

Coffee Talk: Two Sugars One Life

RECALCULATING

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October 2025

Your GPS doesn't negotiate.

Mine tried to tell me for months. That calm, robotic voice in my nervous system saying "RECALCULATING" while I white-knuckled the steering wheel, convinced I could force my way back to the original route.

I couldn't.

Early separation. I was still trying to save it. Convince her to go to counseling. Work on us. Fix whatever was broken. Because that's what you do, right? You don't just give up on a marriage. On a family. On the entire life plan you'd built.

So I pushed for therapy. Eventually she agreed. Under protest. Checked out. But she was there, and I was there, and surely the professional could help us find our way back to the route we were supposed to be on.

My GPS kept screaming. "RECALCULATING. RECALCULATING. ROUTE UNAVAILABLE."

I ignored it. Because I knew better than my own nervous system, apparently.

If you've ever fought reality because accepting it felt like failure, you know this specific kind of exhaustion.

I kept trying anyway. Talked to her logically. Asked what I could do differently. How to make things better. Her responses were negative. Dismissive. No matter what I offered, no matter how I adjusted, she wasn't interested.

My body knew. My GPS knew. I refused to know.

Then the therapist said it: "I can't help you. This isn't something counseling can fix."

I left confused. Angry. What was so broken it couldn't even be addressed in therapy? Shortly after, I found out why. She'd moved on. Found someone else. Probably months ago while I was busy ignoring my GPS and trying to save something that was already dead.

I broke.

Kitchen floor. Full body collapse. Passed out from anxiety and the weight of it all. Every alarm my body had been sounding for months went off at once. Not gradually. Not gently. Just full-system shutdown on cold hardwood.

The route you planned is gone. RECALCULATE or die here.

Sometimes the GPS isn't suggesting a new route. It's telling you the old one no longer exists.

RECALCULATING isn't a suggestion. It's not your GPS being pessimistic. It's information. The route you wanted, the destination you planned, the life you built your identity around. Sometimes it's just closed. Forever.

And you will fight it. God, you will fight it. Because that route was THE PLAN. Abandoning it feels like failure, like giving up, like admitting you were wrong about everything.

But your GPS doesn't care about your feelings. It cares about getting you somewhere that isn't actively killing you.

Once I could breathe again (and breathing took a while) I had to accept it. There was no "save the marriage" route. That option didn't exist anymore.

So what's the next-least-worst route?

Survive the divorce with the kids as intact as possible.

That became the new navigation target. Not the one I wanted. The one that existed. *RECALCULATING isn't failure. It's your system acknowledging reality faster than your ego can.*

Here's the thing about GPS: when it says RECALCULATING, it's not judging you. It's not disappointed in you. It's not saying you should have taken a different turn three miles back. It's just updating based on current conditions.

Your emotional GPS works the same way. When it forces a recalculation, it's not a verdict on your worth or your choices. It's just information. This route is closed. Here are the alternatives. Pick one or stay stuck.

The alternatives usually suck. They're not the routes you wanted. They might be longer, harder, uglier than the original plan.

But they exist. And the original route doesn't.

Here's to the recalculations we didn't want. To the kitchen floors that caught us when we fell. And to the next-least-worst routes that eventually became the only routes that mattered.

Cheers, Clayton

Coffee Talk 2.0: For everyone whose GPS ever said "RECALCULATING" while they screamed "NO."

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