Why Does Going Home Feel So Complicated?

A few questions to sit with, before or after the episode, whether your festival is Diwali, Eid, or any other that calls you home. There are no right answers and nothing to fix. Take what is useful, skip what is not, and write as little or as much as you like. You may find that more than one answer feels true at the same time. That is allowed.

1. THE DOOR

Picture the front door of the home you grew up in, or the place you think of as home. What does your body do as you imagine opening it?

2. THE OLD ROLE

When you are there, which version of you tends to show up (the quiet one, the helper, the rebel, the peacemaker, the funny one)? Who handed you that role?

3. THE QUESTIONS

Which question from relatives lands hardest for you? When you imagine the person asking, what might they be feeling underneath it? Does that change how it sounds?

4. BOTH AT ONCE

Think of one person at home you love and are also frustrated with. What would it be like to let both feelings be true, without choosing one?

5. THE JOY

What is one small thing about the festival (a smell, a sound, a ritual, a person) that makes you feel most at home? What do you notice when you stay with it for a moment?

6. THE PICTURE

Before you go home, what picture do you build of the perfect festival? How close does the real day usually get, and what happens inside you in the gap?

7. THE WORK

Who does the invisible work of keeping the family together and the festival going? Is that work noticed? Is it chosen, expected, or both?

8. THE DISTANCE, AND THE TWO HOUSES

If you live far away: what has changed at home while you were gone, and what has changed in you? And wherever you spend the festival, who is left with an empty chair because of that choice?

9. YOUR OWN DHARMA

Which of your roles at the table (child, sibling, partner, parent, friend, yourself) are you wearing out of love? Out of fear? Which one feels most truly yours?

10. THE EMPTY CHAIR

Is there someone missing from the table this year, through loss, distance, or a quiet rift? What would you like to say to them, even silently?

Which of these felt like yours?

Circle the one or two questions that stayed with you. If home is not a safe place for you, staying away can be a form of care, and nothing here asks you to go back. If you would like to explore any of this with support, sessions are online and open to clients worldwide at chetnamindfulness.com.