

WHEN TRYING HARDER IS NOT WORKING

A reflection guide for capable professionals at a crossroads



CO-CREATED PATH | SHRADDHA ARORA

Before you begin

This guide is not another task to complete perfectly. It is an invitation to pause and listen to what constant effort may be covering. Move slowly. Write only what feels useful.

1. What feels heavy right now?

Name the part of life that feels draining, conflicted or difficult to carry. Try to describe the experience before explaining or solving it.

Reflect: What feels heavier than it looks from the outside?

Reflect: Where are you functioning well but feeling depleted inside?

Reflect: What have you been telling yourself you “should” be able to handle?

2. What are you trying to force?

Notice where you are pushing, controlling, proving, fixing or overdoing because stopping feels uncomfortable.

Reflect: What result are you trying to make happen?

Reflect: What are you afraid might happen if you paused?

Reflect: What might support look like instead of more effort?

3. Which voice are you believing?

Write down the sentence that appears when you feel tired, uncertain or behind. Do not improve it. Capture the exact words.

Write: The sentence I keep hearing is:

Reflect: Is this sentence a fact, an interpretation or an old expectation?

Reflect: Whose standards or approval might it be connected to?

Reflect: How do you behave when you believe this sentence?

Reflect: What becomes possible when you hold it more lightly?

4. What role are you still carrying?

Many people learned to become the capable one, the peacekeeper, the fixer, the good one or the person who never needed too much. A role can be valuable and still become heavy.

☐ The capable one

☐ The strong one

☐ The peacekeeper

☐ The fixer

☐ The good one

☐ The person who never asks for help

Reflect: When did this role first become useful?

Reflect: What does it help you avoid, earn or control?

Reflect: What does carrying it cost you now?

Reflect: How could you keep its strength without letting it run every choice?

5. What would one self-trusting step look like?

The next step does not have to solve everything. It only needs to be honest, small enough to do and aligned with what matters to you.

Reflect: What do you already know, beneath the noise and pressure?

Reflect: What is one decision, boundary, conversation or pause that would honor that knowing?

Reflect: What can you do within the next seven days?

Reflect: What support would make that step easier to take?

My one self-trusting next step is:

A note from Shraddha

You do not need to force an answer from every question. Sometimes noticing the pattern is the first meaningful movement. Take what feels useful and leave the rest.

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This resource supports personal reflection. It is not a diagnostic, clinical or mental-health treatment tool.