

# What Did I Just Pick Up?

"Is this feeling mine, or is it theirs?"

Use this when a strong feeling hits but nothing actually happened, and you want to see whether it belongs to you or came from someone else.

## Step 1: What's the feeling?

Focusing on the **Immediate Sensation**: identifying the physical or emotional weight that just landed.

Examples:

- **Sudden Guilt**: I feel a heavy sense of responsibility or guilt that came out of nowhere, even though I haven't done anything wrong.
- **The Fixer's Pressure**: I feel an urgent, frantic need to "fix" the mood or solve a problem that isn't actually mine to solve.
- **The Looming Dread**: I feel a sense that something bad is about to happen or that I've messed something up without any clear reason.

**My Boundary:** *(list the specific feelings or sensations you just picked up.)*

## Step 2: What just happened?

Focusing on the **External Trigger**: identifying the micro-event or environmental change that sparked the feeling.

Examples:

- **The Digital Ping**: A text or notification came in, and even before I read it, my body reacted as if it were bad news.
- **The Room Shift**: I walked into a room or a conversation and immediately felt a wave of tension or coldness from the people there.
- **The Tone Change**: I noticed a slight change in someone's voice or body language and immediately felt like I needed to protect myself.

**My Boundary:** *(describe the specific event or shift that just took place.)*

### Step 3: What story did I jump to?

Focusing on the **Instant Narrative**: identifying the automatic assumption you've made about the situation.

Examples:

**The Abandonment Script:** I've decided they're mad at me or disappointed in my performance without them saying a word.

**The Fault Finder:** I've convinced myself that I messed something up and I'm waiting for the other person to "find out" and react.

**The Crisis Projection:** I'm telling myself that "something bad's coming" and I'm already mentally preparing for a fight or a fallout.

**My Boundary:** *(describe the story you're telling yourself about what this means.)*

### Step 4: Hang it up or keep it?

Focusing on the **Conscious Release**: deciding whether to carry the weight or set it aside until there's proof.

Examples:

**The Reality Check:** I'll ask if anyone has actually said or done anything to confirm my story, and if not, I'll treat it as tension, not truth.

**The Temporary Shelf:** I'll picture setting this feeling aside for now, knowing I can pick it back up later if I actually need to.

**The Emotional Boundary:** I'll remind myself that I don't have to carry someone else's mood or tension by default just because I can feel it.

**My Boundary:** *(write down the concrete move you'll make to set this feeling aside.)*

**The Final Move: One Real-Time Decision** A feeling isn't always a fact. Before you put this paper away, choose one interaction where you'll decide to leave a weight on the shelf if it isn't yours to carry.

**My Test:** \_\_\_\_\_