Whose Approval Are You Waiting For?

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A reflection guide to recognizing your validation patterns and reconnecting with your own knowing.



Recognizing Your Validation Patterns

Being seen, heard, and understood can help us feel connected and supported. Seeking validation is a natural part of sharing ourselves with others. Sometimes, though, we begin relying on another person's agreement before we feel able to trust what we feel, want, or choose.

In this reflection, we'll use validation to describe seeking understanding, connection, or feedback while remaining connected to our own perspective. Approval-seeking describes those moments when someone else's response carries more authority than our own knowing - showing how we don't trust our own knowing or desires.

You may recognize both in yourself, even within the same relationship or situation. This is an invitation to notice with curiosity and compassion.

The reflections that follow invite you to notice how validation shows up in your own life ... when it helps you feel supported and when it draws you away from your own knowing. Begin with curiosity. What you discover can offer a starting point for building greater awareness and self-trust.

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Recognizing Your Validation Patterns

Here are some examples of how seeking validation can show up in your life. Place a checkmark next to the statements you recognize in yourself. For each statement you check, use the parentheses to rate how strongly you experience it, from 1 (slightly) to 5 (very strongly). This is to assess each individual statement. There is no total score.

You may recognize experiences that support you alongside patterns that leave you feeling uncertain or dependent on others' responses. For now, simply notice with curiosity.

- ☐ You reach out to someone you trust to feel heard and understood, without needing them to agree with you. (___ / 5)
- ☐ You appreciate praise when you receive it but can still value your efforts when it isn't given. (___ / 5)
- ☐ You can consider feedback, take what is useful, and decide what does or does not fit your experience. (___ / 5)
- ☐ You notice your mood rising or falling sharply depending on the response you receive from others. (___ / 5)
- ☐ You seek another person's perspective while recognizing that the final choice remains yours. (___ / 5)
- ☐ When someone doesn't understand you, you begin to feel that your feelings or perspective must be wrong. (___ / 5)
- ☐ You repeatedly ask for reassurance about the same concern, but the relief you feel does not last. (___ / 5)
- ☐ You find yourself apologizing even when you haven't done anything wrong, out of concern that someone may be displeased with you. (___ / 5)

Exploring One of Your Patterns

Choose one statement you checked. Recall a specific time when you experienced it.

What did you feel before, during, and afterward? What do you notice in your body as you recall it, if anything?

Did the experience bring relief, connection, tension, uncertainty, or something else? You may notice more than one feeling.

Let these feelings offer information without needing to judge yourself or reach a conclusion right away.

Use the space below to note what you discover about this pattern and how it affects your connection with yourself.

Notes:

A Small Practice:

Listen to Yourself First

The next time you notice yourself reaching for approval, pause before asking someone else.

Ask yourself: “What do I feel, and what matters to me here?”

Complete this sentence:
“Even before I hear anyone else’s perspective, I can acknowledge that …”

You can still reach out for support. As you listen, practice giving your own experience a place in the conversation, too.

Notes:

Continuing Your Exploration

Recognizing your patterns is a meaningful beginning. You may now notice moments when another person's response supports you and moments when you begin to lose touch with your own knowing.

If you feel drawn to explore further, my Trusting Your Knowing: A Self-Guided Soul Journey Workbook offers over 50 pages of teachings and practices to help you:

- Understand the difference between receiving validation and depending on approval.
- Explore people-pleasing patterns.
- Recognize how approval-seeking affects your relationships and practice new ways of responding.
- Acknowledge your feelings, needs, and boundaries.
- Practice self-validation through awareness, reflection, choice, and action.
- Reconnect with your inner power, your divinely given wisdom, and the spiritual foundations of self-trust.

Move through the workbook at your own pace, returning to the reflections as your understanding deepens. The invitation is to bring what you discover into how you choose, relate, and express who you are.

Explore the full Trusting Your Knowing Workbook in my Dharma Shop.

About Christine



Christine Rapp, PhD, is a mindfulness teacher, soul astrologer, and Soul Journey and personal growth mentor. Her passion is helping others reconnect with their Souls, deepen trust in their inner wisdom, step into their power, and express who they truly are. Through spiritual teachings, mindful practices, and guided reflection, she supports others in discovering their own truth and bringing it into how they live.

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