

30 Shadow Work Prompts

Fifteen pairs about approval, emotions, boundaries, relationships, avoidance, and self-protection.

Use this workbook in any order

- Each reflection contains two related questions. A short response is enough.
- Skip any question you do not want to answer.
- End with something grounding: water, movement, rest, or connection.

REFLECTION 1 - Approval and belonging

Where do I look for approval, and what do I hope it will prove?

What part of myself do I edit or hide to feel accepted?

Shadow Work Prompts - Reflections 2-3

Notice what happens when an emotion appears and when you consider a clearer boundary.

REFLECTION 2 - Emotional reactions

Which emotion do I judge most quickly in myself?

What do I usually do when that emotion appears?

REFLECTION 3 - Boundaries

When did I last say yes while wanting to say no?

What concerns come up when I imagine setting a clearer boundary?

Shadow Work Prompts - Reflections 4-5

Look at how you respond to mistakes and which strengths you downplay.

REFLECTION 4 - Mistakes and accountability

Which mistake do I keep bringing up against myself?

What would taking responsibility look like without attacking myself?

REFLECTION 5 - Visibility

Which compliment is hardest for me to believe?

What strength do I downplay because I worry about being judged for it?

Shadow Work Prompts - Reflections 6-7

Notice the roles and stories that appear in close relationships.

REFLECTION 6 - Relationship roles

What role do I automatically take in close relationships?

What do I need when I am not playing that role?

REFLECTION 7 - Rejection stories

What pattern tends to appear when I feel rejected?

What story does my mind tell in those moments?

Shadow Work Prompts - Reflections 8-9

Explore what defensiveness protects and what a dismissed desire may point toward.

REFLECTION 8 - Protection

What might I be protecting when I become defensive?

What could I say or do instead of becoming defensive?

REFLECTION 9 - Desire and values

What desire do I dismiss as unrealistic or selfish?

What is one part of that desire I can act on?

Shadow Work Prompts - Reflections 10-11

Look at care, reciprocity, and what you avoid when disappointment feels possible.

REFLECTION 10 - Care and reciprocity

When do I feel valued mainly for what I do for other people?

What would feeling cared for look like in that relationship?

REFLECTION 11 - Avoidance

What am I avoiding because I am afraid I will fail or be disappointed?

What is one small way I could begin?

Shadow Work Prompts - Reflections 12-13

Consider what a past version of you was trying to get through. Let envy point to what you want.

REFLECTION 12 - A past version of me

Which past version of me do I criticize most?

What was that version of me trying to get through?

REFLECTION 13 - Envy as information

Who or what do I envy? What do they have that I want?

How could I pursue that without copying their life?

Shadow Work Prompts - Reflections 14-15

Name the permission or truth that could lead to a decision, boundary, or request.

REFLECTION 14 - Permission

What am I waiting for someone else to give me permission to do?

What is one small step I can take without waiting?

REFLECTION 15 - A truth I can admit

What truth can I admit now that I could not admit a month ago?

What decision, boundary, or request follows from accepting it?

What I Want to Keep

Review what you wrote. Then choose how you will return to the present.

A pattern I can name

A need I want to take more seriously

A boundary or choice I want to practice

What will help me return to the present now?

Water, movement, going outside, rest, or contacting someone.
