

# Handing it back

Five minutes. One ordinary moment from this week.

Read each step slowly, out loud if you can, and pause where it says pause. Pick an ordinary moment, not your hardest memory. If anything feels like too much, stop and look around the room.

1. **Settle.** Feet on the floor, somewhere you won't be interrupted.
2. **Pick the moment.** A meeting, a message you answered, a minute in the kitchen. Where are you, who is there, what are your hands doing? (Pause.)
3. **Catch the sentence.** A should, have to, need to or must arrived. Say it out loud, the way it sounded. (Pause.)
4. **Notice how it arrived.** Fast, with a flinch, not wanting to be questioned? That is usually a sign it came from somewhere else. (Pause.)
5. **Ask whose rulebook it is.** A voice, a face or a place, whichever comes first. "I can't place it" is an answer too. (Pause.)
6. **Thank it.** "Thank you. I picked this up when I needed it, and it helped me then." Some of that rulebook is yours and worth keeping. (Pause.)
7. **Keep it, rewrite it or hand it back.** Would I choose this today? Yes: keep it. Partly: rewrite it. No: picture it passing across a table to where it came from, and say "This is yours. I am handing it back." (Pause.)
8. **Say what you choose now.** Out loud, then write it below. Choose from your heart how you want to act.
9. **Come back to the room.** A slow breath. It may feel strange, and that is ok.

## Write it down

The moment (where, who, what I was doing)

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The sentence (should, have to, need to, must)

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Whose rulebook

☐ a parent's ☐ a grandparent's ☐ a school's ☐ an old job's ☐ the place I grew up ☐ can't place it

What I am doing with it

☐ keep it ☐ rewrite it ☐ hand it back

What I choose now is

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One place I will try it this week

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When the next should arrives, ask: "Whose rulebook is that?"