

# Diluting the Guilt

**Read the article first.** *How Do I Find My Purpose? Two Different Questions Hiding in One* at ThoughtsFromATherapist.com. This sheet is for the first half of that question: people who know their purpose and carry a schema, usually with a good value inside it, that says the purpose is not allowed. Search “how do I find my purpose” on the site.

“I do not know my purpose” is sometimes the safest available sentence for a person who knows it exactly. The work for that person is not search. It is tolerance for the discomfort of knowing that our authentic self will sometimes produce uncomfortable emotions in other people. Four things grow that tolerance, and this sheet works through each. The guilt does not have to go away. It gets company.

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## VALIDATION

Someone outside  
the schema sees  
the purpose and  
says so

The therapist who sees a dancer in how a person's hands move. It lets us embrace the purpose and set a goal inside it, because the abandonment the schema predicted turns out to be partial.

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## EXPOSURE

Small doses

Say a smaller true thing. Survive the response. Say a slightly larger one. Behavioral psychology in its plainest form.

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## DILUTION

Pour water, not  
poison

A glass of water with poison in it. The automatic mind pours poison on its own. We pour water on purpose: gratitude, celebration, and telling it to people who attune. The guilt stays in the glass at a smaller proportion.

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## INSIGHT

Their reaction is  
not mine to  
manage

Knowing that we are internalizing someone else's reaction and building identity out of it. This is a hard room for me to be in, and their emotional reaction to my authentic self is not my responsibility.

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*The purpose was never missing. What was missing was the tolerance for being seen inside it.*

## The purpose and the schema

Directions: name what we already know, then the construct that says it is not allowed. A few words per space is enough.

### THE PURPOSE I ALREADY KNOW

Not a goal. The conditions under which I feel most myself. The route nobody else would take, the dance, the thing I do when nobody is asking me to.

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### THE SCHEMA

What tells me it is not allowed

The automatic reaction, not the belief. What fires before thought when I imagine being fully seen inside this purpose. Whose voice is it closest to?

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### THE VALUE INSIDE IT

The good thing the schema is protecting

Do not cause discomfort. Do not appear to have it easy. Do not embarrass the family. Name the value, and then name where it has grown past its scale.

#### THE VALUE

#### WHERE IT IS NOW TOO BIG

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### WHAT I SAY INSTEAD

The protective sentence. "I do not really know what I want." "It is not a big deal." "Maybe next year." And the safer version of the thing I do instead of the thing itself.

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## Validation and exposure

*Directions: who can already see it, and the first small true things to say out loud.*

### VALIDATION

Who has seen the purpose in me

Anyone who has named it, even in passing. What they said. If nobody has yet, who would be able to see it if they were looking?

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### THE INJURY

Who will not be able to see it, and what that costs

The parent, the teacher, the friend who only hears the risk. Their construct is real and it stays. Write what they would say, and then write that it is partial.

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### THE GOAL INSIDE THE PURPOSE

*What validation unlocks: one concrete goal I would set if the abandonment were only partial. Sign up for the class. Plan the route. Book the trip. Write it as if permission had already arrived.*

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### EXPOSURE

Three true things, smallest first

The first is one I can say this week to someone safe. The third is the one I am not ready for. Fill the first line only if that is all there is.

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## Dilution and insight

*Directions: what the radio pours in, what I can pour in beside it, and the differentiation that lets me stay myself in a room that would prefer I were someone else.*

### THE POISON

What the radio  
says on its own

The automatic lines. "People were scared." "Keep that part out." "That was selfish." Write them down without arguing.

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### THE WATER

What I can pour in  
on purpose

Gratitude for the experience. What went well and how connected it was. Who I can tell who will not hand the guilt back. One line each.

#### GRATITUDE AND CELEBRATION

#### WHO CAN HEAR IT

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### INSIGHT

The room, and  
what I internalized

A room that preferred I were someone else, and the identity I built out of its reaction without knowing I was doing it.

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### NOT MINE TO MANAGE

*Rewrite it in one sentence: this is a hard environment for me to be in, and their reaction to my authentic self is not my responsibility. In my own words.*

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### THE EXPERIMENT IN THE MOMENT

*One sentence that owns the purpose out loud, to one person, this week. "I am your equal here. I happen to practice the language more." Write mine, then believe it while saying it.*

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