

Avoidant Attachment Journal Prompts (None of Them Ask About Feelings)

Standard journal prompts assume the problem is finding time to explore your feelings. For this pattern the problem is that "explore your feelings" is a doorway you have spent a lifetime learning to walk past -- ask directly and you get the same three words the pattern gives everyone else: fine, busy, tired. So none of these thirty prompts asks how anything made you feel. They ask about objects, actions, other people, timings and hypotheticals -- and they let the material arrive sideways, which for this wiring is the direction material actually arrives from.

Who this is for: Anyone with the avoidant pattern who has bought a notebook before, written "day one" and a weather report, and never gone back. Especially those who think journaling is not for them.

The thirty prompts, in six sets

Set 1 -- Objects (the easiest door)

Five prompts about things, which turn out to be about people.

An object I have kept longer than its usefulness explains. Where it came from:

A gift I received that I never use, and what using it would be like:

Something of mine an ex or old friend still has. Whether I would want it back:

The object in my home a stranger would need explained to understand me:

Something I threw away that I think about. What week that was:

Set 2 -- Logistics of distance (the audit)

Five prompts about arrangements, which map the moat.

Who could currently walk into my home without notice? The exact list:

The last time I told someone about a problem before it was already solved. Roughly when:

Whose calls do I screen, and what would answering on the first ring change?

What I did with my last genuinely bad day -- the timeline, hour by hour, and who appears in it:

If I disappeared for a week, on what day would someone notice, and who:

Set 3 -- Other people (the safe third person)

Five prompts about how others do closeness, watched from the observation deck.

A couple I know whose closeness looks liveable. What specifically they do:

The most openly needy person I know, and my honest reaction to them -- unedited:

Someone who handles being helped gracefully. What that looks like, mechanically:

A person I watched receive bad news in company. What the company was for:

One behaviour I have filed under "couldn't be me" that I would quietly not mind having:

Set 4 -- Timings (the pattern's clock)

Five prompts about when things happen, which expose the machinery.

At what point in a good evening with someone do I start wanting to leave? What has usually just happened:

The interval between my last genuinely close moment with someone and my next spell of being "slammed":

The longest delay between an ending and the feeling about it arriving. What finally triggered the arrival:

How long I can be visited before I need the house back. Whether that number is different for anyone:

The time of day this notebook is easiest to open. What that hour has that the others lack:

Set 5 -- Hypotheticals (stakes removed)

Five prompts about situations that are not happening, which is what makes them answerable.

If I knew for certain it would never be used against me, the thing I would tell someone:

If someone I trusted asked to see my week exactly as it is -- no tidying -- who could it least-worst be:

If help arrived without my asking and left without being thanked, what I would want it to do:

If I could install one of set three's admired behaviours overnight, cost-free, which one:

If my next relationship were guaranteed to end well either way, what I would do differently in month one:

Set 6 -- The re-read (quarterly, not monthly)

Five prompts for reading the notebook back, on the pattern's schedule.

Reading as a stranger: what does this person arrange their life to avoid?

The entry that was most obviously written in report-mode. What the report was covering:

Anything that appears in more than one set (an object, a person, an hour). Why it recurs:

One arrangement from set two I would now change by ten per cent. The concrete first step:

The sentence I have been not-writing for three months, written once, here:

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