

The Family Visit Plan

You are forty-one, you run a team of nine, and about twenty minutes after your coat comes off in the hallway of the house you grew up in you are answering questions in a voice you have not used since you were fifteen. Nothing has happened yet. Nobody has said anything difficult. The shift is triggered by the building rather than by the people in it: the smell of it, the chair you sit in, the order everyone stands in around the kitchen. It is ordinary, and it is much easier to plan around than to resist.

Who this is for: You are a competent adult everywhere else, and roughly twenty minutes into a visit home you can hear yourself using a voice you have not used since you were fifteen.

Before, during, after

How long you are staying

Decided before you arrive, and told to someone else.

Arriving when, leaving when. Exact times:

Who outside the family knows those times?

What I will say if I am asked to stay longer:

The day it has usually gone wrong before:

Getting there and getting out

Whoever controls the car controls the leaving time.

How I am getting there:

How I am getting back, booked and paid for:

What it would cost me to leave four hours early:

Where you sleep

Your childhood bedroom does some of this on its own.

Where I am sleeping:

If it is not the family house, the reason I will give:

What time I can reasonably go to bed:

If a partner or children are coming, what have we agreed?

The two questions you will be asked

You already know which two they are.

Question one, in the words they use:

My answer, two sentences and a question back:

Question two:

My answer:

What I will say if it is pushed a third time:

The first twenty minutes

The shift happens before anything is said.

What my voice and posture usually do in the first hour:

The version of me that arrives in that house:

One thing I will do at the twenty-minute mark to check:

Exits, named in advance

An exit announced on arrival is not a reaction.

Exit one, announced on arrival:

Exit two:

The signal that tells me to use one early:

Where I will actually go:

One ally, one outside line

One inside the family, one outside it.

My ally inside the room, and what I will ask of them:

My contact outside the family:

What I want from that text, in one line:

The day after

The visit is charged to Tuesday, not Sunday.

What I have scheduled for the day after, and what I will move:

The one exchange I am still replaying:

What was hard that I did not expect:

The one thing I would change about the next visit:

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.