

Appendix C

Healing Our Inner Child

Please note that even though inner child work can provide healing at the deepest level, it should be done with a trusted friend/family member or, better yet, a trusted counselor or therapist. We all need to do inner child work in a safe and supportive environment. We are survivors of childhood trauma and need to process the emotions we have carried since. We also need to understand patterns of thought and behavior. Professional support tools are important and allow for more effective and transformative healing. With that said, here are some self-help steps for healing:

- **Acknowledge Your Inner Child:** Simply recognize that our inner child holds wounds from our childhood trauma experiences.
- **Design a Safe Place to Heal:** Find a quiet place to feel safe, providing a reflective and calming environment.
- **Know Your Triggers:** From the outset, list the known triggers that have affected you, internal (fear, anger, etc.) and external (sights and sounds).
- **Have Grounding Techniques:** Know how to use grounding techniques, meditation, or breathing exercises to stay in the present.
- **Find a Safe Place to Visualize:** Once in your safe place, visualize your younger self. What age are they? What is their expression? What are they saying?
- **Connect with Your Inner Child:** Try to dialogue with your inner child. Speak with compassion, empathy, and kindness as the parent you wish you would have had.
- **Identify Those Negative Thoughts:** If you can, identify any negative self-talk your younger self engages in and respond with affirmations, helping them set boundaries and offering encouragement.
- **Prepare to Feel:** Allow yourself to wade through the clutter of emotions your inner child may exhibit.
- **Offer Up Forgiveness:** Determine how to offer forgiveness to those responsible for the trauma.
- **Journal the Experience:** Allow yourself to journal the experience and write a letter to your younger self expressing the self-compassion you needed then but can provide now.
- **Seek Professional Support:** We must seek professional support to ensure a fully stable and safe therapeutic environment.