Your Next Step

Describe. Choose. Try. Review.

A practical reflection pack by Dr Nicholas Jenner. Use it on its own or alongside Awareness to Action.

One situation at a time

Choose an ordinary, manageable situation. Use pages 2 and 3 to prepare one response. Try it when appropriate, then use page 4 for a brief review. You do not need to complete these pages every day.

Choose the pages that help

Page 5 is an optional boundary preparation sheet. It can replace the general planning pages when you want to prepare a limit. Page 6 contains a completed fictional example.

Keep it manageable

Allow around five to ten minutes for preparation and a short review afterwards. You can leave a question blank. The aim is a useful next step, rather than a perfect account of the situation.

Using the app

If useful, prepare the same action in Your Next Step and review a saved action in Evidence. Paper and app use are alternatives; you do not need to record the same exercise twice. App entries are not automatically sent to Dr Jenner.

A note about safety and privacy

Use a mild situation. Do not test a refusal with someone who may threaten or harm you. Seek individual support where needed. Keep names and identifying details out of these pages and store them privately. This is an educational reflection resource, not therapy or emergency support.

Print at actual size on A4 paper. Write in the spaces provided. This version is printable, rather than an interactive form.

What is happening?

Write only what is useful. Keep facts and assumptions separate.

The situation I want to consider

What do I actually know? What am I assuming or predicting?

What matters to me here? Include my needs and any genuine responsibilities.

Example: I have been asked to help on Saturday. I had planned to rest. I expect disappointment, but I do not yet know what the response will be.

One response I can try

A small, realistic step is enough.

What do I usually do? What would I like to do differently?

My next step or exact sentence

When and where could I try it? What would help me follow through?

What is within my control? What belongs to the other person?

Example: I will check my diary before answering and reply by this evening. I can choose my offer; I cannot guarantee that someone will be pleased.

What happened when I tried?

You are learning from the attempt, rather than grading yourself.

What did I actually do?

How did the other person respond? What did I notice in myself?

What helped? What was difficult?

What would I keep, change or make smaller next time?

If the opportunity has not arisen, keep the plan for another suitable time. Feeling uncomfortable does not by itself mean the action was wrong. Look at the circumstances and what actually happened.

Prepare what you want to say

Use instead of the general planning pages when a limit is the next step.

What request or behaviour am I responding to?

What can I offer or accept? What is my limit?

The sentence I want to use

If there is ordinary disappointment or pushback, what could I say?

What action can I take within my control if the limit is not respected?

A boundary does not control someone else's feelings. Keep the response proportionate and consider your responsibilities. Use the review page afterwards. Where there is intimidation or danger, prioritise safety and individual support.

A request for the weekend

An illustration of one complete attempt

Describe

A relative asks me to help on Saturday. I had planned to rest. I start explaining my week because I expect them to be disappointed. I know they have asked; I do not yet know how they will respond to a different offer.

Choose

I will say: “Let me check what I can manage. I will reply this evening.” After checking my plans, I decide I can offer an hour on Sunday, but not Saturday.

Try

I reply that evening and offer Sunday. They sound disappointed. I feel guilty and want to offer Saturday as well, but I keep the offer I can manage.

Review

I included my need for rest before answering. I still felt uncomfortable. Next time I will keep the first reply brief rather than explaining the whole week. Their disappointment did not become a demand or a threat.

If the attempt went differently

If I agreed immediately, I could still notice what happened and make the next step smaller. If there were threats or serious consequences, this would need a different plan and appropriate support.

Awareness to Action | Describe. Choose. Try. Review. Explore the app: https://theonlinetherapist.blog/awareness-to-action/