



Are Patterns From Your Past Still Shaping Your Life?

Discover how learned ways of thinking, feeling and responding may be influencing you today.

Some responses are so automatic that it can be hard to recognize how much they're affecting your life. This brief quiz will help you notice where you may be living on auto-pilot and bring awareness to reactions and behaviors you haven't questioned before. With awareness comes the possibility of choice, and the opportunity to respond differently.

How to Take the Quiz

Read each statement and choose the answer that best describes you most of the time. Keep track of your answers as you go so you can add up your score at the end. Try not to overthink your responses. Choose the answer that feels most true for you.

0 Rarely or never | **1** Sometimes | **2** Often | **3** Very often

1. I replay conversations in my mind, worrying about what I said, what I should have said, or how I came across.
2. I defer to others when making decisions because I worry about making the wrong choice or being judged.
3. When something goes wrong, my reaction can feel much bigger than the situation itself, even when part of me knows I'll be okay.
4. Being liked is very important to me, so I try hard to be polite, agreeable, useful and easy to get along with.
5. I mostly keep my opinions to myself or go along with others because I'm afraid of being judged or ridiculed, or don't want to disappoint them.

6. I'm quick to make myself available when someone needs help, but rarely ask for help when I need it.
7. When someone is upset, critical, or unhappy with me, I easily become anxious or feel an urge to make things okay, even when I'm not sure why I'm reacting so strongly.
8. During conflict or stressful interactions, I sometimes freeze, shut down, or have trouble finding the words to say what I really want to say.
9. Even when I know logically that I'm safe, my body sometimes reacts as though I'm not, making it difficult to relax or settle.
10. I may know what I want or need but still find myself putting it aside because someone else might not like it.

What Your Answers May Reveal

Some of these questions may have seemed unrelated. But overthinking, putting others first, difficulty speaking up, and strong reactions to stress can be more connected than you might think.

Many of these are learned behaviors and responses that began in childhood as ways of adapting, staying connected, avoiding conflict, or feeling safe. Over time, they became so automatic that you didn't realize how much they still influence you today.

Recognizing what you learned to do automatically can help you understand what's been keeping you stuck. With awareness comes the possibility of choice and the opportunity to respond differently.

Calculate Your Score

When you've answered all 10 questions:

1. Add together the numbers you selected for each question.
2. Your total score will be between **0 and 30**.
3. Find your score range below to learn what your answers may be telling you.

0–9 | These Patterns May Have Less Influence

You may experience some of these reactions from time to time, but they're less likely to regularly shape your choices or relationships. Take another look at any questions you scored higher on, since these may point to situations where you tend to doubt yourself, hold back, or react more strongly than you would like.

How therapy can help: We can look more closely at the patterns that do get in your way and help you strengthen your ability to trust yourself, speak up, and respond with greater choice when those situations arise.

10–19 | Some Old Patterns May Be Getting in Your Way

You may notice a gap between what you know or want and how you automatically respond in certain situations. You might overthink, put other people's needs ahead of your own, avoid speaking up, or find that certain situations affect you more strongly than you expect.

How therapy can help: Together, we will understand what keeps these patterns going and work with both your thoughts and nervous system to help you feel less anxious, more confident in your choices, and better able to respond in ways that work better for you today.

20–30 | Old Patterns May Be Having a Stronger Influence

Some of these responses may feel so natural that you've thought of them simply as part of who you are. But learned behaviors and responses can become deeply ingrained, influencing your relationships, decisions, reactions to stress, and the way you feel about yourself.

How therapy can help: We will work together to understand and change these patterns at a deeper level. By combining insight with practical tools and body-based approaches, therapy can help you calm your nervous system, trust yourself more, speak up for yourself, and have more choice in how you respond today.

A Score Is Only Part of the Story

Your score matters less than what you noticed while answering the questions. Pay attention to the statements that made you stop, surprised you, or felt especially familiar. Those responses may offer the most useful clues about where you're responding automatically rather than by choice.

What Could Be Different?

Awareness is a beginning. Therapy helps you understand yourself more deeply, and assists you to interrupt automatic thoughts and actions. Gaining control over unconscious, learned responses offers choice in how you think, feel, and respond.

If you'd like to explore what change could look like for you, I'd be glad to talk with you.

Schedule a Brief Phone Consultation

Heidi Elias, LCSW, SEP
Psychotherapy & Somatic Experiencing®
heidielias.com | info@heidielias.com

