



"Turning this practice 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

SELF LEADERSHIP INNER BONDING

This goes a step further from Inner Connecting journaling. Inner Bonding is a practice originated by Dr. Paul as a psychotherapy method. Through Inner Bonding you become your own best resource, capable of creating new, healthy habits, and functioning from a state of self-attunement and rationale, connected with your emotions and self-awareness in the present, rather than in self-abandonment (neglecting or suppressing your emotions).

FREE YOURSELF FROM YOUR PAST TO ENJOY THE NOW AND BUILD THE FUTURE YOU WANT

The more you practice, the more you build new neural pathways within your higher-reasoning areas of your brain where you have access to calm and clarity. Lift, process and overcome false beliefs, maladaptive protective strategies, subconscious programming and old patterns lodged in your lower, 'emotional,' areas of the brain.

THE SIX STEPS OF INNER BONDING THERAPY

Step 1 Willingness to Take Responsibility for Your Feelings and Allow Yourself to Feel Painful Emotions

Step 2 Move into the Intent to Learn with Curiosity

Step 3 Journal with Inner Child (feelings) & Wounded Self (fears, beliefs, judgments, protective strategies)

Step 4 Journal with Your Wise Mind (values, higher intelligence, prefrontal cortex, desires and purpose)
THIS HIGHER COGNITION IS ACCESSIBLE WHEN WE ARE IN A STATE OF COMPASSION & CURIOSITY

Step 5 Take Self-Compassionate and Caring Action

Step 6 Evaluate your Actions to Ensure You are Providing Yourself with What is Needed

"The six steps of Inner Bonding flow from one to the other. Some issues take weeks or even months to resolve... yet with many issues, you can resolve inner-conflict, painful feelings, and come to an 'ah ha' moment on the spot, within a minute or so."

Margaret Paul, PhD

Prior to practicing Inner Bonding, it is imperative to learn about the **Wounded Self**. Therefore the following three pages provide an explanation and specific questions for you to understand the Wounded Self before journaling.

WHAT IS MY WOUNDED SELF?

Your Wounded Self is the part of you that consists of your Inner Critical thoughts, false beliefs, fears, maladaptive protective strategies, controlling behaviors, and judgments that limit you and cause havoc on your life. Wounded Self stems from childhood when beliefs and perceptions were accepted as facts and became stored in our subconscious programming. Here are some of the benefits for understanding your Wounded Self:

- Realize what you are telling yourself and how you are treating yourself that is causing wounded feelings
- Learn how to process through and release painful emotions
- Get to know yourself for REAL - your purpose, values, your essence, feelings, and what brings you joy
- Understand the real reasons for your painful feelings of loneliness, emptiness, heartache, emptiness, shame, fear, depression, anxiety, guilt, apathy, and other painful emotions

TWO TYPES OF PAINFUL FEELINGS EXISTENTIAL AND WOUNDED FEELINGS



EXISTENTIAL PAIN (EXTERNAL)

Caused by something external, such as a loss, divorce, grief, heartbreak, fear of real and present danger, layoff, or other life events.



WOUNDED SELF (INTERNAL)

Due to internal influences, perceptions, self-talk, inner critic, beliefs, etc. Result from our intent to control or escape feelings, and existential pain becomes internalized, compounded, resulting in anxiety, guilt, shame, anger, emptiness, etc.

YOUR WOUNDED SELF SHOWS UP AS DIFFERENT AGES IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS



If you learned to judge yourself harshly when you were six, due to a hyper-critical parent or culture, you may be operating from a **6-year-old** aspect of yourself when you are judging yourself.



If you learned at age 12 that food helped numb painful emotions for a few minutes, it is likely that it's your **12-year-old** Wounded Self that is in charge if you are emotionally eating or bingeing.



If you learned at age 21 that drinking alcohol in social gatherings, helped you feel a sense of belonging and increased your ability to feel confident and liked by others, then it is your **21-year-old** Wounded Self that triggers you to drink when you feel lonely, unworthy or unloved.

Although our Wounded Self helped us try to make sense of the world as children and feel safe, it is now a major obstacle for connecting with ourselves and others. You will begin to realize how maladaptive it is to live off subconscious programming, false beliefs, fears, Inner Critic, and limitations. **"When the intent is to control our feelings or to control others and outcomes, we are operating from our Wounded Self!"** Margaret Paul, PhD

WOUNDED SELF: FALSE BELIEFS

When we try to numb or reject our painful feelings, we will end up feeling rejected. This is self-abandonment. The more you attempt to ignore your emotions, the louder and bigger they may get, like alarming anxiety. Or they may "give up," and go numb into a sense of deep helplessness and depression. Resentment, rejection, emptiness, and shame, have little to do with other people, and a lot to do with self-abandonment and Wounded Self.

Be honest with yourself and discover the ways you may be abandoning yourself:

Do I ignore my feelings by ruminating in thinking, analyzing, judging, and self-criticizing?

Do I get stuck focusing on what others are doing, analyzing them instead of attending to my own feelings?

Do I turn to addictions - substances, activities, eating, obsessing, or other patterns to avoid my feelings?

Am I judging myself? What are my typical judgments?

Am I telling myself that I am not good enough, inadequate or a loser? Or unlovable, unimportant, or broken?

Do I put a ton of pressure on myself? Do I tell myself I have to look perfect or be perfect? Or impress others?

Do I make others responsible for my feelings and try to have control over getting them to give me the love, attention, affirmation, approval, forgiveness, compliments, and validation that I am not giving to myself?

Am I telling myself that I am ok only if others like me and approve of me? Are there specific people? What is it about others that makes their opinions of me so important?

What else am I telling myself? In what other ways am I abandoning myself - what am I doing or not doing that is causing anxiety, depression, guilt, shame, anger, sadness, loneliness, emptiness, hopelessness, resentment, etc.?

What ways do I set RIGID limits on myself that are not necessarily in my highest good? Have these RIGID limits worked to feel accomplished and happy?

What OVERLY-INDULGING behaviors do I have that are not in my highest good? What am I telling myself during these behaviors? Am I caring for myself or am I being like a permissive parent, confusing poor choices (five cupcakes) with rewards that are genuinely caring, healthy and balanced (one cupcake after a healthy dinner)?

WOUNDED SELF: SHAME, GUILT AND INTERNALIZED RESENTMENT

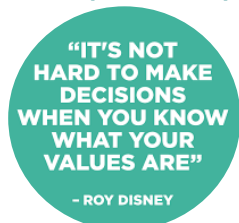
Shame stems from false beliefs that something is basically wrong with you - that you are broken, flawed, bad, or inadequate. It takes time to peel away layers of shame. Yet it's well worth it. Shame impacts our sense of self and worthiness. Shame involves statements like, "I am unlovable," or "I am not enough."

Shame is also a form of control. *"As long as my Wounded Self believed that others' unloving and rejecting behavior toward me was my fault, because I wasn't good enough, I could continue to believe that if only I changed, I could control their behavior toward me. Magically, when I finally fully accepted my lack of control over others' feelings and behavior, my shame disappeared and has never returned."* Margaret Paul, PhD

WOUNDED SELF: SHAME, GUILT, AND INTERNALIZED RESENTMENT (continued)

- When you **understand your shame (rather than avoid, escape, or self-medicate it)** you can learn to prevent compounded shame and the resulting reactivity, RESENTMENT, self-berating and associated negative behaviors
- Inner Bonding journaling helps you figure out if you are dealing with AUTHENTIC or INAUTHENTIC shame
- Learn to feel into shame, accept it, and understand it, so you may choose actions that feel aligned with your personal values and virtues (even when no one is looking). Build TRUST in yourself and FREE yourself from resentment.

REAL SELF AUTHENTIC (HEALTHY) SHAME



Based on your morals, values, rules and boundaries you agree to willingly. Authentic Shame guides you away from harmful or self-sabotaging impulses. Once you realize what value or expectation you have violated (or about to violate), you will have identified why you are feeling the deep pain of shame. When you correct your wrongdoing, authentic shame will naturally lift with a sense of relief and self-forgiveness.

IDENTIFY YOUR VALUES & REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Examples: Honesty, Treat others with Kindness, Eat good food for my health and ideal weight

WOUNDED SELF INAUTHENTIC (TOXIC) SHAME



Subconscious 'agreements' that stem from childhood, societal pressure and others' opinions, expectations, cultural norms, rules, and control. Based on what you perceive others' want you to be (perfect, good-looking, over-achiever, always happy, always 'normal'). Inauthentic Shame is more focused on getting validation and approval from others' instead of living within your own value system and intrinsic wants.

IDENTIFY WHAT TRIGGERS INAUTHENTIC SHAME FOR YOU

Examples: Single people are losers, Should be married by 30, Get straight A's, Look perfect to be worthy of love

Who or what do I allow to determine my value as a human being?

What is getting in my way of owning and claiming pure unconditional self-worth and lovability?

When someone rejects me, disappoints, gets angry, withdraws, or is unloving in any other way, what do I tell myself?

What is my Wounded Self and its false beliefs telling me about myself during these situations? What do I tell myself that makes this other person's behavior my fault?

Imagine yourself when you were 4-years-old. Who or what would you allow to determine your value at this age?

If you valued yourself, can you see how you may fully accept your lack of control over others - while fully accepting your power is in taking care of yourself, establishing healthy boundaries, and claiming your intrinsic value and worthiness?

STEPS OF INNER BONDING: CHOOSING SELF-CONNECTION OVER SELF-ABANDONMENT

Realize What You Want to Address Start with what you are feeling right now or how you feel about a past situation that keeps circling back and surfacing. Clearly identify the topic of concern. Are you addressing current feelings? Your feelings about an issue or a specific person? Feelings about something in the past?

What I want to be ADDRESSING in this journaling dialogue is: _____

Step 1 Chose to feel your feelings and accept them unconditionally. Remember your emotions and feelings are 'childish' by nature as they are not processed through the rational, higher cognitive areas of your brain, yet they are as real as it gets in terms of understanding yourself and your truth.

Inner Child, "What are you FEELING right now about [what we are ADDRESSING]?" _____

Step 2 Once you are aware of how you feel and are taking responsibility for your feelings, chose to have the Intent to Learn with **CALMNESS, CURIOSITY, CLARITY, COMPASSION, CONFIDENCE, CREATIVITY, COURAGE AND CONNECTEDNESS**. Be open to understanding yourself. This creates your loving "Adult Self." Compassionately embrace any current or past pain of life and be open to what would bring you joy and calm.

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

1. You feel a sense of warmth and compassion for your Inner Child (feelings) and your Wounded Self
2. You are filled with a deep desire to know how you may be causing your pain
3. You truly want to understand what you need to do, to bring a sense of self-forgiveness and calm
4. You feel curious about the reasons you have for feeling and behaving the way you do

Step 3 Explore your feelings, behaviors, false beliefs and memories. Explore what you are telling yourself and how you are treating yourself that causes wounded feelings and behaviors.

Inner Child, what am I telling you, doing, or not doing, that is causing your FEELINGS of _____?

There must be a good reason why you are treating Inner Child in ways that are causing pain.

Ask Yourself: What do you believe is causing this behavior? What are you trying to control or avoid feeling?

Ask your Wounded Self (fears, pain, thoughts/beliefs), "What is the fear of feeling the deeper pain of life that you might be avoiding with your protective or controlling behavior?"

"Where did you get these beliefs?" Describe memories, people, places or things that arise.

"What are you telling me about these beliefs and these painful feelings?"

Ask Inner Child (feelings) "What else is helpful for me to understand?" Be open to events, memories, feelings.

"What do you want to feel instead of these painful feelings (even if it seems hard to imagine currently)?"

What do you imagine could help you feel safe and joyful?

How can I build more trust with you?

What do you need from me right now?

What is missing in your life? What do you want to do this weekend? "Who do you want to spend time with?" "What would be fun to do right now? Free write answers as they unfold naturally.

Step 4 Journal with 'Wise Mind,' which is your highest value-based, intelligent aspect of yourself. We have access to this part of our mind when we are grounded in self-compassion. Imagine this aspect as a mature, balanced, WISE MENTOR to yourself if this helps. Find what works best for you.

Ask Wise Mind, "What is the truth about these beliefs about the topic of concern?"

"What do you want to tell me about my passion and purpose or about what my Inner Child needs to feel loved, safe, trusting and connected with?"

Step 5 Actualize loving, caring action as identified above.

Ask Wise Mind, "What caring, loving actions can I take right now? Is this within my values and highest good?"

For long-term needs, how can I create a plan? What steps do I need to take to ensure I'm moving in the right direction?

Is this action plan loving to me? Is this within my values and my highest good?

Step 6 Evaluate the actions by checking with how you are feeling about it.

Ask Inner Child, with care and compassion, "What are you feeling and experiencing as a result of the loving actions I plan to take as soon as I can?"

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.