Eyes on My Own Path

A Sunshine on Tap Worksheet for When Comparing Myself to Others Gets Loud

It can happen in a few seconds. You're scrolling while the kettle boils, and there it is: someone's new house, someone's promotion, someone's spotless kitchen and perfectly happy kids.

And then, quietly, the thoughts arrive:

> *"Everyone else has it figured out."*
> *"I should be further along by now."*
> *"How do they have time for all that?"*
> *"What am I even doing?"*

Comparing ourselves to others is very ordinary. Sometimes it nudges us toward something good. More often, it just leaves us feeling behind in a race we never signed up for.

This worksheet won't tell you to stop comparing forever, or to pretend you never feel a twinge. **The goal is to notice when comparison shows up, hear what it's pointing at, and measure your life by your own yardstick.**

Let's start by noticing when it happens.

> **A gentle note:** This worksheet is a space for reflection. It isn't therapy, and it doesn't diagnose or treat any condition. It's not a replacement for care from a doctor, counselor or other qualified professional. Take what's helpful, leave what isn't, and reach out to someone when you need it.

1. When Comparison Shows Up

Comparison usually arrives fast and leaves a feeling behind, even after you've forgotten what you were looking at. For a day or two, just notice it. No fixing yet.

A recent moment when I compared myself to someone:

What I was doing right before it happened:

Afterward, I mostly felt…

☐ Behind ☐ Not enough ☐ Annoyed ☐ Flat ☐ Inspired ☐ A mix

What I did next (for example, "kept scrolling for twenty more minutes"):

2. Where I Compare Most: A Quick Check-List

Most of us have a few favorite measuring sticks. Check the ones that tend to catch you.

- ☐ Money and what people can afford
- ☐ Homes and how they look
- ☐ Bodies, looks and clothes
- ☐ Careers and job titles
- ☐ Relationships and dating
- ☐ Parenting and kids
- ☐ Fitness and health routines
- ☐ Travel and vacations
- ☐ Friendships and social plans
- ☐ Creative work or hobbies
- ☐ How productive people seem
- ☐ Age and “where I should be”
- ☐ How calm or organized people seem
- ☐ Holidays and celebrations
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Other: _____

The one that stings the most for me:

Where I usually run into it (an app, a group chat, a place, a person):

Why I think that one gets to me more than the others:

3. The Highlight Reel vs. the Whole Picture

Most of what we compare ourselves to is a highlight reel: the best photo out of thirty, the good news without the months of waiting, the clean corner of the room. Meanwhile, we compare it to our own whole picture, including the laundry pile and the 3 a.m. worries.

That isn't a fair match. This table is a way to fill in a little more of the picture.

What I saw	What I didn't see (but can guess)	What my own reel would show
A friend's beach vacation photos	*The early flight, the cost, maybe a sunburn*	*My niece's birthday party, and a good walk on Sunday*
A coworker's big promotion post	*Years of long hours, maybe some rejections*	*Finally finishing the project I'd been stuck on*

When I picture my own week as a highlight reel, what would make the cut?

4. What the Comparison Says I Want

Comparison can be a clumsy messenger. Under the sting, there's often a want. Sometimes it's the exact thing you saw. Often it's something smaller and more personal.

For example, envy of someone's renovated kitchen might really be about wanting a home that feels calm. Envy of someone's trip might be about wanting more time off, or more adventure in an ordinary week.

Who or what I compared myself to	What it might say I want
A friend who runs marathons	*To feel strong, and to have something that's just mine*
A neighbor whose house always looks tidy	*Fewer piles, and a corner that feels peaceful*

Looking at this list, the want that keeps showing up:

5. Envy as Information, Not a Verdict

Envy is an uncomfortable feeling, and it's easy to feel bad about feeling it. But a feeling isn't a judgment about your worth. It's more like a sign on the road. You can read it without letting it decide where you go.

When envy shows up, try asking it a few plain questions:

What exactly am I envious of?

Do I actually want this, or do I just not want to feel left out?

If I want it, is there a small, realistic version that would fit my life?

If I don't want it, what can I let go of?

A small reminder: someone else having something good doesn't use it up. Their good news isn't a vote against yours.

6. My Own Measures of a Good Ordinary Day

Comparison borrows someone else's yardstick. This section is about building your own. Forget big achievements for a minute and think about ordinary Tuesdays.

Some measures other people use. Borrow any that fit:

- *I laughed at least once*
- *I ate something I actually enjoyed*
- *I got outside, even for five minutes*
- *I finished one thing I'd been putting off*
- *I talked to someone I like*
- *I went to bed without feeling rushed*

A good ordinary day, by my own measures, includes:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

A recent day that met some of these, even if it looked unremarkable from the outside:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Measures I've been using that aren't really mine:

For example: "Having a spotless house by Friday." "Being as busy as everyone else."

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Things I'm Quietly Good At

Comparison is great at pointing out what we lack, and terrible at noticing what we have. Some of the best things about people never show up online: being a good listener, remembering birthdays, making a tired friend laugh, knowing how to fix the wobbly chair.

Check any that sound like you:

- ☐ Making people feel welcome
- ☐ Listening without rushing
- ☐ Keeping things running at home
- ☐ Fixing or figuring things out
- ☐ Remembering the little details
- ☐ Cooking or feeding people
- ☐ Being steady in a crisis
- ☐ Making people laugh
- ☐ Noticing when someone is off
- ☐ Starting over after setbacks
- ☐ Being patient with kids or pets
- ☐ Other: _____

Things I'm quietly good at, in my own words:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Someone who would agree, and what they might say:

8. Turning Comparison Into Curiosity or Connection

Comparison puts a wall between you and the other person. Curiosity and connection take the wall down. The next time you notice yourself measuring, you could try turning it into a question or a kind word instead.

"Why can't I cook like that?"	→	"I'm curious how they learned. Maybe I'll ask for the recipe."
"They're so much fitter than me."	→	"What do they enjoy about it? Is there a piece I'd enjoy?"
"Must be nice to have that much time."	→	"I wonder what their week actually looks like."
"Everyone's doing better than me."	→	"Who could I check in on today, just to say hi?"
"I'll never be that creative."	→	"That's lovely. I want to tell them so."

Now try your own.

A comparison I make often	A curious or connecting version

Someone I compare myself to whom I could actually reach out to, and what I might say:

9. My Scrolling Boundaries

A lot of comparison happens on our phones, often when we're tired, bored or waiting. You don't have to delete everything. A few small boundaries can make a big difference in how the scrolling leaves you feeling.

Ideas to try (check any that appeal to you):

- ☐ No scrolling in the first 30 minutes of the day
- ☐ Phone stays out of the bedroom
- ☐ Mute accounts that always leave me feeling behind
- ☐ Follow a few accounts that make me laugh or learn
- ☐ Set a timer before I start scrolling
- ☐ Move tricky apps off my home screen
- ☐ Ask myself "how do I feel?" after 10 minutes
- ☐ Swap one scroll a day for a walk or a call
- ☐ Other: _____

Accounts, apps or places that usually leave me feeling worse:

Ones that usually leave me feeling better:

The two or three boundaries I'll try first:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

10. A 7-Day Notice-and-Redirect Log

For one week, notice when comparison shows up. Then try one small redirect: a question, a kind word, a measure of your own, or simply putting the phone down. No need to catch every moment. A few is plenty.

	When comparison showed up	How I redirected it (and how that felt)
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		
Day 6		
Day 7		

At the End of the Week

What did I notice about when and where comparison shows up?

Which redirect worked best for me?

What, if anything, felt a little lighter?

One Last Question

If you measured your life only by your own yardstick, not anyone else's, what would you say you're doing well right now?

Other people's lives are theirs to live. Yours gets to be measured by what matters to you.

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