

Understanding Your Source Code

Why the same patterns keep showing up — and how to change them

A between-session reflection worksheet

Most people spend their lives editing the display screen — changing jobs, relationships, habits, cities — and wondering why the same patterns keep showing up. That's because the patterns aren't in the display. They're in the source code: everything laid down before you had language to question it.

What is Source Code?

Your source code is the programming your nervous system received early in life — before you could consciously choose what to believe about yourself, others, and the world. It includes:

- How your nervous system learned to read safety and threat
- What you decided you had to *be* in order to belong or be loved
- The coping strategies a younger version of you developed to survive
- Beliefs that were installed in environments that no longer exist — but are still running

You are not broken. You are not stuck. You are running **outdated software** in a life that has moved on. The good news: source code can be rewritten.

Part 1 — Recognize the Pattern

Think of a pattern in your life that keeps repeating — a relationship dynamic, an emotional reaction, a way you respond to stress, conflict, or intimacy.

Describe the pattern in your own words:

How long have you noticed this pattern in your life?

What does it cost you? (emotionally, relationally, professionally)

Part 2 — Trace It to Its Origin

Source code gets written early. This isn't about blame — it's about understanding where the program came from so you can choose whether to keep running it.

When you're in this pattern, how old does the feeling inside you feel? (It's okay if it's a very young age.)

What was happening in your life when this pattern first appeared or made sense?

What was this pattern trying to protect you from?

Part 3 — Meet the Part Running the Code

Inside this pattern lives a part of you — a younger version of you who developed this strategy because they needed it then. This part deserves curiosity, not criticism.

Try this: Close your eyes, take a breath, and gently turn your attention inward. Notice where in your body you feel this pattern most. Place a hand there if it feels right. Ask that part of you: What are you afraid will happen if you stop doing this?

What did you notice in your body?

What is this part afraid will happen if the pattern stops?

What does this part most need to hear from you right now?

Part 4 — Update the Code

The source code was written for a world that no longer exists. Your nervous system needs new evidence — not just new thinking, but new *experience*. This section helps you begin building that.

What is one thing that is true about your life NOW that the younger version of you didn't have access to?

What would it look like to respond differently, even just 10% differently, the next time this pattern activates?

What is one small, concrete act of self-trust you can take this week?

Closing Reflection

You are not your patterns. You are the awareness that can observe them, get curious about them, and choose something different. The work isn't to fight the old code — it's to gently show it that the world it was written for no longer exists. That's what freedom actually looks like.

What is one thing you want to bring to your next session from this reflection?

This worksheet is for your personal reflection. There are no right answers — only honest ones.