

What Ends With Me

Every family passes something forward. Some things deserve to continue. Some things deserve to stop.

This room is an inventory, not a séance and not a diagnosis. Whatever your family handed you — by teaching, by example, or by what it never said out loud — you're the one holding it now, which means you're the one who decides what happens next. Two lists, and then the only question that matters.

THE FIRST LIST

What I inherited that I want to carry forward

Name it so you keep it on purpose. Love of family. Humor. Hospitality. Faith. Creativity. Resilience. Work ethic. The recipes. The way holidays were done. Whatever was good in the house you came from — write it down, because good things get dropped by accident when nobody names them.

THE SECOND LIST

What I inherited that I do not want to pass on

Silence. Shame. Rage. The drinking. Body criticism. Prejudice. Fear of money. Emotional avoidance. Martyrdom. Secrets. Never apologizing. Never saying "I love you." Write your own list plainly — naming it is not betraying anyone. You can love the people and still refuse the package.

THE ONLY QUESTION THAT MATTERS

What will I do differently?

A list of what stops is only a wish until it becomes behavior. For each thing on the second list, what's the concrete *other thing* you'll do — the apology given, the feeling named out loud, the "I love you" actually said? Specific enough that someone watching your life could tell.

Two honest notes. Carrying the first list forward is also breaking a cycle — the cycle of letting the good things be accidental. And if something on the second list has deep roots that writing alone won't reach, that's not a failure of will — patterns this old sometimes deserve a professional beside you. The Pattern Map can help you see yours; the Grief Room is next door if this list turned out to be about the childhood you didn't have.

IF IT STIRRED SOMETHING UP

Coming back down

Breathe in through your nose for four, out through your mouth for eight — longer out than in — for a few minutes. Then name five things you can see, four you can hear, three you can touch. Stirred-up feelings after writing like this are common and tend to pass; if they don't, that's information that this deserves more support than a page can give.

If you're in crisis or thinking about harming yourself, please don't work through it alone here. In the US, call or text 988 (the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), or chat at 988lifeline.org — available 24/7. Outside the US, findahelpline.com lists helplines around the world.

A BLESSING ON THIS WORK

This work is a gift. Share it freely with anyone who needs it — print it, copy it, pass it on whole. It is not for sale, by us or by anyone, and it shouldn't be changed. Above all, keep the crisis lines and the words about seeking professional help exactly as they are — for someone, those may be the lines that matter most. It exists to help people heal, and to raise the vibration of the world. That will never cost anything here.

— *Aether & Root* · aetherandroot.com/inner-work