

Stepping Stones to Healing and Thriving

Step 2

THE BODY

Reconnecting With Your Body

Establishing a Healthy Relationship With Your Body



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WELCOME

Welcome to this workbook on reconnecting with your body and healing from childhood trauma. This resource is designed to help you establish a healthy relationship with your body through compassionate curiosity and guided imagery with some basic Internal Family Systems (IFS) principles. You will learn practical techniques and exercises to support your healing journey and will create an action plan.

I kindly invite you to remember the importance of approaching this journey with self-compassion and patience.

Follow the workbook at your own pace, taking breaks as needed.

Please note that this program is designed to supplement working with a trauma-educated mental health professional.

What's Ahead

MODULE 1 UNDERSTAND

Understanding the Impact of Childhood Trauma

1. The Lasting Impact
2. Reflection
3. Activity

MODULE 2 REBUILD

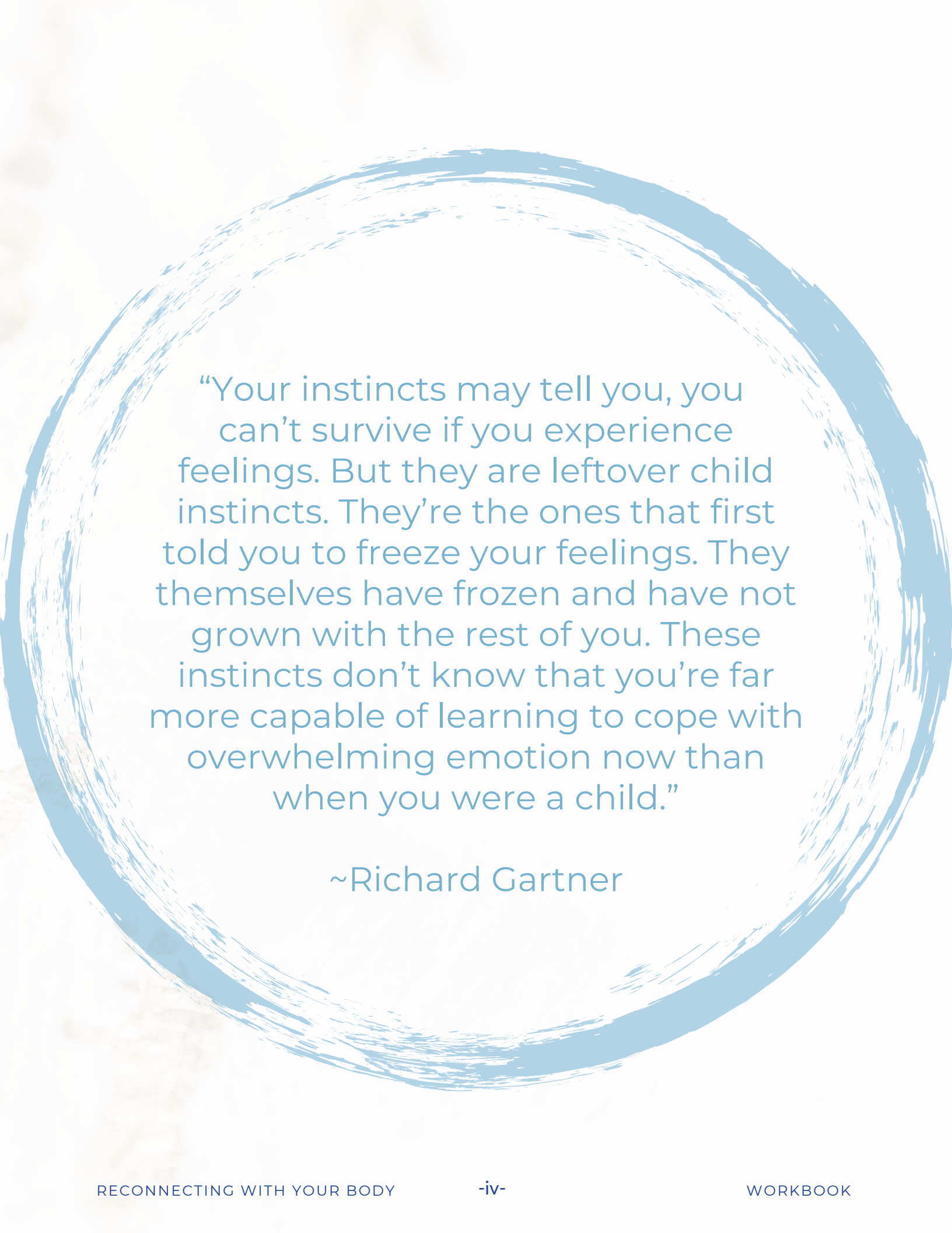
Establishing a Healthy Relationship With Your Body

1. How to Build and get Reacquainted
2. Reflection
3. Activities

MODULE 3 INTEGRATE

Reconnecting with Self-Compassion and Guided Imagery and IFS Principles

1. Finding your nurturing and compassionate voice
2. Reflection, Activities
3. Action Plan



“Your instincts may tell you, you can’t survive if you experience feelings. But they are leftover child instincts. They’re the ones that first told you to freeze your feelings. They themselves have frozen and have not grown with the rest of you. These instincts don’t know that you’re far more capable of learning to cope with overwhelming emotion now than when you were a child.”

~Richard Gartner

Module 1

Understand

How your childhood
experiences impacted your
relationship with your body.

Lasting Impact of Childhood Trauma

The Lasting Impact of Childhood Trauma

- *Definition:* Childhood trauma comes from adverse experiences such as abuse, neglect, witnessing violence, medical interventions, poverty, genocide, etc. It can come from within or outside the family of origin. Traumatizing events are often labeled as things that happen too fast, too soon and are too much, causing overwhelm. But it's not just the events.
- *Effects:* When there is no significant safe adult to help the child process the emotions that come from the above, the resulting trauma or emotional wounding can lead to dissociation, anxiety, chronic pain, and difficulty connecting with the body.
- *Importance:* Recognizing these impacts is the first step toward healing.

Yes, healing begins with awareness.



What Have You Noticed?

When you look in the mirror, do you see your entire body or just focus on your face/head? Do you notice subtle sensations below your neck? Or only notice when the pain is intense? (this is to help you determine how much you notice re your body)

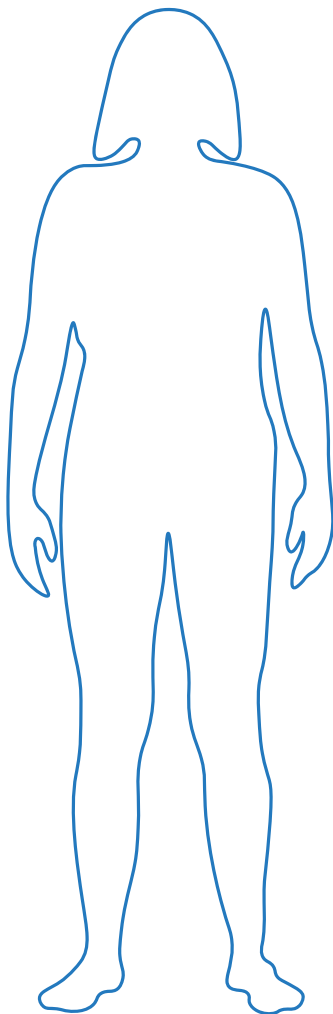
After reflecting on the above, ***how do you feel about your body and its response to your childhood trauma?***

How has this impacted the relationship you have with your body?

Use this space to journal

Activity

Mind-Body Connection



Use this diagram to mark areas where you feel tension, pain, or numbness. Write a few words about what you think might be causing these sensations. Feel free to record your thoughts too.

Use the following page if applicable.

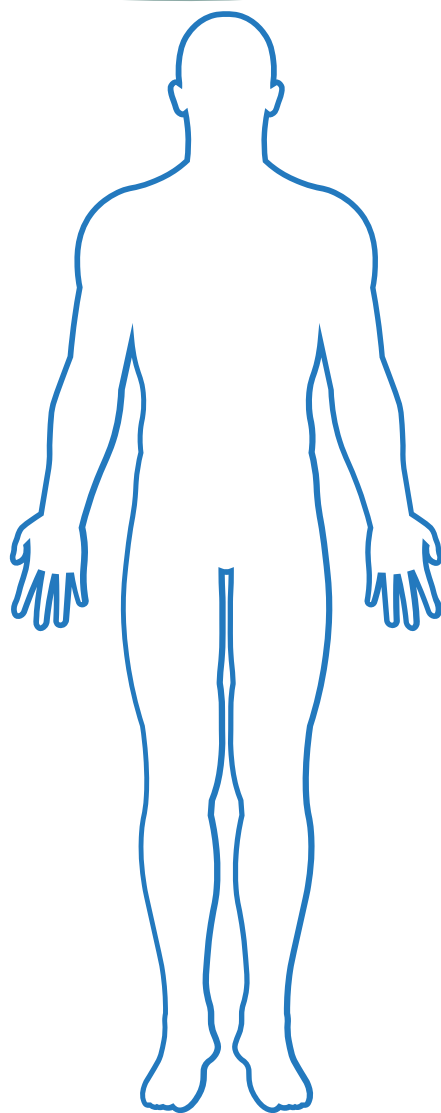
Date _____

Note Space

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Activity

Mind-Body Connection



Use this diagram to mark areas where you feel tension, pain, or numbness. Write a few words about what you think might be causing these sensations. Feel free to record your thoughts, too.

Use the following page if applicable.

Date _____

Note Space



Fyi

Alexithymia - The word comes from Greek: 'α' meaning lack, 'lexis' meaning word, and 'thymos' meaning emotion — overall, it means having a lack of words for emotions. There is difficulty identifying and describing emotions, and a tendency to not focus on them.

While I did not mention this in the slide presentation, I believe that being aware of this word, what it is, and how it **may** have or be impacting your current life would be helpful for your self-education and self-understanding.

Alexithymia is not a condition nor does it have a diagnosis per se yet it is often linked with childhood trauma, Complex PTSD, and sometimes autism.

For those who suffered childhood trauma, perhaps the home environment was one where emotions were not acknowledged, talked about, or, if they were, were not addressed in a healthful and supportive way. Suppose there was overt and or covert abuse, which emotional neglect/abandonment is. In that case, to protect oneself from the intense emotional pain that results, the disconnect between the body and its sensations and emotions comes to be. It makes sense, right?

I cannot prescribe or diagnose, yet I felt the need to share a name for a condition you may struggle with. Self-diagnosis is common among childhood trauma survivors. Again, this is an opportunity to practice curiosity and understanding with yourself. There is nothing “wrong” with you if you have this condition precisely as described, or, like me, perhaps you may see shades of it in your life that show up in self-work and interpersonal settings.

There is a book I recommend reading that may help enlighten your childhood experiences on the Resource page - *Running On Empty*.

Module 2

Rebuild

Getting reacquainted with
your body and building on
your relationship with it and
its feelings and sensations
with compassion

Gentle reminder to join in the group discussion for extra support

*I'll share something
with you.*



There are times when I feel frustrated with my body and the pain that seems to surface randomly or with the chronic health challenges that exist. This is normal.

However, I am also aware of the danger of lingering in this frustrated state. Remaining in these feelings tells my body that I am judging it, which is the opposite of compassionate curiosity. It reinforces the teaching that my feelings and experiences don't matter and that I am insignificant. This doesn't promote healing or healthy self-love.

When I touch the area that hurts or causes frustration (I have restless leg syndrome, among other challenges), it makes the restlessness go away, or the pain lessens significantly enough that I can sleep.

I see my pain or anxiety as a little child who is tugging my pant leg, wanting attention. When a child needs your attention, this child will call you repeatedly until they are acknowledged and heard. The same goes for our pain and discomfort - primarily when it originates from childhood trauma (mentioned in Step 4). For example, at the time of this workbook creation, there was a sharp and chronic pain that suddenly emerged recently in my right arm. With this pain, a memory emerged of being hit repeatedly in this same place until the arm ached and went limp. This physical abuse caused physical and emotional trauma. I am sitting with the memory and listening to what my body shares about the emotions connected.

Once you practice noticing, you'll come to see how trauma is stored in the body. Noticing its "voice" and offering emotional support of compassion, validation, and understanding will go a long way toward your trauma recovery, detoxing it from your body.

Ways to Honour Your Body's Experiences

Acknowledge and Validate Your Feelings:

Recognition: Take time to consciously recognize and validate the emotions and physical sensations that arise from your trauma. Understand that these responses were your body's way of protecting you.

Journaling: Write about your experiences, how your body reacted, and how it has tried to protect you. This helps in processing and validating your experiences.



Engage in Therapeutic Practices:

Mindfulness and Meditation: Practices like mindfulness meditation can help you connect with your body in a compassionate way, acknowledging its experiences without judgment. Please listen to, *Reconnecting with Your Body: A Gentle Mindfulness Practice* located in the Resource tab.

Body-Focused Therapies: Consider therapies that focus on the body, such as somatic experiencing, trauma-informed stretches, or massage therapy. These can help release stored trauma and reinforce the safety of your body.

Internal Family Systems (IFS): Engage with IFS therapy to explore and understand the different parts of yourself, including those that hold trauma. This helps integrate these parts and appreciate their role in your safety.

Create a Safe and Nurturing Environment:

Safe Spaces: Cultivate or frequent environments where you feel safe and relaxed - any place that comforts you.

Rituals of Care: Develop daily rituals that focus on nurturing your body, such as gentle stretching, taking warm baths, or using calming scents. These reinforce the message that your body deserves care and safety.

Boundaries: Set and maintain healthy boundaries with people and situations that might trigger your trauma. This helps in creating a sense of safety and respect for your body's needs.



Honouring Your Body's Experiences

Acknowledge the resilience and survival mechanisms your body has developed.

In the slides, we focused on one way the body develops protection to cope with the overwhelm of childhood trauma.

This is dissociation or disconnection between the brain and body. Sometimes, this dissociation manifests as depersonalization or derealization—feeling that you're seeing yourself from outside your body or sensing that things around you are not real—or both.

How to get reacquainted and form a healthy relationship with your body and its emotions takes time and practice. It needs to be gentle and slow so that the nervous system does not get overwhelmed.

Reflection:

- How has your body been trying to protect you from the pain and overwhelm it was enduring? (Through distraction? Through avoidance? Through disconnection to yourself?)
- How can you offer your body and mind appreciation for its survival and resilience strategies:

Use this space to journal

Date_____

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Date_____

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Date: _____

self reflections

Ways to honour my body's
experiences today

Ways to show self-
compassion today

Ideas for a compassionate letter to my body that
expresses kindness, appreciation, and validation



Date: _____

self reflections

Ways to honour my body's
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Getting
Reacquainted
With Your
Body

Beginning the Reconnection (1)

Awareness:

Depending on how attuned you feel in and with your body, you may need to begin with noticing what is happening outside your body first. For example: when out for a walk, notice the sounds around you - birds, rustle of leaves, traffic, water trickling somewhere, etc.

Notice the sound of your feet hitting the ground as you walk. What does it sound like? Do you notice any pebbles or crunchy sounds perhaps walking through autumn leaves, etc.

When you wake up in the morning, before you get out of bed, take a moment to notice the sensation of the blankets on top of you. Notice where your body is connecting to the mattress or ground - what does that feel like? What do you hear or see or smell as you lay there?



Self Awareness

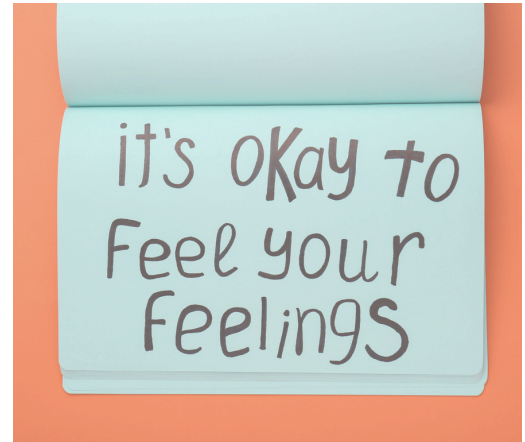
When you make your favourite drink (coffee, tea, etc) I invite you to take the time to notice the aroma of what you've made. Cradle the cup and notice how warm it is, is the cup smooth or round? What shape is it? What colour is it, inside and outside. Now take a sip and notice the flavour as it saturates your mouth and slides over your tongue. Do you notice it going down your throat? Is it hot, warm, comforting? Do you notice it as it moves down your esophagus?

Beginning the Reconnection (2)

Awareness:

Notice sensations - when and how you feel in your body

- Where do you feel it in your body? Does it feel comfortable? Uncomfortable? What and why do you think that is?
- Notice how you feel towards it. Do you like it? Do you want to get rid of it? Are you afraid of it? Do you depend on it? etc.
- We are just noticing how you feel towards this sensation.



Acceptance:

- Acceptance fosters self-compassion. Your body's responses are attempts to protect you and can help you approach yourself with kindness and understanding rather than blame or frustration.
- Acceptance strengthens the connection between mind and body. It allows you to tune into your body's signals and understand its needs, leading to better self-care and overall well-being.
- Accepting your body's responses validates your experiences and emotions. It acknowledges that your reactions are legitimate and meaningful, which is crucial for emotional processing and integration.

Affirmation:

- Affirm your body's worth and strength.
- Practice positive self-talk

For example,

- "I appreciate my body for all it does for me every day."
- "My body deserves love and care."
- "I'm so glad it worked hard to keep me safe."



Grounding for Reconnection

In part, From The Power Of Attachment by Diane Poole Heller, PhD

Proprioception is the ability to sense stimuli arising within the body regarding position, motion, and equilibrium. As childhood trauma survivors, we want to strengthen this skill. This grounding practice activates the hippocampus and lets you know that you're right here, right now, providing a sense of physical embodiment.

Find a relaxing place to sit, take a few minutes of silence and start by feeling into the physical sensations of your feet. Rotate your ankles a little. Wiggle your toes and move the various bones of your feet. What's that like? How many sensations can you identify and get in touch with as you're doing that?

When you feel like you've gained some sense of connection here, try bringing your awareness higher up in your body. Rotate your ankles and move your knee around. Rotate your knees in and out and notice how those motions affect your hips. Feel as many sensations as you can in your knees, upper legs, and hips. Now, turn your torso a little to the left and then to the right. Notice all the sensations in your spine. After doing this for a while, try straightening your spine as if a string pulls you up into the sky, anchoring you in the clouds; feel your vertebrae move and note how they support your head. Twist your torso from side to side. Try to get in touch with the different parts of your spine and feel how the vertebrae work together to keep you upright. Now, turn your attention to all the little movements in your neck and upper spine. Let your head turn slowly from side to side, opening your eyes to see where you are in time and space. Look all around you to notice your surroundings and scan your body for sensations at the same time.

Keep going. Let your shoulders relax and feel into them as they drop a little. See if you can bring your shoulder blades down your back and allow your shoulders to rest. Go through these steps as often as needed until your shoulders feel completely relaxed.

Now try bringing gentle attention to your elbows and wrists as they move about. Reach out, push up, turn them this way and that. As you finish exploring the movements of your elbows, wrists, and hands, let your arms come to a natural resting position. Take a deep breath in, and as you exhale, allow your whole body to soften. Gently bring your awareness back to the present moment, noticing your surroundings and the support beneath you. When you're ready, open your eyes if they were closed, and carry this sense of connection and calm with you as you move into the rest of your day.

The goal is to feel as if this is your body, your physical home. You can reside here.

Activities that Support Reconnection

Paying Attention to Hunger and Fullness Cues: Listening to your body's signals of hunger and satiety helps to nourish it appropriately and avoid overeating or undereating.

Eat Without Distraction: Avoiding distractions like television or smartphones during meals helps you to focus on your food and the act of eating, promoting a deeper connection with your body's needs and response.

Engaging All Senses: Noticing the colors, smells, textures, and tastes of your food can make eating a more enjoyable and satisfying experience, leading to a greater appreciation of how your body processes and benefits from food.



Arts: Engaging in creative activities like sculpting, painting, pottery, or gardening offers a hands-on way to reconnect with your body. Through the movement of your hands, you can gently rebuild awareness and presence. As you shape clay, guide a brush, or tend to the earth, you're not just creating—you're also tuning into your body's emotions, sensations, movements, and rhythms. Practicing with focus, mindfulness, and intention strengthens this connection, allowing you to experience your body in a new and meaningful way.

Activities that Support Reconnection



Breathwork: Focused breathing exercises, such as deep diaphragmatic breathing, pranayama, or even simple mindful breathing, can help you become more attuned to the sensations in your body.

Sensory Immersion: Engaging in activities that stimulate the senses, such as spending time in nature, listening to soothing music, or taking a warm bath, can help you reconnect with bodily sensations.

Body Scan Meditation: This mindfulness practice involves mentally scanning your body from head to toe, paying attention to any sensations, tension, or discomfort, which can enhance body awareness.

Massage and Bodywork: Receiving or giving a massage can help you become more aware of physical sensations and areas of tension in your body.





Reacquainting Yourself with Your Body

- Mindfulness and Body Awareness Techniques:
 - Practice being present in the moment.
 - Scan your body to notice areas of tension or relaxation.
- Gentle Movement and Exercise:
 - Engage in activities like stretching, qi gong, or walking.
 - Focus on movements that feel good to your body.
- Listening to Your Body's Signals:
 - Pay attention to hunger, fatigue, and emotional cues.
 - Respect and respond to your body's needs.

Reflection:

- How can you incorporate mindfulness into your daily routine?
- What gentle movements or exercises do you enjoy? How did the grounding exercise help you feel connected to your body?

Use this space to journal

Date_____

Note Space

self awareness

30-day
challenge

SPEND FIVE MINUTES EACH DAY DOING A
BODY SCAN MEDITATION.
CHECKLIST ON THE NEXT PAGE



SPEND FIVE MINUTES EACH DAY DOING A BODY SCAN MEDITATION.
WRITE DOWN OR RECORD ANY SENSATIONS OR FEELINGS
YOU NOTICE.

Once you've completed the task, tick the relevant day's checkbox.

Day 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 11	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 21	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 12	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 22	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 13	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 23	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 14	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 24	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 15	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 25	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 6	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 16	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 26	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 7	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 17	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 27	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 8	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 18	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 28	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 9	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 19	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 29	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 10	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 20	<input type="checkbox"/>	Day 30	<input type="checkbox"/>

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♥

Making Friends with Your Emotions





Perhaps you're like me - you did not learn about feelings and emotions in your formative years. Maybe you didn't know about emotional literacy or emotional intelligence. Perhaps you didn't learn how to notice or communicate your emotions healthfully, or if you did, doing so was ignored or used in a negative way.

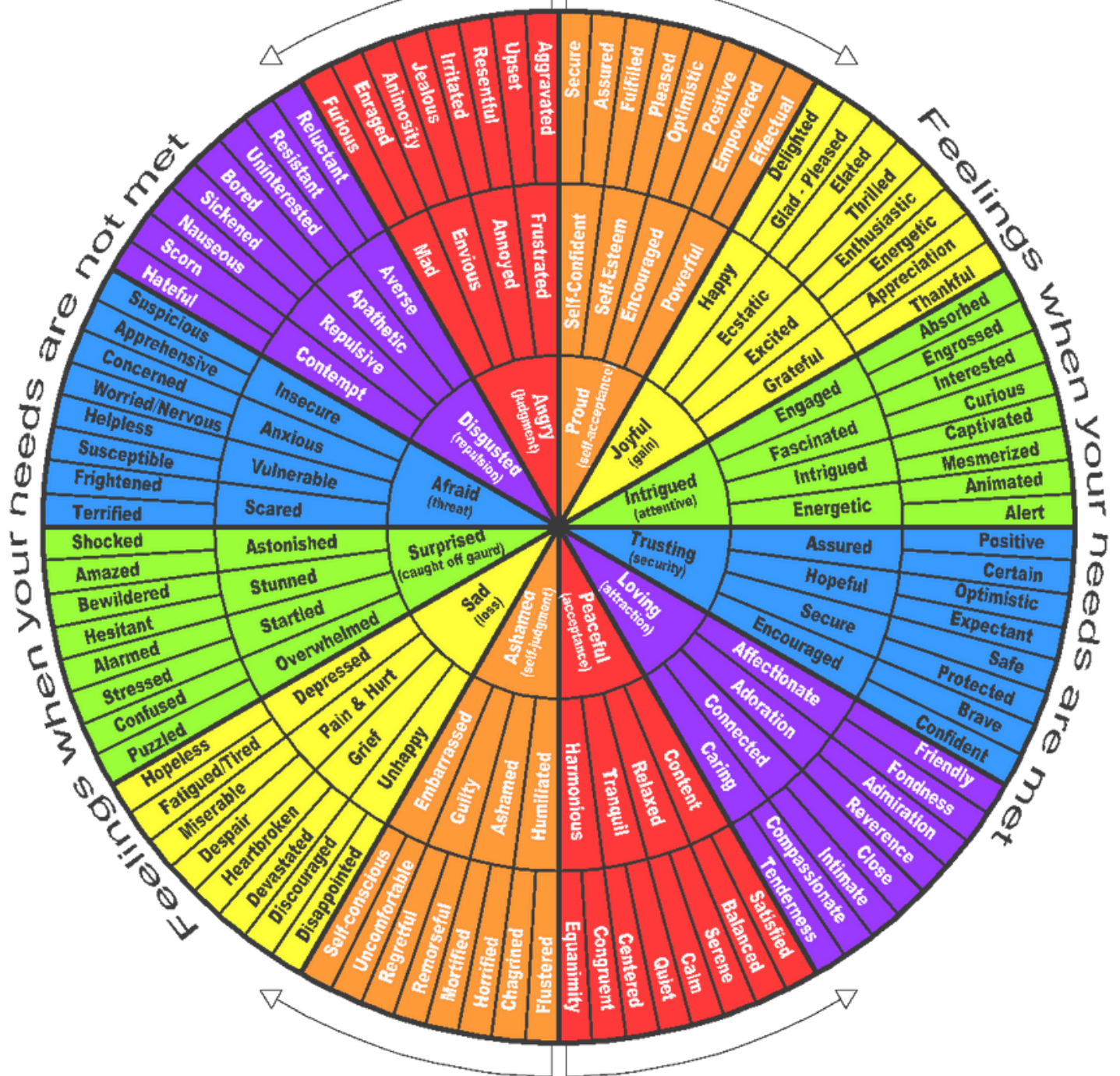
Maybe the only feelings you learned about were sadness, anger, frustration, loss, hunger, love, disgust, thirst, and happiness. - just the basic ones. As an adult, you may realize what's lacking and want to learn the nuances of emotions or how to communicate them to elicit a healthful response and connection. This will be covered in Step 7. In this step, we work on the body and build healthy relationships with its sensations and emotions.

I want to let you know that emotional illiteracy is not your fault; there is no need to feel wrong or ashamed. The good news is that you can learn how to connect with your emotions in a curious, accepting, and grateful way, helping you feel more connected to yourself and others.

In Steps 3 & 4, emotions are discussed in greater detail. You'll come to understand how emotions are the body's communication, telling us when something is pleasant or not, or that we must react because of danger. Emotions are often a call to action. Therefore, getting reacquainted with emotions and appreciating their value and need for a well-balanced and authentic life is necessary for the healing journey.

Emotional Literacy

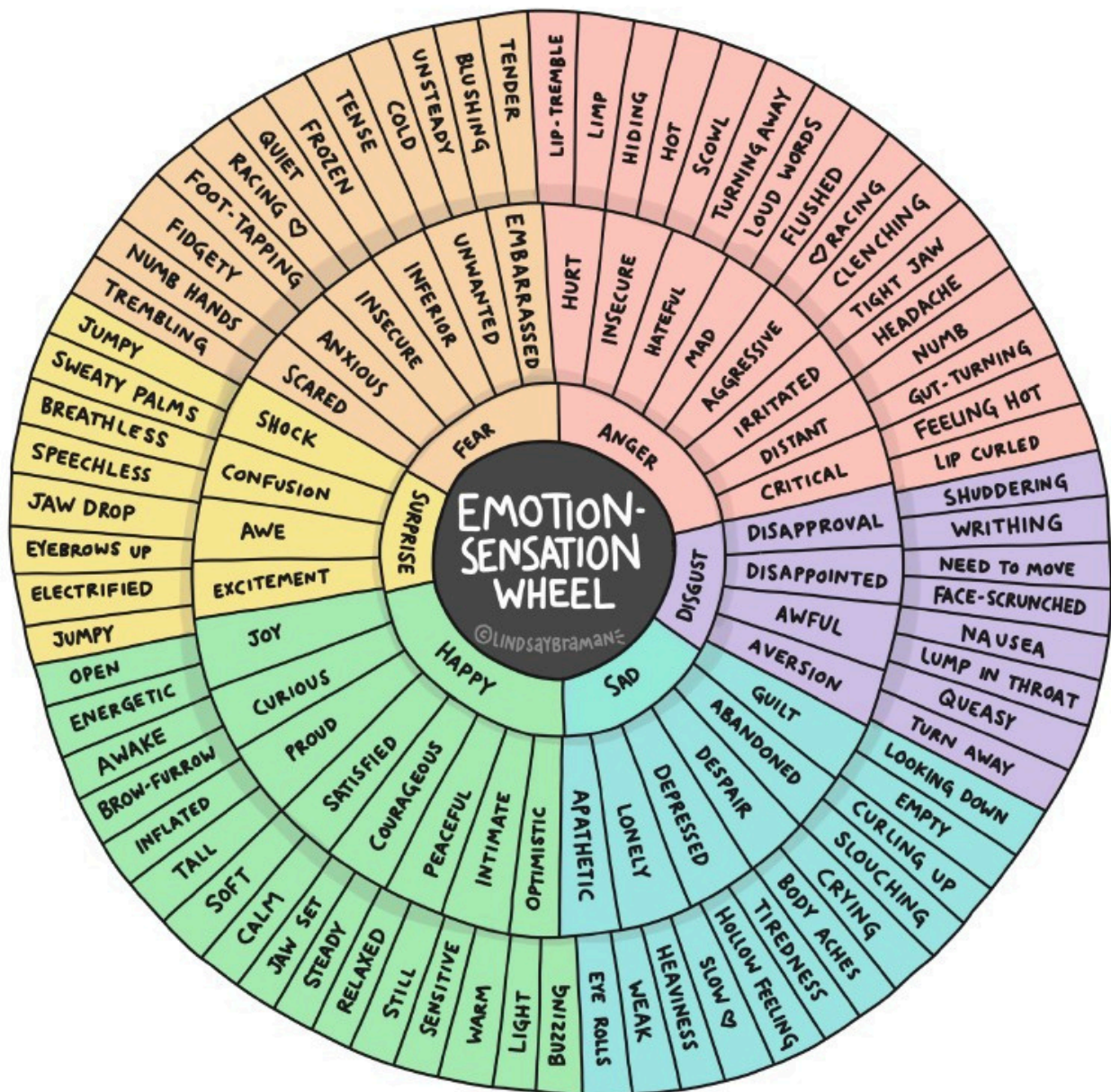
Feelings Wheel



Based on Nonviolent Communication by Marshall Rosenberg, Ph.D. May be duplicated for personal use and for teaching Nonviolent Communication. Graphics and organization of feelings, needs, and communications wheels by Bret Stein. Submit suggested changes and recommendations to artisan1@hotmail.com Revised 1/1/09

Emotional Awareness

Sometimes, we need to go back to the beginning to learn what physiological sensations may mean. Please use this chart to help you connect the emotion to the physical sensations



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Emotional Awareness and Emotional Intelligence

You can learn the corresponding words to describe your emotions by using the wheels above.

In this Step, the wheel helps you familiarize yourself with the different kinds of feelings (or emotions), learn where they are felt in your body, and practice "listening" to them. This is the basis for emotional intelligence.

The principles and protocols of IFS involve noticing "parts" or feelings/sensations and focusing on them, noticing how you feel towards them, befriending them, and listening to see if there is any fear or concerns behind the feelings.

Inner Child work is similar, for it involves being aware that there are younger versions of yourself inside you that need to be acknowledged, validated, accepted, and loved.

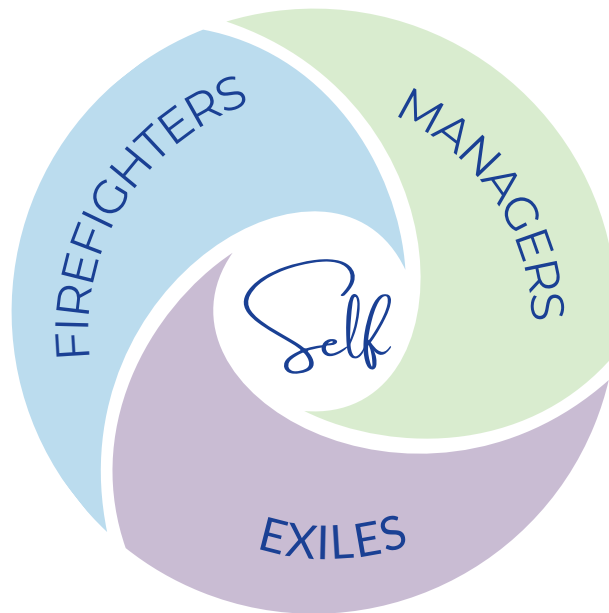
Doing this requires practice. Getting to know your body and its feelings and befriending them will go a long way toward making you feel connected to yourself and grateful for your body and all that it's done to keep you safe and protected.



Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and understand our own emotions and those of others. When we use this awareness in a positive way, it helps us communicate effectively, build meaningful relationships, and express empathy and compassion. This deepens our connections with others and makes life richer, more fulfilling, and more meaningful.

If at any time you're feeling overwhelmed and need extra support, please remember you're not alone. You're always welcome to book a 1:1 session with me—I'm here for you."

Review of the IFS Model



Inner Child Work

Inner child work is a gentle and compassionate practice aimed at healing the wounded parts of ourselves that stem from childhood and interpersonal trauma. It involves reconnecting with our younger and previous selves, acknowledging their wounds and emotions, and offering the love, understanding, and validation they may have missed. By nurturing and “listening” to these wounded previous versions, we create a safe space for them to express their emotions and needs.

This process helps to integrate past experiences, fostering self-acceptance, emotional healing, and a deeper sense of wholeness. Through inner child work, we honor our past and empower ourselves to move forward with greater resilience and compassion.

Curiosity and Compassion

using the 6 F's

This is how you learn to connect with the sensations your body produces that manage and protect vulnerable memories and feelings.

I gently invite you to take some time to breathe and sit in silence. See if you can notice any sensations, feelings, or discomfort. I'd like you to please **find** one.

Please notice where it is in your body and **focus** on it.

Keep focusing and notice if it has a shape or colour or it makes a sound. Here, you are **fleshing** out the sensation or part.

Notice how you're **feeling** towards it. Are you patient with it or want it to go away? Are you able to allow this sensation to be what it is or do you want to control it? How are you feeling towards this sensation or part? Are you open to it?

If you have no agenda and are curious, please keep moving on to the next steps.

Now, could you focus on be**friend**ing this sensation/part? Find out what its job is and what it wants you to know. Is it happy with its job or would it like to do something else? How old is this sensation/part? Feel free to sit there and hold space for whatever thoughts or memories surface. Offer compassion and validation to any feelings or emotions that may surface.

If it's ready, ask the sensation/part what its **fear** is—what it is afraid of if it doesn't do its job.

Reflective Exercise



What are some parts of yourself or sensations that you have noticed?

How can you nurture your inner compassionate voice?

Use this space and the next page to journal

Date: _____

Note Space

Identify one young part of yourself that feels wounded, fearful, or anxious. Write or record a dialogue between this part and your compassionate voice.

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Date: _____

Note Space

Reflect on how the younger part responded with the compassion offered.
Did its feeling change? Did this younger version of yourself trust the
compassion? etc.

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Module 3

Integrate

Reconnecting with Self-Compassion
and Guided Imagery and IFS
Principles



Practical Exercises for Healing

I suggest reading this guided imagery through to the end first. Feel free to record yourself reading it and then listen while you follow the steps.

Find a comfortable and quiet place where you won't be disturbed. Sit or lie down in a relaxed position. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths, allowing your body to relax with each exhale.

Guided Imagery:

- Begin by focusing on your breath. Take slow, deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- With each exhale, feel your body becoming more relaxed and at ease.
- Imagine roots growing from the base of your spine or the soles of your feet, anchoring you securely to the ground.
- Notice and feel the stability and support from the earth beneath you.
- Visualize a place where you feel completely safe and at peace. This can be a real place or an imaginary place.
- Picture every detail of this place. Notice the colors, shapes, and textures around you. What does the sky look like? What sounds can you hear? Are there any smells in the air?
- Imagine yourself in this safe space. Notice how your body feels here. Feel the warmth of the sun or the coolness of the breeze against your skin.
- Allow yourself to experience the comfort and safety of this place fully. You are completely protected here.

Guided Imagery, Cont'd

- If it feels right, invite any supportive figures into your safe space. These could be loved ones, animals, or imaginary figures who make you feel safe and loved.
- Feel their presence and support around you, knowing that they are here to help you feel secure.
- Spend some time exploring your safe space. Sit by a calm river, lie in a meadow, or walk through a beautiful forest. Engage with your surroundings in a way that feels nurturing and soothing.
- Remind yourself that this space is always available to you. Please feel free to return here whenever you need to feel safe and grounded.
- When you are ready to leave your safe space, take a moment to thank it and any supportive figures for being there.
- Slowly bring your awareness back to your physical surroundings. Wiggle your fingers and toes, take a few deep breaths, and gently open your eyes.



Take a moment to reflect on your experience. Notice how you feel now compared to when you started. Sit with this feeling.

Remember that one of your safe spaces is within you, ready to provide comfort and safety whenever needed.

Feel free to write down what this guided imagery was like for you on the following page.

Date _____

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Practical Exercises for Healing



Journaling Prompts for Self-Reflection:

- Write about your body's experiences and your feelings towards it.
- Use prompts to explore memories and emotions.

Breathing Exercises to Calm the Nervous System:

- Practice deep breathing or diaphragmatic breathing.
- Use breathwork to reduce stress and increase body awareness.



Please note: The emotional and self-awareness work highlighted in this program does not replace medical intervention nor supersedes medical advice from a professionally trained doctor, therapist or counsellor, or the use of prescribed medications.

Always seek medical advice if you have concerns about your health.

Reflective Exercise



Which exercises resonate most with you?

How do you feel after practicing these exercises?

Use this space to journal

Date _____

Note Space

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Next Steps

Healing is a journey; take it
one baby step at a time.

Seek support and continue
practicing self-care.



Four - Week Action Plan for Reconnecting with Your Body

This action plan is designed to help you apply the information and activities from the presentation and workbook to your daily life. Follow these steps to continue your healing journey.

Awareness & Self-Compassion

Goal: Start recognizing your body's experiences and practicing self-compassion.

STEP ONE

DAILY MIND-BODY CHECK-IN

SPEND 5 MINUTES EACH DAY DOING A BODY SCAN MEDITATION.

NOTE ANY AREAS OF TENSION, PAIN, OR NUMBNESS.

WRITE DOWN YOUR OBSERVATIONS IN A JOURNAL.



SELF-COMPASSION PRACTICE

- WRITE A COMPASSIONATE LETTER TO YOURSELF.
- ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR EXPERIENCES AND EXPRESS KINDNESS.

READ THE LETTER TO YOURSELF WHENEVER YOU NEED REASSURANCE.



STEP TWO

STEP THREE

REFLECTION JOURNAL ABOUT HOW YOU FEEL AT THE END OF EACH DAY. NOTE ANY CHANGES IN YOUR BODY AWARENESS OR EMOTIONAL STATE.



Date _____

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Mindfulness & Gentle Movement

Goal: Incorporate mindfulness and gentle movement into your routine.

STEP ONE

MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

- SPEND 10 MINUTES EACH DAY PRACTICING MINDFULNESS MEDITATION.
- FOCUS ON BEING PRESENT AND NOTICING YOUR BODY'S SENSATIONS.



STEP TWO

GENTLE MOVEMENT

- CHOOSE A GENTLE EXERCISE OR WALKING.
- ENGAGE IN THIS ACTIVITY FOR 15-30 MINUTES, THREE TIMES A WEEK.
- PAY ATTENTION TO HOW YOUR BODY FEELS DURING AND AFTER THE EXERCISE.



STEP THREE

LISTENING TO YOUR BODY

TAKE NOTE OF YOUR BODY'S SIGNALS, SUCH AS HUNGER, FATIGUE, AND EMOTIONS. RESPECT AND RESPOND TO THESE SIGNALS WITH CARE AND COMPASSION.



STEP FOUR

REFLECTION

- JOURNAL ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH MINDFULNESS AND MOVEMENT.
- REFLECT ON ANY NEW INSIGHTS OR CHANGES IN YOUR BODY AWARENESS.



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Date _____

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Befriending Your Body

Goal: Begin to identify and nurture your inner compassionate voice

STEP ONE

INNER CHILD/PARTS WORK

- LEARN ABOUT THE BASICS OF INTERNAL FAMILY SYSTEMS (IFS) OR INNER CHILD/PARTS WORK
- IDENTIFY DIFFERENT EMOTIONS/PARTS OF YOURSELF THAT YOU NOTICE.



STEP TWO

DEVELOP & PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION

- FIND AND STRENGTHEN YOUR INNER COMPASSIONATE VOICE.
- USE THIS VOICE TO COMFORT AND GUIDE YOUR HEALING PROCESS.



STEP THREE

INNER CHILD/PARTS EXERCISE

- IDENTIFY ONE PART/AREA OF YOURSELF THAT FEELS TENSE OR WOUNDED OR AN EMOTION
- HAVE A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THIS AREA AND YOUR COMPASSIONATE VOICE.
- REFLECT ON THE INSIGHTS GAINED FROM THIS EXERCISE



STEP FOUR

REFLECTION

- JOURNAL ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH MINDFULNESS AND MOVEMENT.
- REFLECT ON ANY NEW INSIGHTS OR CHANGES IN YOUR BODY AWARENESS.



Date _____

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Practical Exercises for Healing

Goal: Engage in practical exercises to support your healing.

STEP ONE

GUIDED MEDITATION

- LISTEN TO A GUIDED MEDITATION ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK.
- FOCUS ON CREATING A SAFE AND CALM MENTAL SPACE.
- WRITE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE AFTERWARD.



STEP TWO

JOURNALING PROMPTS

- USE JOURNALING PROMPTS TO EXPLORE YOUR BODY'S EXPERIENCES AND FEELINGS.
- WRITE OR RECORD ABOUT A TIME WHEN YOU FELT DISCONNECTED FROM YOUR BODY AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO RECONNECT. (SUGGESTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES)



STEP THREE

BREATHING EXERCISES

- PRACTICE DEEP BREATHING OR DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING DAILY. USE BREATHWORK TO REDUCE STRESS AND INCREASE BODY AWARENESS



STEP FOUR

REFLECTION

- JOURNAL ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH MINDFULNESS AND MOVEMENT.
- REFLECT ON ANY IMPROVEMENTS IN YOUR BODY AWARENESS AND EMOTIONAL STATE.



Date _____

Journaling Prompt

Body Awareness and Sensations:

- Take a few moments to sit quietly and focus on your body. What physical sensations are you experiencing right now? Describe them in detail. How do these sensations change as you pay more attention to them? Are there areas of tension or relaxation? Reflect on what these sensations might be telling you about your current emotional state.

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Date _____

Journaling Prompt

Emotional Mapping:

- Think about a recent emotional experience that stood out to you. Where did you feel this emotion in your body? Describe the physical sensations associated with this emotion. Did it feel heavy or light, warm or cool, tense or relaxed? Explore how acknowledging these sensations impacts your understanding of the emotion itself.

[illegible]

Date _____

Journaling Prompt

Inner Dialogue with Your Body:

- Imagine conversing with a specific part of your body that often holds tension or discomfort. What does this part of your body want to tell you? Write down its thoughts, feelings, and needs. How can you respond compassionately to this part of your body? What actions can you take to address its needs and support its healing?

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Checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	Daily mind-body check-in	<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-compassion practice
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mindfulness practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gentle movement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Practice listening to your body	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn about inner child/parts
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reflect on benefits of improved self awareness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inner child/parts work exercises
<input type="checkbox"/>	Guided meditation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reflect on impact of listening to your body
<input type="checkbox"/>	Journal about reconnecting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Journal or record how you feel about reconnecting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Breathing exercises	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

*Tracking and Celebrating the Improved Relationship
with your Body and Emotions*

Ongoing Practice & Support

As the saying goes, old habits die hard. This is true because being disconnected from our bodies was a necessary coping strategy at the time the abuse was going on.

Now that you are an adult learning new, more resourceful, and sustainable ways of being - wanting to feel more alive, connected with others, trusting, relaxed, content, and at peace within. These words can be used to describe genuine authenticity. This is where we can live in the moment, experience joy and freedom, and live the life we have always wanted to live.



Regular Practice

Maintain regular mindfulness, gentle and mindful movement, and self-compassion practices.

Adjust your routine as needed to support your ongoing healing.

Seek Support

Join a local or online trauma support group.

Consider working with a therapist trained in IFS or trauma-informed care. You are welcome to book a 1:1 session with me.

Resources

Continue to read and learn from recommended resources.

Stay connected with supportive communities and professionals.

Reflection

Keep a journal to document your healing journey.

Reflect on your progress and celebrate your successes.

Ongoing Practice & Support

Affirmations may help your nervous system, depending on where you are in your healing journey. For me, saying them early on only led to frustration and disappointment. Now that I am further along and my nervous system has settled somewhat, I find them helpful. These positive thoughts help rewire the brain and overcome strongly entrenched lies.

The following affirmations are by or based on Louise Hay's work. The below focuses on the body and your relationship with it. Try them out and see what you notice.

I am in the process of positive change.
I am comfortable looking in the mirror, saying, "I love you, I really love you."
It is safe to look within.
I claim my power and move beyond all limitations.
Deep at the centre of my being is an infinite well of love.
Life / God supports me in every possible way.
I listen with love to my body's messages.
I am at home in my body.
I am very thankful for all the love in my life. I find it everywhere.
I know that old, negative patterns no longer limit me. I let them go with ease.
I forgive myself for not being perfect.
I honour who I am.
I do not have to prove myself to anyone.
I come from the loving space of my heart, and I know that love opens doors.
I am in harmony with nature.
I choose to be at peace.
I choose to see clearly with the eyes of love.
I am willing to change.
Loving others is easy when I love and accept myself.
My body appreciates how I take care of it.
The more peaceful I am inside, the more peace I have to share with others.
I enjoy the foods that are best for my body.
My life gets better all the time.
I claim good health.
My body is a sacred gift, and I appreciate that it has carried me through.
I love me because I am mine.

Date _____

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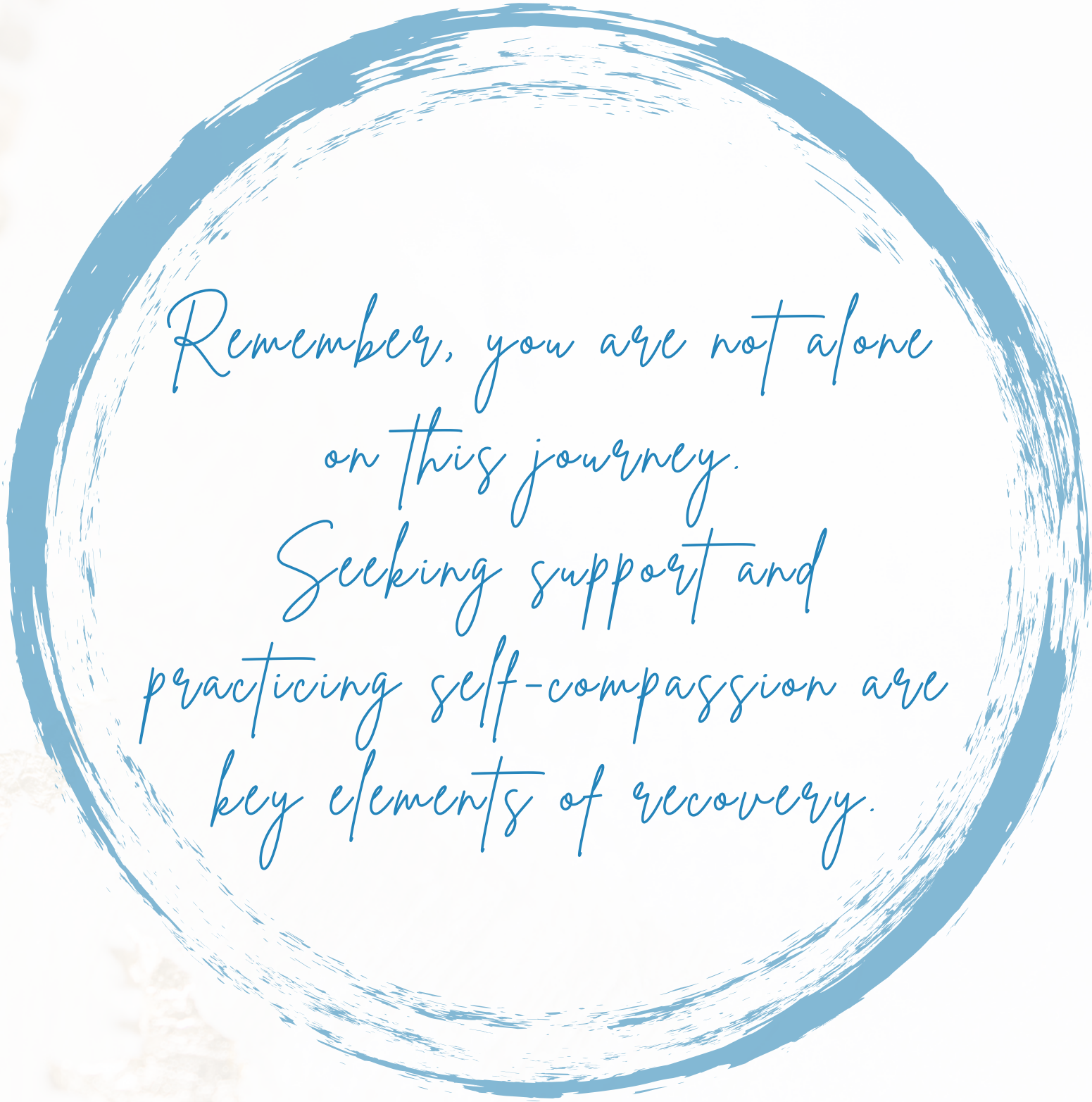
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Remember, you are not alone
on this journey.

Seeking support and
practicing self-compassion are
key elements of recovery.

Routine Creation - Action Plan

You know you best. Reflect on what you've learned and consider what you can add to your **daily** routine to improve your relationship with yourself and your feelings.

Please write it down and commit to trying it out.

This is an exercise in patience, presence, compassion, and empowerment.

1

2

Routine Creation - Action Plan

Reflect on what you've learned and consider what you can add to your **weekly** routine to improve your relationship with yourself and your feelings.

Please write it down and commit to trying it out.

1

2

Evidence of Integration

THEN

VS

NOW

Feeling numb or
disconnected to body

Feeling more present,
engaged, and connected to
self, more self-aware

Emotionally dysregulated

Improved emotional
regulation

Often avoidant and or in
denial

Acceptance of the past and
more open to engaging in
activities without
overwhelm

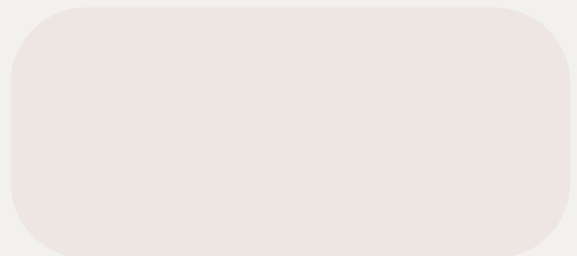
Unexplained physical pain
or discomfort

Improved physical well-
being

Hypervigilant and or
anxious, difficulty relaxing

Sensing more calmness and
feeling safe

Name what else you struggle
with below



Date: _____

Note Space

What are you noticing about yourself overall?

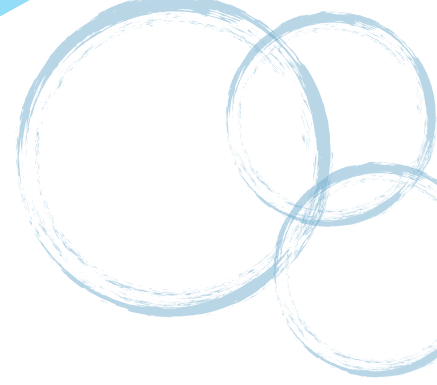
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Date: _____

Note Space

What are you noticing about your re-connecting journey overall?

Resources



Feel free to book a 1:1 coaching session with me if you're seeking additional support or need more clarity. If you're in the highest membership tier, you have one 1:1 session included. I encourage you to make the most of this valuable resource as you progress through the program.

A warm reminder to take advantage of the group support.

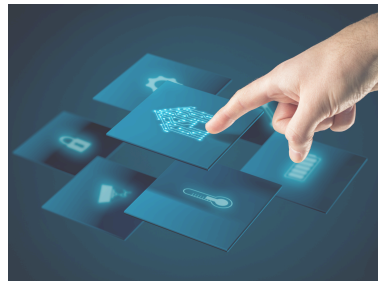


[The Secret Ingredient to Feeling Good in your Body | Marla Mervis-Hartmann](#)

A TEDx talk sharing what she did to develop a healthy relationship with her body

[Mindful Movement, the Feldenkrais method](#)

using gentle movement and directed attention based on physics, biomechanics and human development



Mindfulness and Body Awareness Platforms

Insight Timer: A free app with guided meditations, yoga sessions, and talks focused on mindfulness and body awareness.

Headspace: An app offering guided meditations and mindfulness exercises to help individuals connect with their bodies and emotions.



Suggested Reading

The Body Keeps the Score by Bessel van der Kolk

Self-Compassion the Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself by Kristin Neff

What Happened to You by Bruce Perry and Oprah

Running on Empty by Jonice Webb

Your journey towards reconnecting with your body and emotions is a beautiful and courageous step towards healing. Every small moment of awareness and self-compassion brings you closer to a place of peace and wholeness. Each step deserves a celebration. Keep believing in your strength and resilience.

You are doing incredible work, and every effort you make is a testament to your inner courage and commitment to yourself.

Keep shining your light; your progress is inspiring.

You are deeply valued.

You Matter.

You did It!!!

It's an honour to work with you; please reach for extra support along your healing journey.

Remember that YOU matter.



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