

Releasing the Grip

Leading beyond ego,
fear, and the habits that
keep us stuck.



The Two Traps of Leadership



The hardest work of leadership isn't learning the new playbook. It is unlearning the habits that make us hold our roles too tightly, and the fears that make us retreat under pressure.

Nobody Wears Their Stats on the Field

A left tackle who has to remind the huddle he made the Pro Bowl is a problem regardless of whether it's true. The claim isn't the issue. Needing to make it is.

The only player whose importance is self-declared is the one nobody wants on the team.



The Mirror of Sober Judgment

Humility is not thinking less of yourself. It is thinking of yourself less often.



We are not asking anyone to believe they don't matter. We are asking whether we need everyone else to keep confirming that we do.

"If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself... think of yourself with sober judgment." — Galatians 6:3 / Romans 12:3

The Dashboard of Ego

Which of these warning lights have been flashing in the last six months?

Tenure as Leverage

("Do you know how long I've been here?")



Territory

("A task or budget that has quietly become 'mine'")



Consultation Demand

("Needing to be asked, not just informed")



Withholding

("Because being the one who knows is the position")



The Power of the Open Hand

What would this team gain if I held my role more loosely?



"He did not consider equality with God something to be grasped." (Philippians 2)

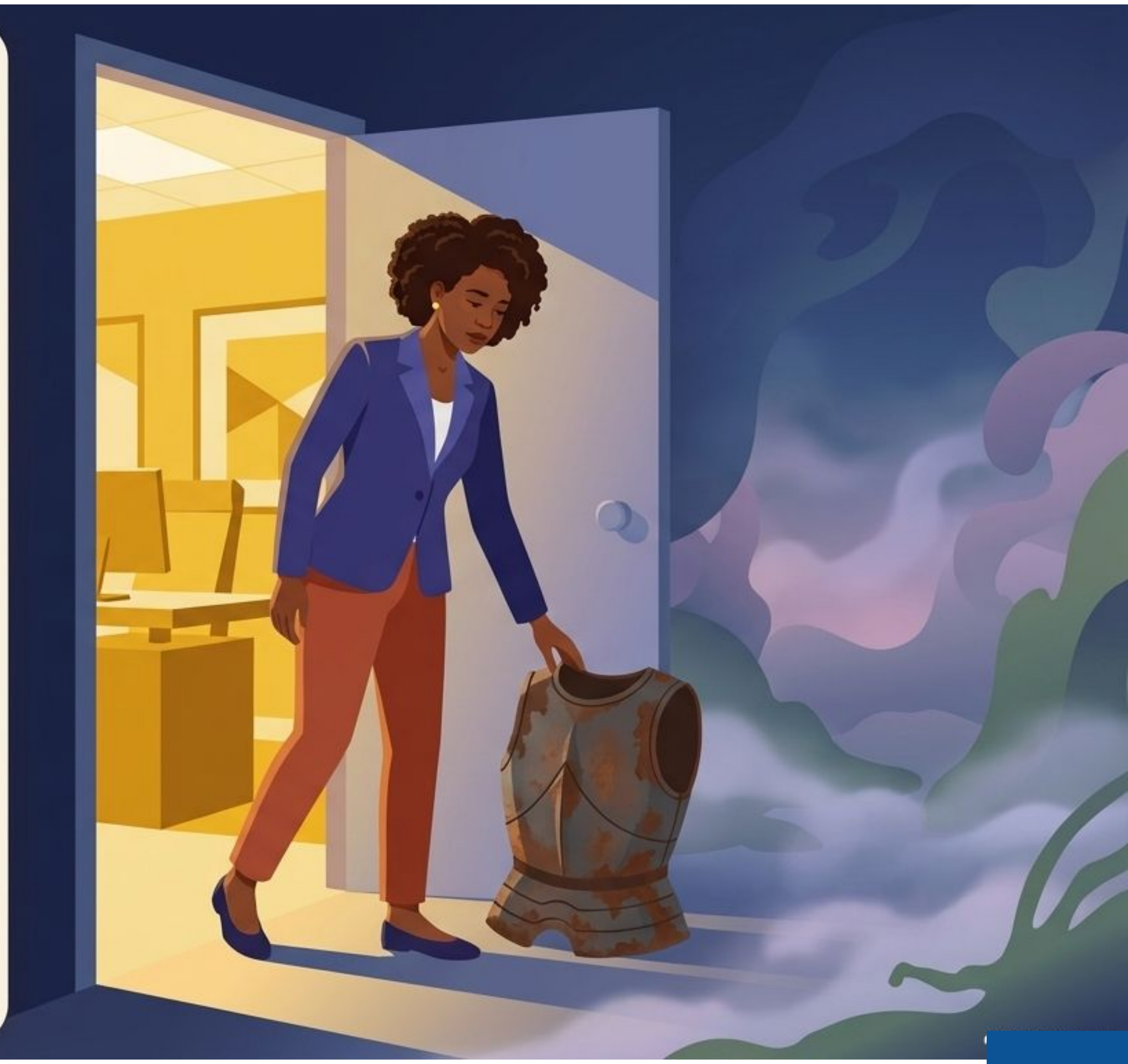


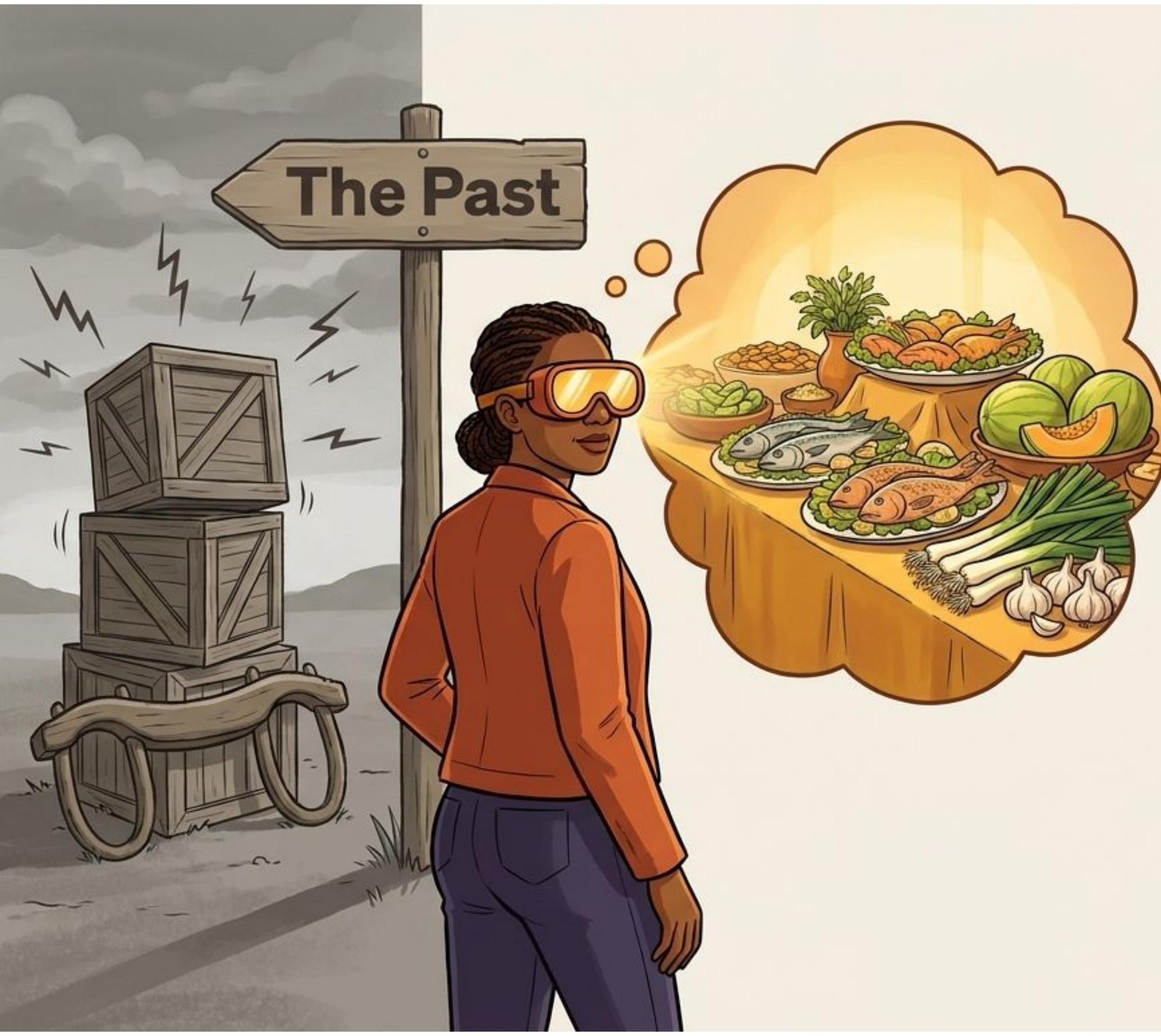
- We develop people faster.
- We stop being the bottleneck.
- The next generation finally gets a shot.

The Pivot: From Pride to Fear

The first trap asks what we are holding too tightly. The second asks something harder: Where do we go when we get scared?

An old mindset is rarely a sin. It is an outdated survival strategy. It worked once—which is exactly why it is still here. But it is coping with a reality that stopped being true a decade ago.





The Nostalgia Edit

"We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost... cucumbers, melons, leeks, garlic." (Numbers 11)

They were not lying.
They were remembering.

And memory edits.

Distance does not give us perspective; it gives us nostalgia, and nostalgia is a liar with a good memory for the wrong details.

Nothing in Egypt was free.

Why We Run Back

We do not run back to Egypt because it was good.
We run back because it was **known**.

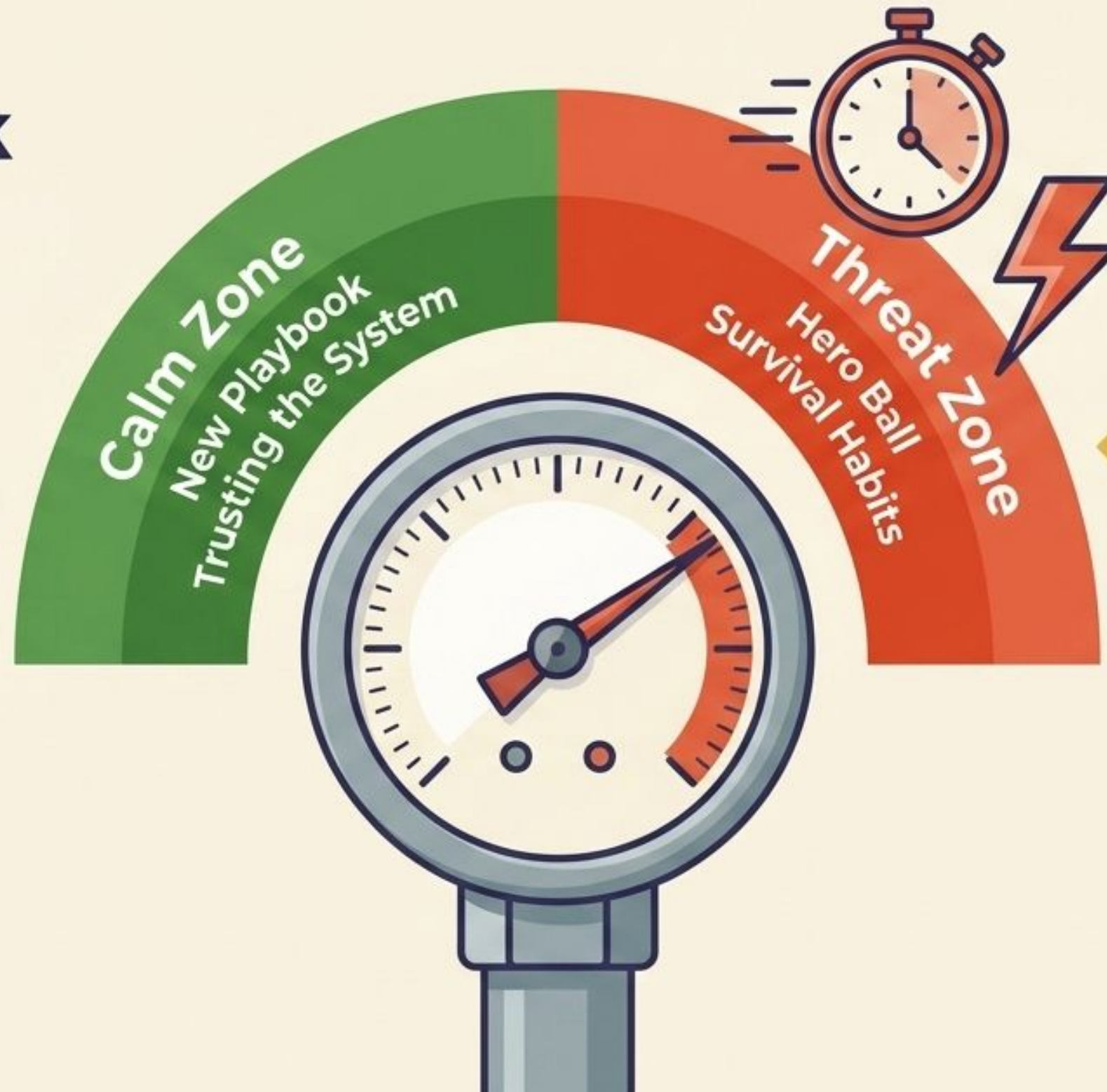


Predictable misery beats unpredictable freedom for most people most of the time.

The Trigger: Running the Old Playbook

Egypt never shows up when things are going well. It shows up under pressure, delay, hunger, and threat.

Which means most of us do not know our “Egypt” until the week we are already in it.



Under stress, a player does not rise to the occasion.

They fall to the level of what their body actually practiced.

They run the play they already know.

The Dashboard of Fear

What does this house do when it gets scared?

"We've always done it this way"
(The phrase that ends good ideas)



Hero Ball

(Doing it myself because delegation failed once)



The Old Conflict Pattern

(Silence, silence, silence... explosion)



Going Quiet

(Hiding when underwater instead of asking for help)



A Posture of Grace

For some, the “old playbook” was learned in a house where it was the only thing that kept them safe.

For someone with deep trauma, running back under pressure is not **disloyalty or weak faith**. It is the only regulation strategy your nervous system was ever given.



We are not asking anyone to be ashamed of the thing that got them through. We are asking whether it is still what you need today.

The Anatomy of Our Grip

	The Trap of Ego	The Pull of Fear
The Root	Pride & Self-Importance 	Insecurity & Trauma 
The Symptom	Holding tight to what I do 	Running back to what I know 
The Cost	Bottlenecking the team's growth 	Sabotaging the team's future 
The Cure	Thinking of yourself less often 	Trusting the new system in the unknown 

The Box of Release

"When things get hard around here, the old way I go back to is -----."



The door back to the past is always open (Hebrews 11:15). If we keep thinking about the country we left, we will find an opportunity to return.

That is exactly why leaving it behind has to be a decision, and not a feeling. Name the pattern, not a person.

Straining Toward What is Ahead

"Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead."

(Philippians 3:13)

Body Text

Forgetting is not amnesia. It is refusing to be governed by the past any longer. Nobody goes back today.

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing."
(Isaiah 43)

