



“Turning Inner Bonding into a daily way of life is what will protect you from going back into the behaviors and patterns from the past. With practice, you learn to keep a loving relationship with yourself throughout your life, no matter the challenges that come at you.”

Margaret Paul, PhD

INNER CONNECTING JOURNAL PRACTICE

SIX STEPS FOR JOURNALING: MODIFIED AND ADAPTED FROM INNER BONDING®

STEP 1: FEEL YOUR FEELINGS

Feel and unconditionally accept your feelings, including core feelings from childhood and feelings towards yourself.

STEP 2: INTENT TO LEARN

Have the Intent to Learn with **CALMNESS, CURIOSITY, CLARITY, COMPASSION, CONFIDENCE, CREATIVITY, COURAGE AND CONNECTEDNESS**. Be open to understanding yourself. This creates your caring "Adult Self."

You know you are open and have the Intent to Learn when:

I feel a sense of warmth and compassion for my Inner Child (my feelings, emotions, fears, and memories)

I am filled with a deep interest and **CURIOSITY** to know how I may be causing my pain, fears and feelings

I truly desire to understand what I need to do in order to bring a sense of clarity and lessons-learned

STEP 3: WRITTEN DIALOGUE WITH YOUR INNER CHILD

Explore your feelings, behaviors, beliefs and memories. The following pages provide questions for you to start with. However, you may **free-write** your own dialogue if you'd like.

DECIDE WHAT TO ADDRESS

Start with what you are feeling right now or how you feel about a past situation that keeps circling back. Clearly identify the topic of concern. Addressing current pain or feeling? An issue or a specific person? Something in the past?

What I want to address in this journaling dialogue is:

Why is this important for me to address? Allow free-writing, welcome all feelings and thoughts - write quickly.

Inner Child, "What are your current FEELINGS about this?" (feel into your body, free-write 'felt sense', safe, unsafe, angry at yourself or others, pressured, sad, resentment, regretful, confusion, needy, etc.) Use as many words as possible, for example: *I feel a burning, tight, clenching feeling in my heart and an uneasiness.*

Inner Child, what am I telling you, doing, or not doing, that may be causing these beliefs and feelings today?

INNER CHILD: Ask Adult Self, why are you treating me this way? (there must be a good reason you are saying these things to yourself and treating your Inner Child in these ways... even if they are unloving ways).

Have you felt these beliefs and feelings before? Recently?

See if you can visualize one of the first times you felt this way. Describe in detail. How old were you?

Adult Self, what are you truly scared of? What are you trying to 'protect' yourself from?

Inner Child, what do you want to feel instead of fears and painful feelings - even if it's hard to imagine now?

Inner Child, what do you imagine could help you feel these preferred feelings?

Inner Child, how can I build more trust and show you that I will no longer abandon you. I can handle ALL of your painful feelings? I realize there is a reason for every feeling, even if it takes time to understand it.

Inner Child, do you feel listened to and valued by me now? Is there more you'd like to share with me?

Inner Child, what can I do for you right now?

STEP 4: ALLOW MENTORING AND CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FROM YOUR WISE MIND

Journal with 'Wise Mind,' your value-based, intelligent mind. We have access to this part when we trust ourselves and feel safety in the present moment. Imagine your 'Wise Mind' as an ideal MENTOR, someone you look up to and trust.

Wise Mind, What is the truth about my feelings, thoughts and beliefs, as described above?

Wise Mind, what can you tell me about my values, purpose regarding this.

What does Inner Child need to feel loved, safe, trusting and connected with?

STEP 5: LOVING ACTION AND/OR PLAN FOR ACTION

Wise Mind, what caring, loving action can I do right now? Is this aligned my values and highest good?

Imagine long-term wants and needs, what steps do I need to take to ensure I'm moving in the right direction?

STEP 6: EVALUATE THE ACTION AND/OR PLAN FOR ACTION

Inner Child, what are you feeling and experiencing as a result of the loving actions I plan to do to help you?

Inner Critic, what fears and criticism do you have about the loving actions I plan to take as soon as I can?

Wise Mind, are there creative solutions available for these possible criticisms or alternative options?

Ask yourself, have you resolved this for now or at least have a plan in place to take action towards resolution?

If you are not feeling better, go back to Step 4 and continue to dedicate the time to ask for what you need and how to work with your rational, higher cognitive thinking to realize how you may provide comfort and guidance for yourself. You can also come back to this later and/or note it for something to talk about with a friend or in your next counseling session.