



*Life is complicated. People are complicated.
Let's figure it out together.*

IS THIS AN EVENT OR A PATTERN?

A practical reflection tool for deciding what kind of response fits what actually happened.

*One hard moment is not the whole story. Repetition gets a vote,
though.*



Honestly,

Sometimes one hard moment lands with the weight of every hard moment that came before it. Other times, something hurts and our brain immediately starts building a documentary series about it. Very efficient. Not always accurate.

I made this tool to help you slow that down without talking yourself out of what you noticed.

An event can matter. A pattern can begin quietly. The goal is not to decide whether someone is good or bad. It is to look honestly at what happened, whether it keeps happening, what has already been said, and what changed afterward.

You may discover this is one moment that needs curiosity and repair. You may recognize an emerging or repeated pattern that needs a clearer boundary, documentation, qualified help, or a larger decision. Either way, you deserve a response that fits the reality—not only the volume of today's frustration.

Take your time, friend. Fair does not mean vague, and curious does not mean endlessly available.

Colleen ♥

IS THIS AN EVENT OR A PATTERN?

Look at impact, repetition, response, and what changed afterward.

WHY THIS TOOL MATTERS

An event is a single occurrence that may still need attention, repair, support, or a direct response.

A pattern is a repeated behavior, dynamic, or outcome that keeps showing up—especially after expectations, support, or conversations have already occurred.

Do not minimize something because it happened once. Also, no one needs a lifetime character verdict because they had one spectacularly human Tuesday.

The label is not the point. The point is choosing a proportionate response:

- ☐ Curiosity or clarification when information is missing
- ☐ Repair when impact is real and responsibility is possible
- ☐ A reset when the same issue is starting to repeat
- ☐ A firmer boundary, documentation, qualified help, or a larger decision when the pattern is established or safety is involved

HOW TO USE IT

Begin with one specific situation. Write the latest moment as neutrally as you can. Then look backward: similar examples, earlier conversations, support offered, responses, and what changed. Finish by choosing one next move that matches the evidence you have now.

If coercion, retaliation, abuse, discrimination, threats, health, legal rights, or immediate safety may be involved, do not rely on this worksheet or a private conversation alone. Get appropriate qualified help.

WHAT HAPPENED—AND HAS IT HAPPENED BEFORE?

Start with the latest moment. Then check whether it is standing alone.

THE LATEST MOMENT

What happened this time? Keep it brief, specific, and as neutral as possible.

THE ACTUAL IMPACT

What changed, became harder, or mattered because of it?

THE REPETITION CHECK

- ☐ No. This appears to be a first occurrence.
- ☐ Maybe. I need to separate similar facts from accumulated frustration.
- ☐ Yes. There have been similar moments.
- ☐ Yes. This is a clear repeated pattern.

Your memory can be useful without being a courtroom transcript. Write what you can actually identify.

Earlier example 1

Earlier example 2

WHAT WAS COMMUNICATED—AND WHAT CHANGED?

A repeated problem and a repeated surprise are not the same thing.

WHAT WAS ALREADY CLEAR?

Expectation, request, or boundary communicated:

Support, resource, or opportunity offered:

The other person's response:

What happened afterward:

WHAT IS THE PATTERN DOING?

- ☐ Improving after a clear conversation or support
- ☐ Repeating at about the same level
- ☐ Growing in frequency, impact, or risk
- ☐ Changing shape but creating the same outcome
- ☐ Still unclear because I need more information

Curiosity can stay in the room. It just does not have to do all the furniture moving.

WHAT RESPONSE FITS THE REALITY?

Choose a fair next move—not the smallest move and not the most dramatic one.

FINAL CHECK

- ☐ I described the behavior or outcome without turning it into a character verdict.
- ☐ I looked for repetition, not just emotional intensity.
- ☐ I considered what was already communicated and what changed afterward.
- ☐ I am not using curiosity to avoid a boundary—or a boundary to avoid needed information.

MY NEXT USEFUL MOVE

Need a place to start? Borrow one if it fits:

- Ask one clarifying question.
- Name the impact and invite repair.
- Restate the expectation or boundary.
- Document the facts and earlier conversations.
- Decide what I will do if it happens again.
- Get qualified help or make a larger decision when the situation needs more than a conversation.

By when:

YOU CAN BE FAIR AND STILL BE CLEAR

You do not need a perfect label. You need enough truth for one honest next step.

POCKET REMINDER

Impact matters. Repetition matters. Response matters. What changed afterward matters.

WORDS TO BORROW

For an event: *"Can we talk about what happened? I want to understand it before I decide what it means."*

For an emerging pattern: *"I have noticed this more than once, and I do not want to treat each occurrence like it is unrelated."*

For a repeated pattern: *"We have discussed this before. I need to be clear about what needs to change and what I will do if it continues."*

MY OWN WORDS

A quick note: This tool offers reflection and general guidance. It is not legal, medical, mental-health, crisis, safety, or workplace advice for a specific situation. Get appropriate qualified help when the facts, risk, or rights involved call for it.

*Look at you: less guessing, more proportion, and one useful move.
That is plenty for today, bestie.*

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