spirit of EQ

Emotional Intelligence · Enneagram · Spiritual Formation

Was It Ever Yours to Want?

A Reflection Sheet

There's no right way to move through this. Skip what doesn't apply, sit far longer than feels efficient with what does, and let some questions stay unanswered if that's where they land today.

Naming what you were taught

Think of a job, title, or achievement you were taught to want before you ever questioned whether you wanted it. Where did that teaching come from — a parent, a professor, a commencement speech, a culture?

Recall a specific moment, maybe from childhood, when you were praised distinctly for performance, status, or achievement. What did that moment quietly teach you about what makes a person worth noticing, or worth loving?

Testing what's actually yours

If the thing you're chasing right now disappeared tomorrow with no consequence to your reputation or income, would you still want it? Sit with the honest answer, not the impressive one.

Notice your body as you answer that question. Where do you feel resistance? Where, if anywhere, do you feel relief? The body often knows before the mind is willing to say it out loud.

Where in your life have you confused “I worked hard for this” with “this was right for me”? The two are not the same claim, even though they're often mistaken for each other.

Witnesses

Name one person you know whose life looks small by the culture's measure, but who seems, to you, deeply fulfilled. What do they know that the rest of us were never taught?

What would you have to let go of — a comparison, a fear, a story about being behind — in order to actually learn from them, instead of just admiring them from a safe distance?

The cost and the invitation

What would it cost you to want what you want, instead of what you were told to want? Who might be disappointed? What might have to change?

If money and position were neither the goal nor the enemy — just neutral tools — what would you be building your life around instead?

If you wrote one sentence to the younger version of yourself who first absorbed all this — the one sitting in that classroom or sanctuary or living room — what would you want them to know before anyone handed them a script for what success requires?

A closing practice

Before you set this down, take three slow breaths. With each one, let this question rise and fall without forcing an answer: what, even faintly, am I being drawn toward? If nothing comes, that's all right. Some questions take longer than one sitting to answer, and some are answered slowly, by a life, rather than quickly, by a sentence.

Peace and every good.