

Fixer or Leader?

A 3-Step SPIRAL™ Reflective Micro-Tool for Shifting from Reactive Fixing to Intentional Leading

When the pressure mounts and responsibilities blur, even the most accomplished leaders can fall into reactive patterns. This reflective anchor tool is designed to help you transition from anxious fixing to empowered presence in just three steps. By implementing this systematic approach, you'll develop greater awareness of your triggers and make more conscious leadership choices aligned with your true responsibilities.

Step 1: Notice the Surge

"My system is activated. I feel the urge to step in. Why?"

- What exactly is bothering me right now?
- Is this situation mine to own, or am I taking it on emotionally?
- What emotion is underneath the urge—anger, fear, guilt, urgency?

This crucial first step brings awareness to your inner pattern before unconscious action takes over, allowing you to pause and reflect rather than immediately react.

Step 2: Trace It Back

"This moment reminds me of something deeper."

- When else in my life did I feel responsible for fixing something I didn't cause?
- What part of me believes that if I don't step in, something bad will happen, or I won't be good enough?

By connecting present-day over-responsibility to past coping strategies, you depersonalize the urgency and gain perspective on your patterns.

Step 3: Choose as a Leader

"What does conscious leadership ask of me now?"

- **Speak up?** → From calm alignment, not emotional urgency.
- **Let it go?** → Trust others to handle their own consequences.
- **Redirect?** → Focus energy on what *is* your responsibility today.

This final step empowers you to respond from a place of intention rather than reaction, embodying true leadership principles.

"I don't need to fix everything to be valuable. I lead by being clear, not by being everywhere."

When used consistently, this micro-tool creates a powerful pause between stimulus and response. The space where your leadership growth happens. The tool serves as both a practical intervention in moments of stress and a developmental practice that gradually rewires how you relate to responsibility. By recognizing when you're slipping into "fixer mode," you can consciously choose to step into your leadership presence instead, preserving your energy for the challenges that truly require your attention.

Carry this framework with you as a mental checklist or keep it visible as a reminder during high-pressure situations. With practice, you'll find yourself naturally creating healthier boundaries, making more strategic decisions, and experiencing a greater sense of agency in your leadership role.