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Is It Real? Is It True? Is It Kind? Is It Mine?

A Journaling Practice for Observing, Not Absorbing

Introduction to the Practice

As sensitive and empathic people, we may find ourselves responding to the emotions, experiences, and energy of others before we've had an opportunity to understand what we're actually experiencing. We notice someone's discomfort and begin feeling uncomfortable ourselves. We recognize tension in a room and start searching for its source. We sense that something has changed and immediately begin wondering what it means or what we should do about it.

Sometimes, without realizing it, we move from observing an experience to absorbing it into our own Physical, Emotional, or Energy Body.

Is It Real? Is It True? Is It Kind? Is It Mine? is a practice of discernment that helps us recognize the difference between what we're experiencing, what we're interpreting, and what we're choosing to take responsibility for.

Rather than immediately responding to every sensation, emotion, or intuitive impression, these four questions invite us to become the witness of our experiences. We can acknowledge what is happening without automatically making it part of our own story.

The goal isn't to become less sensitive. It's to develop a healthier, more intentional relationship with our sensitivity.

Why This Practice Matters

Throughout Energy Hygiene LIVE, we've explored how energy moves through our experiences and how our awareness influences the way we participate in the world.

Within our energetic teachings, we recognize that like energy attracts like energy and energy multiplies upon itself. When we repeatedly engage with an uncomfortable feeling, fearful thought, or another person's emotional experience, we may find ourselves amplifying that experience within our own system.

Our thoughts, emotions, physical responses, and energetic impressions can begin influencing one another. Before long, something we initially observed may feel as though it has become our own experience.

This is where the practice of **Observe, Don't Absorb** becomes important.

We can recognize someone's sadness without needing to become sad ourselves. We can witness discomfort without automatically creating a story around it. We can offer compassion without accepting responsibility for another person's emotional experience.

And importantly, we can recognize when something genuinely belongs to us and deserves our attention.

This practice is not about denying our feelings, dismissing our intuition, or avoiding responsibility. It's about understanding what we're experiencing so we can choose how to participate.

The Functioning Empath: Becoming the Witness

A functioning empath is not someone who has stopped feeling or responding to the world. It is someone who is developing the ability to recognize their sensitivity while remaining connected to themselves.

Holding space and becoming the witness are essential parts of that process.

Holding space means allowing an experience to exist without immediately needing to fix, change, or control it.

Becoming the witness means recognizing what is happening within and around us without automatically identifying with every sensation, emotion, or impression.

When we practice witnessing, we create an opportunity to recognize the difference between compassion and responsibility, observation and interpretation, and connection and absorption.

The four questions help us develop that awareness.

The Four Questions

1. Is It Real?

Recognizing the Experience

Begin by acknowledging what you're actually experiencing.

What sensations, emotions, thoughts, or energetic impressions are present?
What did you observe that brought this experience into your awareness?

Something can be real as an experience without our interpretation of it necessarily being accurate.

For example, you may genuinely feel tension in your shoulders while speaking with someone who seems upset. The physical tension is real. However, that doesn't automatically mean you've absorbed their energy or that their emotional state caused your discomfort.

This first question invites us to recognize the original information before adding meaning to it.

Journaling Prompts

- What happened that brought this experience into my awareness?
- What am I noticing in my Physical, Emotional, and Energy Bodies?
- What do I actually know that I observed, felt, or experienced?
- Can I acknowledge this experience without immediately explaining it?

My Reflection:

2. Is It True?

Separating the Information From the Story

Once we've recognized what we're experiencing, we can begin exploring the meaning we've assigned to it.

Our minds naturally create explanations based on past experiences, expectations, fears, beliefs, and familiar relationship patterns. Sometimes those explanations are accurate. Other times, they are assumptions that feel convincing because of the emotions attached to them.

This is where we return to our teaching from Class Two: **The Message Before the Story.**

For example, someone may be unusually quiet, and we begin believing they're upset with us. Their quietness may be something we genuinely observed, but the belief that we've done something wrong is an interpretation.

We don't need to dismiss our intuition or our emotions. We simply want to recognize the difference between what we know and what we're assuming.

Journaling Prompts

- What story or explanation have I created around this experience?
- What do I know to be true, and what am I assuming?
- Are past experiences, expectations, or fears influencing my interpretation?
- Can I allow myself not to know everything about this situation right now?

My Reflection:

3. Is It Kind?

Bringing Compassion Into the Experience

Kindness is not simply about being pleasant or accommodating toward others. It includes the way we speak to ourselves, the expectations we place upon ourselves, and the responsibilities we believe we must carry.

When we recognize another person's discomfort, we may begin judging ourselves for not doing enough. We might feel guilty for needing space or believe that being compassionate requires us to experience someone else's suffering.

But compassion does not require self-sacrifice.

This question invites us to consider whether the way we're interpreting or responding to an experience is supportive, compassionate, and respectful toward everyone involved, including ourselves.

Kindness does not mean avoiding difficult conversations, disregarding our needs, or allowing harmful behavior. Sometimes the kindest response is honesty, a clear boundary, or allowing another person to navigate their own experience.

Journaling Prompts

- Am I responding to this experience with compassion or judgment?
- What expectations am I placing on myself or someone else?
- Am I allowing my own needs to matter alongside the needs of others?
- What would a kind and compassionate response look like without requiring me to abandon myself?

My Reflection:

4. Is It Mine?

Recognizing Responsibility Without Absorption

This question brings us to one of the most important teachings for the functioning empath: recognizing the difference between caring about an experience and taking ownership of it.

We may recognize someone else's sadness, frustration, disappointment, or discomfort and immediately feel compelled to make things better.

But recognizing someone's experience doesn't automatically make it ours to manage.

Is It Mine? invites us to explore whether the experience reflects our own feelings, needs, behaviors, responsibilities, or personal patterns—or whether we're taking responsibility for something another person needs to navigate.

Sometimes the answer is yes. We may discover that a situation has activated something within us that deserves attention, or that our own choices have contributed to a problem we need to address.

Other times, we may recognize that while we care deeply, the experience or outcome belongs to someone else.

And sometimes, both things are true. We have our own response to acknowledge while allowing another person to have theirs.

Journaling Prompts

- What part of this experience genuinely belongs to me?
- Am I taking responsibility for another person's emotions, choices, or outcomes?
- Is there something within my own experience that needs attention or care?
- How can I remain compassionate and connected without taking ownership of what isn't mine?

My Reflection:

Bringing the Four Questions Together

Think of a recent interaction or recurring situation where you felt emotionally, physically, or energetically affected by someone else's experience.

It doesn't need to be a particularly difficult situation. Begin with something manageable that allows you to explore the practice without becoming overwhelmed.

The situation I'm reflecting on:

Is It Real? What did I actually experience?

Is It True? What do I know, and what story might I be creating?

Is It Kind? Am I responding with compassion toward myself and others?

Is It Mine? What belongs to me, and what can I allow someone else to carry?

What do I recognize differently after exploring these questions?

What is one small choice I can make that supports a healthier relationship with myself and others?

Bringing the Practice Into Everyday Life

You don't need to complete a full journal entry every time something catches your attention. As you become familiar with the four questions, they can become a simple internal check-in.

When you notice an uncomfortable sensation, an emotional shift, or an intuitive impression, pause long enough to recognize what is happening.

Ask yourself:

Is It Real? Is It True? Is It Kind? Is It Mine?

Notice whether you're observing an experience or beginning to absorb it.

If your attention has moved away from your center, practice Calling Your Energy Home. Reconnect with your Physical, Emotional, and Energy Bodies. Allow yourself to recognize what you're experiencing without immediately needing to do something about it.

Then, if action is appropriate, choose how you would like to participate.

You may discover that an experience needs your attention, a conversation, a boundary, or a compassionate response. You may also discover that nothing further is required of you.

Both are valuable forms of awareness.

Monthly Practice: Observe, Don't Absorb

Throughout the month, use the four questions whenever you recognize yourself becoming emotionally, physically, or energetically involved in another person's experience.

Choose at least one situation to explore more fully through journaling. Return to the practice as often as it feels useful.

As you continue, pay attention to patterns:

- Which question is easiest for you to answer?
- Which question challenges you the most?
- Where do you most frequently move from observation into assumption or responsibility?
- Are you beginning to recognize when your attention or energy moves away from your center?
- What changes when you give yourself permission to observe without absorbing?

The intention is not to get every answer right. It's to develop a consistent practice of awareness, discernment, and self-trust.

Closing Reflection

I can recognize what is happening without immediately making it my own.

I can trust my experiences while remaining open to understanding them more clearly.

I can offer compassion without sacrificing my relationship with myself.

I can observe without absorbing, hold space without carrying, and remain connected without losing my center.