



"Our task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it."

~ Rumi

SELF LEADERSHIP INNER CONNECTING

PRACTICAL DAILY JOURNALING FOR EMOTIONAL ATTUNEMENT AND SELF-AWARENESS

Many of us were not taught how to connect with our feelings. Or worse, taught to avoid, control, or escape painful feelings (even label them as weak, crazy, or shameful). This is self-abandonment, resulting in a sense of 'running on empty,' longing, emptiness, loneliness, anxiety, depression, etc. All the while, connecting to our emotions is truly what we need, first and foremost. With time this inner connection builds into more self-fulfillment, self-trust and an overall sense of mindful self-compassion and awareness within each moment.



PROVEN RESULTS BASED ON MULTIPLE THERAPY MODALITIES

Based on decades of clinical evidence, this blend of CBT, IFS Therapy, Separation Therapy, and Dr Paul's Inner Bonding Therapy, succeeds in bypassing subconscious gatekeepers and turns self-connection into a tangible activity rather than an abstraction.



WHY IT WORKS: Pen to paper, this mindful journaling practice brings you in present moment. I have witnessed my clients benefit from this tremendously. Daily journaling brings your feelings to light (instead of repressed, abandoned and ignored), allowing you to attend to past pains and process them here and now, a process worth years of therapy, in fact it enhances psychotherapy (Johnson, 2012).



HOW IT WORKS: Creates space between your emotional-self, "Inner Child" (since feelings are childish and unpredictable by nature), from the cognitive, thinking part of you, referred to as "Adult Self." This separation between thoughts (Adult Self) and feelings (Inner Child), allows you to "witness," give attention to, connect with, and have compassion for your feelings (and yourself). This builds profound inner connection and self-trust.



NEUROPLASTICITY: Our brains are constantly being shaped by neuroplasticity, 'muscle building,' with every repetition of a thought or emotion, we reinforce a neural pathway - and with each new thought, we begin to create a new way of being, in this case, more awareness, sense of calm, and trust in yourself. This is the power of journaling daily.

EXPERIENCE THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS... JUST TO NAME A FEW:

- 1 Promotes overall health. Process feelings rather than keeping them stuck in your body. Stuck feelings cause toxic stress, leading to myriad of illnesses (Paul, 2019).
- 2 Less reactivity. And overcome addictions by accepting feelings, rather than escaping them through substances or processes such as drinking alcohol, over-eating, shopping, gambling, over-texting, etc.
- 3 You won't get stuck with wounded feelings of anxiety, depression, anger, guilt, shame that may be covering up deeper feelings that need attention such as helplessness, isolation, sadness, suffering, etc
- 4 Both painful emotions and joyful emotions stem from the same place. You can't numb painful feelings without also limiting good feelings of life – joy, serenity, playfulness, self-trust, compassion, etc.
- 5 When you avoid pain you block access to your passion and purpose, which can lead to wondering why you even exist (feeling lost, empty). Again, our emotions, pleasant ones (like joy) and unpleasant ones (like sad), all stem from the same place. Avoid feeling the bad, and you're depressing the good!

TWO TYPES OF PAINFUL FEELINGS EXISTENTIAL AND WOUNDED FEELINGS



EXISTENTIAL PAIN (EXTERNAL)

Caused by something external, such as a loss, heartbreak, fear of real and present danger, outrage, or traumatic life events.



WOUNDED FEELINGS (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.

EXAMPLES OF WAYS WE LEARNED TO CONTROL/ESCAPE FEELINGS. WHICH APPLY TO YOU?

Over-thinking, over-analyzing, and looping in thinking patterns (this is a way of avoiding feelings)

Judging and Rejecting feelings, ie. "anger is bad," "sadness is weak" (realize all emotions have value)

Numbing or Avoiding feelings through alcohol, substances, or processes, shopping, etc.

Making Others Responsible for your feelings, examples: "He made me angry!" or "She makes me feel misunderstood." "He makes me feel alone." "She makes me feel worthless."

Over-sharing and Telling 'he said,' 'she said' (although well-intentioned, this is a subtle avoidance tactic; overcome the need to get others' to buy into your side of story or validate it; drop the story)

Severely Isolating Yourself or Avoiding Situations to not feel painful emotions or anxiety

Perfectionism and People-pleasing behaviors in hopes of avoiding feeling unworthy, shame, etc.

Attempting to "Flush-out" painful emotions by sharing with friends (sharing is HEALTHY, however sharing in an attempt to rid of feelings is not. A better intention is awareness and self-acceptance)

Sabotaging relationships or goals due to fears of rejection, failure, disappointment and other emotions

Controlling others, intentionally or unintentionally, in fear of feeling abandoned, inferior or powerless

ESSENTIALS FOR INNER CONNECTING JOURNALING

1. UNDERSTAND WHY THE TERM 'INNER CHILD' MAKES SENSE TO USE FOR YOUR 'FEELINGS'

Connect to your emotions using the construct of "Inner Child." We are not robots. We have imperfect, childish, feelings that need to be heard, valued, and guided. Feelings are 'childish' by nature as they are not auto-processed through the rational, higher cognitive areas of our brain, such as the prefrontal cortex.

Avoiding feelings doesn't make them go away. Much like avoiding a crying infant doesn't make the infant go away. If the baby does stop crying it is due to giving-up on it's caregiver in panicked exhausted, neglect. Your emotions are similar. Avoiding yourself, leads to giving-up, self-neglect, and disconnection.



Stop abandoning your feelings, no matter how painful they are. They need to you. As an adult, only you have the power to connect, validate and sooth your own emotions. Attempts to avoid, escape, or numb your own emotions may work short-term but will result in emptiness and wounded feelings long-term.

2. PROVIDE YOUR INNER CHILD WITH UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE BALANCED GUIDANCE

No matter how emotional Inner Child gets, your job is to reassure Inner Child that he/she is unconditionally loved by YOU. Allowing your Inner Child to express feelings is the most effective way to lift his/her mood (and yours too), even during the worst of times during anger, helplessness pain, and all.

3. HAVE THE INTENT TO LEARN WITH OPEN CURIOSITY

As you journal, realize and apply an ideal balance between self-parenting extremes, overly permissive and overly authoritative. **Apply the 8 C's of Self Leadership: CALMNESS, CURIOSITY, CLARITY, COMPASSION, CONFIDENCE, CREATIVITY, COURAGE AND CONNECTEDNESS.**

4. BE WILLING TO FEEL PAIN WHILE TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR FEELINGS

Many of us disconnected from our feelings at a young age due to events that caused overwhelming emotions that we didn't have the skills to process, such as bullying, rejection, emotional neglect, or simply not understanding how to attune and process emotions. Thus, we lost emotional self-awareness. Inner Connecting empowers you to heal wounds from the past by gently processing them in the present.

5. IMAGINE YOUR INNER CHILD AND BEGIN A JOURNALING DIALOGUE

Close your eyes and imagine what you were like at about five years old. This will help you personify your emotional self—your Inner Child. Feel how vulnerable, relationally dependent, playful and "needy" your Inner Child is. Sample dialogue questions are included in the following pages.

BEGIN JOURNALING WITH SAMPLES TO GET YOU STARTED

INNER CHILD Expresses long-neglected, and current emotional needs and will look to you for help to guide and process, whether it be temper-tantrum anger, pouting loneliness, clingy neediness, validation of unconditional love... and myriad of an infinite array complex feelings... throughout your life.

ADULT SELF You in the present moment (your actual intelligent 'Self' that is literally reading this right now) empowered with the intent to connect to your 'emotional-self'; your Inner Child, with compassion, kindness, 100% acceptance. **Apply the 8 C's of Self Leadership: CALMNESS, CURIOSITY, CLARITY, COMPASSION, CONFIDENCE, CREATIVITY, COURAGE AND CONNECTEDNESS.**



YOUR JOB IS TO NURTURE INNER CHILD'S NEEDS AND VALIDATE FEELINGS

This includes being admired and listened to, acknowledged and validated. Adult Self is a good parent toward a cherished Inner Child.

Validate Inner Child's feelings; provide reassurances; and, most important, offer to make healthy changes, where appropriate. You become stronger with time, Inner Child begins to trust you more, feeling more open, safe, and honest.



When you are a parent for example, and you hear your baby cry, you immediately attend to your baby's needs. You'll learn to do the same with your feelings and emotions. If you are feeling strong emotions, but at work, or too busy to practice Inner Connecting journaling, you may provide "Containment" by letting yourself know that you will circle back later and provide your full attention and care to hold and take care of your emotional needs.



It is imperative to remain within your feelings throughout the journaling process, offering Inner Child (your feelings) full acceptance, even during painful emotions. In fact, you can turn to Inner Connecting work whenever you feel anything other than calm within. As you become more mindful within your life overall, you will realize when you feel anything less than calm, clarity and fullness within.



ACCESS TO HIGHER CREATIVITY

You may practice Inner Connecting with your Inner Child when you are feeling excited and joyful as well. It may provide an opportune time to realize more imaginative goals and creative ways of improving your business or life overall. Fully connecting with your emotions grounds you and is proven to provide a sense of calm, which leads to access to your frontal cortex, your creative, higher thinking brain.

BEGIN JOURNALING WHENEVER YOU WISH BY ASKING INNER CHILD SIMPLE QUESTIONS

With practice you will have the know-how to tune into your own needs, and begin journaling dialogue as needed for your present needs in any given moment. Examples of simple questions are as follows:

"How are you feeling?" or "What are your needs right now?" or "How can I provide help or comfort today?"

BEGIN WITH SAMPLE JOURNALING QUESTIONS TO GET STARTED. USE YOUR JOURNAL.

Inner Child, how do you feel about your life right now? What feelings do you need help with?

(be encouraging, Inner Child is likely not used to your curiosity and caring nature)

How can I make things better for you?

If you don't know, it is ok. May you allow me to try to make things better for you... to try my best to find a way?

Are you angry with me for neglecting your feelings and needs for so long?

I promise I will earn your trust. Do you trust me to keep my promises?

What can I do today to prove I will keep my promises?

I'm making a commitment to improve things for you. What change do you want first?

Do you have confidence in me to actually carry this change out?

I reassure you that I will always love you and never leave you alone again. Do you believe me?

SAMPLE DIALOGUE 2: YOUR UNSPOKEN, BROKEN DREAMS

Inner Child, what secret dreams and desires do you imagine having?

How does it feel to wait so long for you to tell me these dreams and wants?

What old longings and fun activities would you like to see getting involved in now?

INNER CHILD: Ask Adult Self, how come it took you so long to ask? ADULT SELF'S RESPONSE:

Inner Child, from now on I promise I will listen closely to your wishes, desires, and dreams. Do you believe me?

What do you envision freedom to be like? Describe what freedom looks like and feels like to you.

What part of your unlived life do you want to begin living first?

SAMPLE DIALOGUE 3: YOUR CURRENT RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS

Inner Child, how do you feel about my current love life?

What kind of emotional support would you like from another person to make you happier and more content?

INNER CHILD then asks ADULT SELF (if applicable): How come you don't get this for me?

YOUR EXPLANATION:

Inner Child, are you angry about this?

Inner Child, what can I do differently to make this up to you?

Do you trust me to do the right things, to plan and learn in order to get your needs met?

What do you want me to be doing differently to take care of you within relationships?

How do I abandon you when I start to like someone that makes you scared of getting rejected or HURT?

If you consistently attract unavailable people or find yourself backing away from relationships as you start to feel close, ask Inner Child, what are you most afraid of?

I promise I will never leave you alone with these feelings again, I am here for you. Do you believe me?

SAMPLE DIALOGUE 4: ARE YOU FEELING LOVABLE? (Modify based on relationship status)

Inner Child's fears, neediness, and internal seething may make it hard for you to succeed in your relationships.

QUESTION FOR ADULT SELF: Can you still love and commit to Inner Child in spite of the nuisance she/he creates in your love life?

Inner Child, I will always love you unconditionally—reactivity, anger, fears, failures, mistakes, and all. Do you believe in my sincerity?

Do you feel like you fit-in and belong with others?

Tell me more about what you feel? (ask more sensitive and specific questions about your relationships)

Do you feel closer to me now that you have shared your feelings?

SAMPLE DIALOGUE 5: EMOTIONAL HUNGER

Inner Child, what are your most urgent emotional needs? Please elaborate so I fully see, hear and value what you need.

What can I do to show you that I care?

I am sorry I didn't know how to connect with you until now. What can I do differently in life to make up for lost time?

I will not leave you alone again. I will always be here to listen, care, and help change things for the better. Do you believe me?

SAMPLE DIALOGUE 6: WHAT BRINGS YOU JOY OR PAIN

Inner Child, if you could do anything this weekend, what would it be?

What's fun for you?

Who would you like to spend time with?

How do you feel about _____ (certain person or experience that comes to mind)?

What kind of creative, active, experiences in nature, or playful activities do you like?

Remind me of a time you felt excited about doing something creative, active, in nature, and/or playful?

How am I taking care of you in terms of having enough fun... or not enough fun?

What do you want to tell me about my passion and purpose?

Who are the people you have always admired in the world?

If you could make anyone your part of our family who would it be? What role would they play?

What would you like to explore more of in this world?

What do you want to be doing differently to explore more?

How may I help provide more joyful experiences for you?

SAMPLE DIALOGUE 7: EXPLORE AN ISSUE OF YOUR CHOICE

Decide on a current issue that you want to explore. It may be a relationship issue, parenting, family, work, health issue., or perhaps an overwhelming yearning, addiction or emotion. Tune into this.

THE ISSUE I WANT TO EXPLORE IS:

Inner Child, what am I telling you and how am I treating you concerning this issue?

ADULT SELF (there must be a good reason you are saying these things to yourself, or treating your inner child/emotions in these unloving ways): Reply to Inner Child by clarifying why you are doing this:

What are you afraid of regarding this issue?

What are your beliefs surrounding this?

How did you get these beliefs? Where did you learn these behaviors?

TAKE A MOMENT TO CONNECT WITH YOUR HIGHER THINKING, WISE MIND THAT REALIZES TRUTH AND ASK, What is the truth about any of these beliefs I've uncovered?

What have I really been afraid of?

What story am I telling myself?

Inner Child, how may I help you feel better about this? What caring ACTION can I help you with right now?

How can I provide **CALM, COMPASSIONATE, CONNECTION** with my Inner Child in this moment?

In general, how do I treat you that makes you feel stressed, anxious, depressed, angry, guilty, ashamed, alone, and unloved within? Breath inside and allow answers to flow.

How do you generally feel when I'm emotionally abandoning you?

What do you want me to be doing differently so you feel seen, heard, valued and emotionally supported?

FREE-WRITE WHENEVER YOU LIKE BY SIMPLY ASKING YOUR INNER CHILD SPECIFIC QUESTIONS IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND YOURSELF. Continue to free-write dialogue naturally. Be compassionate and supportive in how you treat yourself... this makes all the difference in bettering your life.