

Attachment Journal Prompts

Journaling about attachment has an obvious failure mode that almost nobody warns you about: for an anxious pattern, writing at length about a relationship worry is often indistinguishable from ruminating about it with better handwriting. You can finish an hour of journaling more convinced of the catastrophe than when you started, and feel virtuous about it.

Who this is for: You want to write about your patterns but either end up spiralling or end up staring at a blank page wondering what you are supposed to say.

The prompt sets

For anxious patterns: prompts that close rather than open

Bounded questions that resist becoming a spiral.

What did I predict would happen last time I felt like this, and what actually happened?

What is the smallest, most boring explanation for what they did?

What would I tell a friend who described this exact situation to me?

Name three things about today that had nothing to do with this relationship.

What do I want from them right now, in one sentence, with no justification attached?

For avoidant patterns: prompts that get past "I am fine"

Questions designed to be hard to answer in one word.

What did I do differently today from how I would have behaved a month ago?

Where in my body do I notice anything at all right now, even if I cannot name it?

What was happening in the ten minutes before I started wanting to be alone?

What did they ask for, in their words, not my summary of it?

If I imagine telling them one true thing, what comes up first — and what would it cost?

For fearful-avoidant patterns: prompts that hold both sides

Questions that stop you having to pick one feeling.

Both are true today: I want ____ and I also want ____.

Which state am I writing from right now — the wanting-closer one or the wanting-away one?

What did I believe about this relationship a week ago, when I was in the other state?

What decision am I about to make, and would the other version of me make it?

What is the earliest sign that I am about to flip?

For everyone: prompts about where the pattern came from

Slower questions, for when you are not in the middle of something.

When I was upset as a child, what happened next?

What did I learn to do to keep things steady at home?

Which of my current reactions would have made complete sense back then?

Whose voice is it when I criticise myself?

What did nobody say out loud in my family?

This worksheet is free to print, photocopy and share, including with clients. It is self-reflection material, not a diagnosis, an assessment or a substitute for professional support. If a relationship involves fear, control or coercion, or if working through this raises more than feels manageable, please speak to a doctor, a therapist or a domestic abuse service.