



AngelaMarie
— COACHING —

GETTING UNSTUCK

A Practical Exercise for Breaking Free from Problem-Focused Thinking

When we're stuck, our minds tend to do one thing: circle the problem. We rehearse it, replay it, and analyze it from every angle — convinced that if we think about it hard enough, the answer will appear. But here's the paradox: the more we focus solely on the problem, the more concrete and immovable it becomes. We call this an “Anchor” problem.

Being stuck within a problem isn't a sign of weakness or failure. It's a sign that the way we've been looking at the problem isn't working. The exercises below are designed to help you pause, step back, and look at your problem/situation differently... by reframing your problem, you can leave what no longer serves you behind, feel confident in your choices and move forward.

STEP 1 — STOP & RECOGNIZE

Before you can work through a problem, you have to notice when you're caught in it. The first step is simply to pause.

Check in with yourself. Do you notice any of the following?

- Replaying the same thoughts or worries repeatedly
- Feeling paralyzed, overwhelmed, or hopeless about one issue
- Difficulty thinking about anything else
- A sense that this problem defines your situation entirely

If you checked even one, you're in the right place. Take a breath. You're not the problem — you're just very close to it right now.

STEP 2 — NAME THE PROBLEM

Write down the problem as clearly and simply as you can. Resist the urge to over-explain. One or two sentences is enough.

In plain language, the problem I'm facing is:

Now notice: how does it feel to name it? Often, simply putting words to a problem creates a small but important sense of separation between you and it.

STEP 3 — THE HARD QUESTIONS

These questions aren't easy — and they're not meant to be. Take your time. Answer honestly. There are no wrong responses.

What am I telling myself about this problem? (What's the *story in my head* — about what it means, what caused it, or what it says about me?)

What is actually within my control about this problem? (Not what you *wish* you could control — what can you genuinely influence?)

How might I *reframe* this problem into something I can work with? (Come up with as many options as you can!)

STEP 4 — ONE STEP FORWARD

Based on your answers above, identify one small action you can take. *Not a solution* — just a step. An “experiment” you can try to see if it helps you begin to get unstuck.

One thing I can “experiment with” in the next 24–48 hours:

A REMINDER...

Getting unstuck is not about having all the answers. It's about *shifting your relationship* with the problem — from one of frustration and helplessness to one of agency. You don't need a perfect plan. You only need a new direction.

Ready to Go Deeper?

Reflection is often the first step toward meaningful change. If this exercise helped you notice areas where your life feels stagnant, coaching can help you *intentionally* redirect your focus, rewrite old narratives, and begin a journey to an outcome you desire.

A coaching conversation provides space to explore: Identifying patterns that may be keeping you stuck - Reconnecting with your authentic self - Creating forward movement aligned with what matters most to you.

✦ *If you're ready to explore your next chapter, I invite you to schedule a discovery session.*

Book a Consultation

AngelaMarie Coaching

Helping individuals navigate their crossroads and rewrite the stories that shape their lives.

Website: www.angelamariecoaching.com

Email: Angela.Blomquist@angelamarie-coaching.com