The Soul SCHOOL

Do what makes your soul shine

What's Wrong With Me?



Discover the hidden patterns that may be shaping your thoughts, relationships, health, parenting, finances and purpose.

BY THE SOUL SCHOOL
WWW.THESOULSCHOOL.COM



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Welcome

What if nothing is wrong with you?

Have you ever found yourself lying awake at night wondering...

Why do I feel like this?

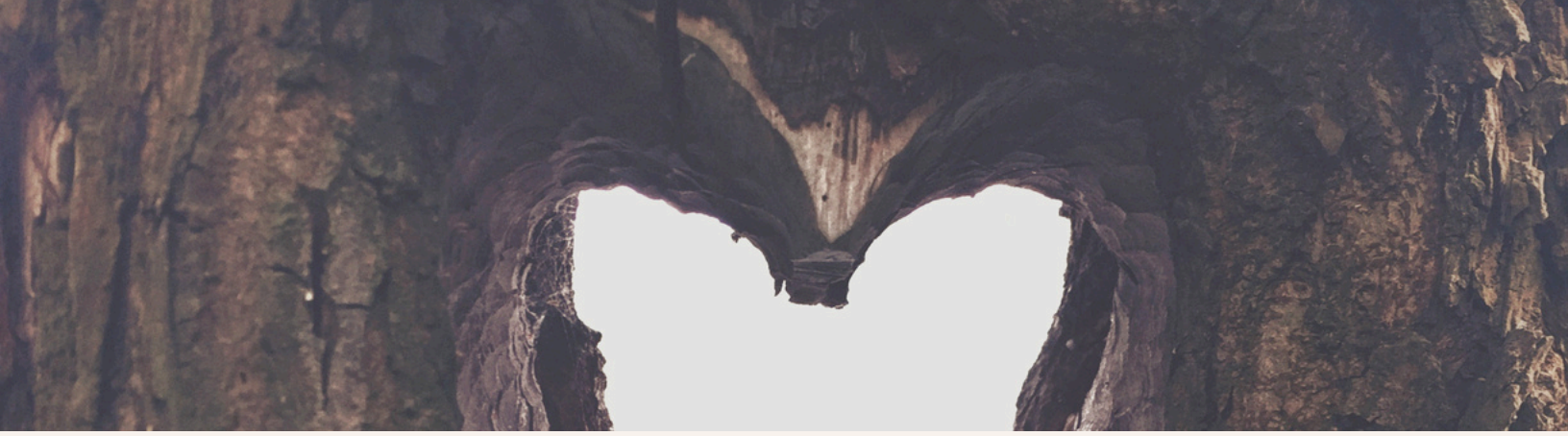
Why am I anxious when everyone tells me I should be happy?
Why do I keep attracting the same relationships?
Why do I keep choosing people who hurt me?
Why do I shout at my children when I love them more than anything?
Why do I feel guilty all the time?
Why can't I say no?
Why do I feel exhausted before the day has even begun?
Why do I keep putting everyone else's needs before my own?
Why do I feel like I'm constantly carrying the weight of the world?
Why can't I make enough money?
Why do I know I'm capable of more but still feel stuck?
Why do I sabotage myself every time life starts going well?
Why do I never truly feel safe?
Why can't I let things go?
Why do I always feel as though something is missing?
Perhaps you've blamed yourself.
Perhaps other people have blamed you.
Perhaps you've wondered whether you're broken.
Perhaps you've spent years trying to "fix" yourself.



Reading books.
Listening to podcasts.
Going to therapy.
Trying the next diet.
The next relationship.
The next career.
The next course.
The next self-help programme.
Always hoping this one will finally explain why life feels harder for you than it seems to for everyone else.
If that's you...
I want you to pause for just a moment.
Take a breath.
And consider this possibility...

What if nothing is wrong with you?

What if your anxiety...
your anger...
your people-pleasing...
your exhaustion...
your relationships...
your parenting...
your finances...
your physical symptoms...
your lack of confidence...
your fear...
are not separate problems at all?
What if they are connected?
What if they are all different expressions of the same underlying patterns?



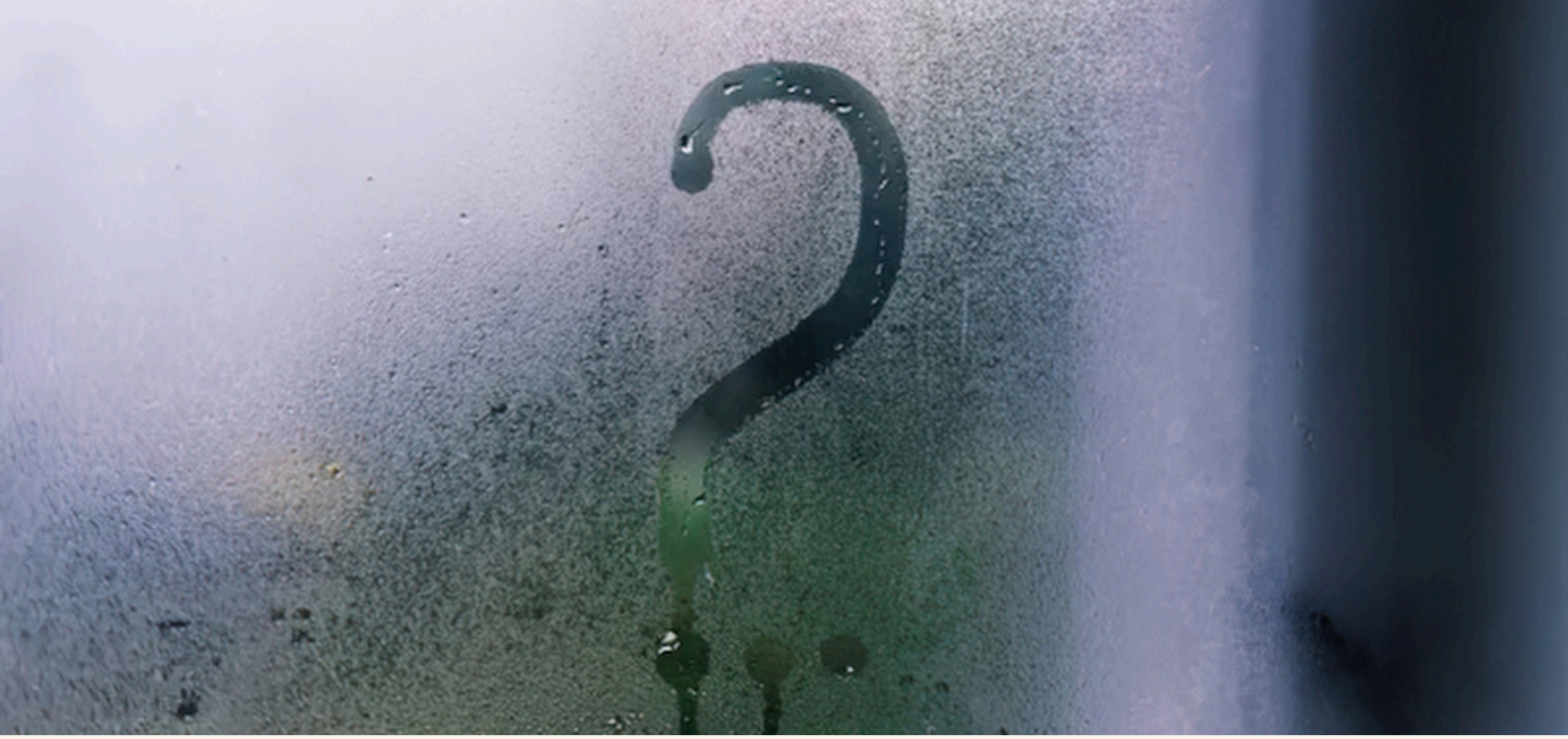
We Are All Shaped By Our Story

None of us arrives in adulthood as a blank page.
Long before we understand the world, we are learning from it.
We learn what love looks like.
What conflict looks like.
Whether it is safe to speak.
Whether our feelings matter.
Whether we are allowed to make mistakes.
Whether money feels safe or frightening.
Whether we have to earn love.
Whether we are allowed to rest.
Whether we are expected to rescue everyone else.
Whether we must become invisible to survive.
Sometimes those lessons help us.
Sometimes they quietly become the beliefs that shape the rest of our lives.
Many of them happen so early that we don't even realise they are there.
They simply become...
"This is just who I am."
But what if they aren't?
What if they are simply adaptations?
Brilliant survival strategies created by a younger version of you doing the very best they could with what they knew at the time.



The Hidden Cost of Survival

The problem with survival strategies
is that they don't disappear just because the danger has gone.
The child who learned...
"If I keep everyone happy, I'll be safe."
Often becomes the adult who cannot say no.
The child who learned...
"Don't upset Dad."
May become the adult who avoids conflict at all costs.
The child who watched Mum stay silent because she was frightened of losing the home or having no money...
May grow into the adult who remains in unhealthy relationships because financial security feels safer than emotional freedom.
The child who learned...
"My needs don't matter."
May become the parent who gives everything to everyone else while quietly becoming exhausted, resentful and overwhelmed.
The child who learned...
"Money is never secure."
May become the adult who constantly worries, even when there is enough.
The child who learned...
"Love has to be earned."
May spend a lifetime proving their worth while never truly believing they are enough.
These are not character flaws.
They are learned patterns.
And learned patterns can change.



The Question That Changes Everything

For years, people have asked me the same question.

“What’s wrong with me?”

After working with hundreds of people through integrative therapy, professional kinesiology, nutrition and holistic healing, I’ve found myself asking a different question.

Not...
“What’s wrong with you?”

But...
“What happened to you?”

What did you experience?
What did you learn?
What did you have to become in order to survive?
And perhaps most importantly...

How far have those adaptations taken you away from your truth?



This Book Is Different

This isn't another book that tells you to simply think positively.
Or meditate more.
Or be more grateful.
Or "just let it go."
Because healing isn't that simple.
At The Soul School, we believe healing happens when we begin to understand the whole person.
Your mind.
Your body.
Your relationships.
Your family.
Your beliefs.
Your emotions.
Your nervous system.
Your physical health.
Your finances.
Your purpose.
Because none of these exist in isolation.
Everything is connected.
And when we begin to see the connections...
Everything starts to make sense.

The Soul SCHOOL
Do what makes your soul shine

Before You Read Any Further...

The next pages contain **The Soul School Self-Assessment.**

Please complete it before reading the rest of the book.
Don't overthink your answers.

Be honest.

Your highest-scoring areas are not there to label you.
They are simply clues.

Clues that may help you understand why you've been feeling the way you have.

Because the goal of this book isn't to tell you what's wrong with you.
It's to help you remember something you may have forgotten.

Who you really are beneath everything life has taught you to become.



The Soul School Self-Assessment

Discover the Nine Hidden Patterns That May Be Shaping Your Life



HOW TO USE THIS COMPASS

Take a few quiet moments for yourself.
Rate each area from 1 – 10:
1 = Needs a lot of attention
10 = Thriving

Notice which areas feel strong and which may need more love and support.

This is not about perfection.
It's about awareness.
Awareness creates choice.
Choice creates change.

REFLECTION

Which area feels most in need of your attention right now?

What is one small step you can take this week to support that area?

YOU ARE A WHOLE PERSON. EVERY PART MATTERS. SMALL STEPS LEAD TO BIG TRANSFORMATION.

The Soul SCHOOL
Do what makes your soul shine

The Nine Foundations of Your Life

Before we begin...

I want you to forget everything you've ever believed about being "broken."

This assessment isn't looking for what's wrong with you. It's looking for the places where life may have gradually pulled you away from your authentic self.

Perhaps through childhood.
Perhaps through relationships.
Perhaps through trauma.
Perhaps through years of simply surviving.

Each section represents one important foundation of life. There are no right or wrong answers.

No pass or fail.
Simply answer honestly.

Score each statement
0 = Never
1 = Rarely
2 = Sometimes
3 = Often
4 = Almost Always

At the end of each section, total your score.

Don't analyse it yet.

Everything will become clearer as you read.

Foundation One
TRUTH

Who am I beneath everything life has taught me to become?

Most people never lose themselves overnight.
They lose themselves gradually.
One compromise.
One disappointment.
One unhealthy relationship.
One family expectation.
One painful experience at a time.
Until one day they wake up asking...
“Who even am I anymore?”
If you’ve ever felt that way...
you’re not alone.



Score yourself honestly.

☐ I often wonder who I really am.
☐ I struggle to make decisions because I doubt myself.
☐ I worry about disappointing other people.
☐ I change myself depending on who I'm with.
☐ I often ignore my intuition.
☐ I rarely put my own needs first.
☐ I compare myself with others.
☐ I struggle to identify what I genuinely want from life.
☐ I often feel disconnected from myself.
☐ I know something is missing, but I can't explain what.

Score _____ /40

If this section resonated...

You may have spent so long becoming who everyone else needed...
that you've forgotten who you were created to be.
Don't worry.
That person isn't lost.
They've simply been buried beneath years of adapting.

Turn the page.

Foundation Two
Relationships & Inner Balance

Why do I keep repeating the same relationship patterns?

Relationships are often where our deepest wounds become most visible.
Not because relationships create them...
but because relationships reveal them.
Many of us enter adulthood believing we're simply looking for love.

In reality...
we're often looking for what feels familiar.

Sometimes familiar is healthy.
Sometimes...
familiar is chaos.

As a woman...

Have you ever thought...
"Why do I keep giving until I'm exhausted?"
"Why do I struggle asking for help?"
"Why do I feel guilty resting?"
"Why do I always put everyone else first?"
"Why do I feel responsible for everyone?"
Or perhaps...
"Why do I feel like I have to do everything myself?"
"Why can't I switch off?"
"Why do I find it so difficult to trust anyone else to take over?"

These can sometimes reflect an inner imbalance between our nurturing qualities and our decisive, protective qualities. We all have both, regardless of gender, and when life pushes us too far towards one way of coping, relationships can begin to feel exhausting rather than life-giving.

As a man...

Perhaps you've wondered...
"Why do I lose my temper?"
"Why do I struggle showing emotion?"
"Why do I feel pressure to provide?"
"Why can't I relax?"
"Why do I withdraw instead of talking?"
"Why do I always feel like I have to be strong?"
Sometimes strength has been confused with silence.
Sometimes protection has become control.
Sometimes responsibility has become emotional isolation.

Healthy balance looks like...

Being able to lead...
without controlling.
To care...
without rescuing.
To receive...
without guilt.
To protect...
without dominating.
To nurture...
without losing yourself.

Healing isn't about becoming more masculine or more feminine.
It's about allowing the healthiest qualities of both to work together.

Score yourself honestly.

☐ I lose myself in relationships.
☐ I fear rejection or abandonment.
☐ I struggle trusting people.
☐ I find it difficult to receive help or love.
☐ I over-give until I become exhausted.
☐ I feel I must always be strong or in control.
☐ I struggle to rest or slow down.
☐ I often ignore my own needs to care for others.
☐ I repeat the same relationship patterns.
☐ I feel emotionally out of balance.

Score _____ /40

Pause for a moment...

Imagine a healthy relationship.
Not a perfect one.
A healthy one.
Would you know how to create it?
Would you know how to receive it?
Or have you spent so many years surviving...
that peace now feels unfamiliar?
Because here's something I've learned...
People rarely choose what is healthy.
They choose what feels familiar.
And until we understand what feels familiar...
we unknowingly keep choosing it.

Foundation Three

Boundaries, Codependency & Relationship Patterns

“Why do I always put everyone else first?”

Have you ever...
Walked away from a conversation replaying everything you should have said?
Agreed to something you didn’t want to do?
Said “yes” when every part of you wanted to say “no”?
Stayed in a relationship long after you knew it wasn’t healthy?
Made excuses for someone else’s behaviour?
Felt guilty simply because you put yourself first?
If so...
You are far from alone.
Many of us are taught from a very young age that being a “good” person means putting everyone else first.
We are praised for being kind.

Helpful.
Easy-going.
Selfless.

But somewhere along the way...
kindness can become self-sacrifice.
Compassion can become rescuing.
Loyalty can become tolerating unacceptable behaviour.
Love can become losing yourself.

What Are Boundaries?

Many people think boundaries are about keeping people out.
They aren't.
Healthy boundaries are about clearly knowing where you end and someone else begins.
They allow you to love people…
without carrying them.
Support people…
without rescuing them.
Care deeply…
without abandoning yourself.
Boundaries protect relationships.
They don't destroy them.

Do You Recognise Yourself?

You may struggle with boundaries if…

- You feel guilty saying no.
- You apologise even when you've done nothing wrong.
- You constantly put yourself last.
- You worry people won't like you if you disappoint them.
- You avoid conflict at all costs.
- You feel responsible for everyone else's happiness.
- You over-explain your decisions.
- You keep giving long after you're exhausted.
- You tolerate behaviour you know isn't acceptable.
- You rarely ask yourself, "What do I need?"

When Helping Becomes Hurting

Helping someone is healthy.
Rescuing someone often isn't.
There is a huge difference.
Helping empowers.
Rescuing unintentionally keeps people dependent.
Imagine a child who falls while learning to walk.
If you pick them up every single time before they've even tried...
they never discover they can stand on their own.
The same happens emotionally.
Sometimes rescuing another person prevents them from growing.
And prevents you from living your own life.

The Hidden Cost of Codependency

Codependency isn't simply "being needy."
In fact...
many codependent people appear incredibly capable.
They are often the ones everyone relies upon.
The dependable one.
The strong one.
The fixer.
The organiser.
The peacemaker.
The one who always copes.
The one who carries everyone else.
From the outside they seem incredibly together.
Inside...
they're exhausted.

Why Does This Happen?

Often because, as children, love became connected to responsibility.
Perhaps...

Mum was overwhelmed.
Dad was unpredictable.

There was addiction.
Conflict.
Mental illness.
Financial pressure.
Divorce.
Illness.

Someone had to become the responsible one.
Someone had to keep the peace.
Someone had to look after everyone else.

Perhaps...
that someone became you.

Children naturally adapt.
They don't think,
"This isn't healthy."
They simply think,
"This is how families work."

Those adaptations often continue into adulthood...
long after the original danger has disappeared.

What Does This Look Like As An Adult?

You may…
Stay in relationships because you feel sorry for them.
Choose partners who need saving.
Become everyone's therapist.
Answer your phone immediately because you're frightened someone needs you.
Feel guilty resting.
Feel guilty spending money on yourself.
Feel guilty saying no.
Feel guilty asking for help.
Believe your worth comes from what you do for other people.
Lose yourself trying to keep everyone happy.
Sound familiar?

A Mother's Story

Sarah loved her children more than anything.
She worked.
Cooked.
Cleaned.
Remembered birthdays.
Organised appointments.
Packed school bags.
Supported everyone emotionally.
She told herself…
"I'm just being a good mum."
Yet every evening she found herself shouting.
Not because she didn't love them.
Because she had nothing left.

Nobody had ever taught Sarah that boundaries weren't selfish.
Nobody had taught her that constantly giving without receiving eventually becomes resentment.
Nobody had taught her that caring for herself was one of the greatest gifts she could give her children.

Healthy Love Doesn't Cost You Yourself

One of the greatest myths many of us learn is this:
"Love means sacrificing yourself."
Healthy love asks us to be compassionate.
It does not ask us to disappear.

Real love allows two whole people to stand side by side.
Not one person carrying the other.

Reflection

Complete these sentences honestly.
I find it hardest to say no to...

I often feel responsible for...

When somebody is upset, I automatically...

I would feel guilty if I...

One boundary I know I need to set is...

The Truth

Boundaries are not rejection.
They are self-respect.
Saying no to something unhealthy often means saying yes to something healthier.
You are not responsible for fixing everyone.
You are not responsible for carrying everyone.
You are not responsible for keeping everyone happy.
You are responsible for living your own life with honesty, compassion and integrity.
Sometimes the most loving thing we can do is allow other people to carry what belongs to them.

Soul School Insight

At The Soul School, we often find that difficulties with boundaries don't exist in isolation. They can be closely connected with earlier experiences of relationships, safety, responsibility and self-worth. Rather than treating them as a character flaw, we explore how they fit within your wider life story.

As you continue through this book, you may begin to notice how the patterns you've recognised in one foundation start to appear in others. That's because our thoughts, relationships, finances, health and sense of purpose are often more connected than we realise.

HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

A COMPLETE GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING, BUILDING, AND LIVING WITH THEM

1. WHAT ARE BOUNDARIES?

Boundaries are the invisible lines that define where you end and others begin. They protect your emotional, mental, physical, energetic, and spiritual wellbeing.

Boundaries clarify what you are responsible for—and what you are not.

Healthy boundaries are not walls to shut people out. They are filters that allow love, respect, and connection in—while keeping harm, disrespect, and overwhelm out.

Boundaries answer the questions:

- What is OK for me?
- What is not OK for me?
- What am I responsible for?
- What am I not responsible for?

2. WHY BOUNDARIES ARE IMPORTANT

WITHOUT BOUNDARIES, PEOPLE OFTEN FEEL:

- Drained • Overwhelmed • Resentful
- Invisible • Used or taken for granted
- Emotionally unsafe • Confused about their identity

HEALTHY BOUNDARIES CREATE:

- Emotional safety • Self-respect
- Clear communication • Balanced relationships • Inner peace
- Stronger self-worth • Authentic connection instead of people-pleasing

Boundaries are a form of self-love.

3. TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

EMOTIONAL	Protect your feelings and emotional energy.
MENTAL	Protect your thoughts, beliefs, and opinions.
PHYSICAL	Protect your body, space, and privacy.
ENERGETIC	Protect your life-force and emotional capacity.
TIME	Protect how your time is used.
MATERIAL	Protect your resources and finances.

4. EXAMPLES OF BOUNDARIES IN DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIPS

FAMILY	"I love you, but I won't engage when voices are raised."
ROMANTIC	"I need respect during disagreements."
FRIENDSHIPS	"I can listen, but I cannot carry this for you."
WORK	"I am not available after working hours."
SELF	Resting, saying no, self-kindness.

5. SIGNS YOU MAY NEED STRONGER BOUNDARIES

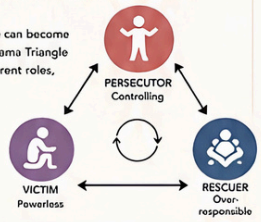
- Difficulty saying no
- Feeling responsible for others' emotions
- Overgiving and exhaustion
- Resentment and silence
- People-pleasing
- Fear of conflict
- Feeling unseen or unheard

6. BOUNDARY LANGUAGE

GENTLE	"That doesn't work for me."
FIRM	"Please don't speak to me like that."
LOVING	"I care about you and need this for my wellbeing."
IF IGNORED	"I will step away now."

7. BOUNDARIES AND THE DRAMA TRIANGLE

When we have boundary issues, we can become involved in a dynamic called the Drama Triangle where you and others take on different roles, which can rotate.



8. THINGS PEOPLE SAY IN THE DRAMA TRIANGLE

- VICTIM: "I can't cope." "It's not fair." "Nothing changes."
- RESCUER: "I'll fix it." "You need me." "I can't say no."
- PERSECUTOR: "This is your fault." "You always mess up." "What's wrong with you?"

Roles rotate unconsciously.
Boundaries interrupt the cycle.

9. DRAMA TRIANGLE → EMPOWERMENT DYNAMIC

VICTIM	→	CREATOR I have choices.
RESCUER	→	COACH I support, not fix.
PERSECUTOR	→	CHALLENGER I speak truth without harm.

With awareness we can create a shift!

10. BOUNDARIES AND CODEPENDENCY

WEAK BOUNDARIES
Overgiving · Self-loss · Rescuing

STRONG BOUNDARIES
Identity · Autonomy · Balance · Self-trust

11. CONTROL VS NO CONTROL

CANNOT CONTROL (LET GO ZONE)	CAN CONTROL (POWER ZONE)
Others' feelings	My choices
Reactions	Behaviour
Past	Healing
Opinions	Boundaries
Outcomes	Effort · Honesty
External events	Reactions · Self-care

Peace comes when energy moves from Let Go Zone → Power Zone.

12. WHAT HAPPENS WITH HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

- Emotional calm
- Confidence
- Healthier relationships
- Less resentment
- Authentic self-expression
- Reclaimed time and energy
- Inner peace

13. COMMON FEARS

- "They will leave." Right people stay.
- "It's selfish." It's self-respect.
- "I don't like conflict." Boundaries reduce long-term conflict.

14. BOUNDARY AWARENESS EXERCISES

1	Where Am I Drained?	Where do I feel resentful, obligated, heavy, or exhausted?
2	Responsibility Check	What is mine? What is not mine? Am I rescuing?
3	Boundary Gap Questions	Do I struggle to say no? Fear upsetting others? Overgive? Absorb emotions?
4	Rewrite the Script	Old response → Desired boundary → New statement → Supporting action
5	Body Awareness	Where do I feel tight, frozen, or heavy after interactions?
6	Permission Statements	I am allowed to say no, rest, protect my peace, honour myself.
7	Check-In	How do I feel now in my body? What do I need?

15. TRAUMA, NERVOUS SYSTEM & BOUNDARIES

Weak boundaries often come from:

- Survival patterns (freeze, fawn, appease)
- Fear of rejection
- Childhood conditioning
- Emotional unsafety

Healing boundaries involves:

- Nervous system regulation
- Safety in saying no
- Reclaiming voice and body signals
- Emotional processing
- Rebuilding self-trust

Boundaries are somatic, not just mental.

16. SOMATIC / KINESIOLOGY BOUNDARY EXERCISE

1. Think of a draining situation
2. Notice body reaction
3. Ask: "What boundary is needed?"
4. Speak boundary aloud
5. Notice body shift (strength / calm)
6. Reinforce with breath + grounding

Repeat until body registers safety.

17. MOVING OUT OF THE DRAMA TRIANGLE PRACTICE

WHEN YOU FEEL: VICTIM	WHEN YOU FEEL: RESCUER	WHEN YOU FEEL: PERSECUTOR
Ask: • What choice do I have? • What can I control?	Ask: • Am I over-functioning? • What is theirs to carry?	Ask: • Can I express truth without attack? • What boundary is needed?

18. BOUNDARY STRENGTHENING REFLECTION

- Where do I abandon myself?
- Where do I tolerate discomfort to keep peace?
- What am I afraid will happen if I set boundaries?
- What boundary would change my life most right now?
- What does my body need more of?
- Where do I need protection, truth, or distance?
- What does healthy self-respect look like in action?

WHAT ARE BOUNDARIES?

A boundary is the line between what belongs to me and what belongs to you.

It helps us understand:

* What am I comfortable with?
* What am I not comfortable with?
* What am I responsible for?
* What belongs to somebody else?
* What am I willing to give?
* What am I no longer willing to tolerate?

Boundaries can protect our emotional, physical, mental, energetic, financial and spiritual wellbeing.

Importantly, boundaries are not walls.

A wall says:

“Nobody gets in.”

A healthy boundary says:

“You are welcome here when there is respect, honesty and safety.”

Think of a boundary as a filter rather than a barrier. It allows love, intimacy, generosity and connection to move through while protecting us from behaviour that is harmful, disrespectful or overwhelming.

WHY DO BOUNDARIES MATTER?

When our boundaries are unclear, we can gradually lose connection with ourselves.

We may become:

* Drained
* Overwhelmed
* Resentful
* Over-responsible
* Afraid to say no
* Easily guilted
* Emotionally exhausted
* Invisible within relationships
* Responsible for everybody else's happiness
* Unsure of our own needs

Sometimes resentment is actually a boundary signal.

It can be the part of us saying:

"I am giving more than I genuinely want to give."

Healthy boundaries can create:

* Emotional safety
* Self-respect
* Clearer communication
* More balanced relationships
* Greater confidence
* Stronger self-worth
* More authentic connection
* Less resentment
* More time and energy
* Greater inner peace

Boundaries are not the opposite of love.

Healthy boundaries make healthier love possible.

THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

Emotional Boundaries

Emotional boundaries protect your feelings and emotional capacity.

They allow you to care about another person's feelings without believing you must manage them.

"I care that you're upset, but I am not responsible for making the feeling disappear."

Mental Boundaries

These protect your thoughts, values, beliefs and opinions.

You are allowed to think differently from somebody you love.

Disagreement does not automatically mean rejection.

Physical Boundaries

These protect your body, privacy, personal space and physical safety.

You decide who touches you, how, when and under what circumstances.

Energetic Boundaries

Some people or situations leave us feeling energised. Others leave us depleted.

Energetic boundaries involve recognising your emotional capacity and noticing when you need space, rest or distance.

Time Boundaries

Your time is a finite resource.

A time boundary might mean declining an invitation, protecting rest, ending a conversation or deciding when you are available for work.

Material & Financial Boundaries

These involve your money, possessions and resources.

Generosity should be a choice rather than something extracted through pressure, fear, obligation or guilt.

WHAT CAN HEALTHY BOUNDARIES SOUND LIKE?

Boundaries do not have to be aggressive.

Often the strongest boundary is calm, simple and clear.

Family

“I love you, but I won’t continue this conversation while voices are being raised.”

Romantic relationships

“I am willing to talk about this, but I need us to speak respectfully.”

Friendships

“I can listen and support you, but I cannot solve this for you.”

Work

“I won’t be available after working hours today.”

With yourself

“I need to rest rather than push myself through exhaustion.”

A boundary does not require a lengthy defence.

Sometimes:

“No, that doesn’t work for me.”

is enough.

SIGNS YOUR BOUNDARIES MAY NEED STRENGTHENING

You may benefit from exploring your boundaries if you regularly:

* Say yes when you want to say no
* Feel guilty for putting yourself first
* Take responsibility for other people's emotions
* Over-explain your decisions
* Give until you are exhausted
* Avoid conflict at almost any cost
* Stay silent to keep the peace
* Feel responsible for fixing people
* Absorb other people's moods
* Feel unseen or unheard
* Tolerate behaviour that repeatedly hurts you
* Feel resentful after helping
* Lose yourself within relationships

One useful question is:

"Am I doing this from genuine love and choice — or from fear, guilt and obligation?"

LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF BOUNDARIES

Boundaries can have different levels.

Gentle

“That doesn’t work for me.”

Clear

“I don’t feel comfortable with that.”

Firm

“Please don’t speak to me like that.”

Loving

“I care about you, and I also need to do what is right for my wellbeing.”

Protective

“If the shouting continues, I will leave the conversation.”

The final stage is particularly important.

A boundary is not simply telling another person what they must do.

It identifies what you will do if the behaviour continues.

We cannot control somebody else’s behaviour.

We can control our response to it.

BOUNDARIES & THE DRAMA TRIANGLE

One of the most useful ways of understanding unhealthy relationship dynamics is the Drama Triangle.

The three positions are:

VICTIM

“I have no power.”

RESCUER

“It is my responsibility to fix this.”

PERSECUTOR

“This is your fault.”

People can move rapidly between these positions.

A rescuer may repeatedly overgive, become exhausted and then feel like a victim.

A victim may become angry and move into persecution.

A persecutor may later feel attacked and move into victimhood.

The roles change, but the underlying pattern continues.

Healthy boundaries help interrupt the triangle because they return responsibility to the person it belongs to.

LISTEN FOR THE LANGUAGE OF THE TRIANGLE

Victim language

“I can’t cope.”

“Nothing ever changes.”

“I don’t have a choice.”

Rescuer language

“I’ll sort it.”

“They need me.”

“I can’t say no.”

“If I don’t help, who will?”

Persecutor language

“This is your fault.”

“You always mess everything up.”

“What is wrong with you?”

The aim isn’t to judge ourselves when we notice these patterns.

It is to recognise them.

Awareness gives us the opportunity to choose something different.

FROM THE DRAMA TRIANGLE TO EMPOWERMENT

We can transform the triangle by changing the position we take.

VICTIM → CREATOR

Instead of:

“I am powerless.”

Ask:

“What choices are available to me?”

RESCUER → COACH

Instead of:

“I must fix this for you.”

Try:

“I believe you are capable, and I can support you without taking over.”

PERSECUTOR → CHALLENGER

Instead of attacking:

“This is all your fault.”

We learn to communicate truth with accountability:

“This isn’t acceptable to me, and something needs to change.”

This moves relationships away from powerlessness, rescuing and blame and towards choice, responsibility and truth.

BOUNDARIES & CODEPENDENCY

Codependent patterns can develop when our wellbeing becomes overly dependent on another person's mood, behaviour or approval.

We may:

* Rescue
* Over-function
* People-please
* Ignore our own needs
* Feel responsible for keeping everybody happy
* Struggle to tolerate another person's disappointment
* Confuse being needed with being loved

Weak boundaries can lead to:

Overgiving → exhaustion → resentment → self-loss

Healthy boundaries encourage:

Identity → autonomy → balance → self-trust

The goal is not:

"I don't need anybody."

It is:

"I can love you without losing myself."

THE LET GO ZONE & THE POWER ZONE

One of the biggest sources of emotional exhaustion is spending our energy trying to control things that were never ours to control.

THE LET GO ZONE

I cannot control:

* Other people's feelings
* Other people's opinions
* Other people's reactions
* Their choices
* The past
* Every outcome
* External events
* Whether somebody understands me
* Whether somebody approves of my boundary

THE POWER ZONE

I can influence or take responsibility for:

* My choices
* My behaviour
* My boundaries
* My honesty
* My healing
* My effort
* My responses
* My self-care
* Whether I stay in a situation
* How I choose to move forward

A useful boundary practice is therefore to ask:

"Am I spending my energy in my Power Zone — or trying to control my Let Go Zone?"

Peace often increases when we bring our energy back to what is actually ours.

WHAT CHANGES WHEN BOUNDARIES BECOME HEALTHIER?

Healthy boundaries can lead to:

* Greater emotional calm
* Increased confidence
* Less resentment
* More honest relationships
* More authentic self-expression
* Greater self-respect
* Reclaimed time
* Reclaimed energy
* Stronger identity
* Increased emotional safety
* Greater inner peace

Perhaps most importantly, relationships become more genuine.

When we stop saying yes when we mean no, people begin meeting the real version of us rather than the version designed to keep everybody happy.



COMMON FEARS ABOUT SETTING BOUNDARIES

“What if they leave?”

Sometimes boundaries reveal the true health of a relationship.

People who benefited from you having no boundaries may resist when those boundaries change.

Their discomfort does not automatically mean your boundary is wrong.

“Isn’t it selfish?”

There is a difference between selfishness and self-respect.

Selfishness says:

“Only my needs matter.”

Healthy boundaries say:

“Your needs matter — and mine matter too.”

“I hate conflict.”

Avoiding a difficult conversation may create temporary peace.

But repeated self-abandonment often creates long-term resentment.

Healthy boundaries can actually reduce conflict over time because expectations become clearer.

BOUNDARY AWARENESS EXERCISES

Where Am I Being Drained

Think about your relationships and ask:

Where do I regularly feel:

* Resentful?
* Obligated?
* Heavy?
* Anxious?
* Exhausted?
* Responsible?
* Guilty?

These feelings may be pointing towards a boundary gap.

Responsibility Check

Ask:

What is mine?

What belongs to them?

Am I supporting — or rescuing?

THE BOUNDARY GAP

Ask yourself:

Do I struggle to say no?

Do I fear upsetting people?

Do I overgive?

Do I absorb other people’s emotions?

Do I silence myself to maintain connection?

REWRITE THE SCRIPT

Take one difficult situation and write:

Old response → Boundary needed → New statement → Supporting action

For example:

Old response:
I stay on the phone even though I am exhausted.

Boundary:
I need to protect my energy.

New statement:
“I need to stop here for tonight. We can talk another time.”

Action:
End the conversation.



TRAUMA, THE NERVOUS SYSTEM & BOUNDARIES

Boundary difficulties are not always simply a communication problem.

Sometimes they began as survival strategies.

A child who learned that saying no led to anger, withdrawal, punishment or rejection may learn:

“It is safer to comply.”

The nervous system can carry this learning into adulthood.

This can appear as:

* Freeze
* Fawn
* Appeasement
* People-pleasing
* Conflict avoidance
* Hypervigilance
* Difficulty recognising personal needs
* Fear when saying no

This is why somebody may intellectually know that they are allowed to have boundaries yet still feel enormous anxiety when they try to set one.

Boundary healing can therefore involve:

* Nervous-system regulation
* Reclaiming the right to say no
* Reconnecting with body signals
* Emotional processing
* Practising safe assertiveness
* Building self-trust
* Learning that disagreement can be survived

Boundaries are not only cognitive. They can also be deeply embodied.

A SOMATIC / KINESIOLOGY BOUNDARY EXERCISE

Choose a situation where you regularly feel drained, uncomfortable or unable to say what you need.

Bring the situation gently to mind.

Then notice your body.

Where do you feel:

* Tightness?
* Heaviness?
* Weakness?
* Pressure?
* Anxiety?
* A desire to move away?

Ask yourself:

“What boundary does my body seem to be asking for?”

Now say the boundary aloud.

For example:

“I am allowed to say no.”

“I don’t have to carry this.”

“I can care without rescuing.”

“I am allowed to protect my space.”

Notice whether anything changes in your breathing, posture or sense of strength.

Ground yourself through your feet and take several slow breaths.

The aim is not to force a particular response but to begin reconnecting thought, voice and body.

MOVING OUT OF THE DRAMA TRIANGLE

When you notice yourself entering one of the roles, pause.

IF I FEEL LIKE THE VICTIM:

Ask:

* What choice do I have?
* What can I control?
* What is one action I can take?

IF I AM RESCUING:

Ask:

* Am I over-functioning?
* Was I actually asked to do this?
* What belongs to them?
* Can I support without taking responsibility?

IF I AM PERSECUTING:

Ask:

* What am I actually feeling underneath the anger?
* What truth needs to be communicated?
* Can I communicate it without attacking?
* What boundary is needed?

The question changes from:

“How do I change them?”

to:

“How do I change my position in this dynamic?”

BOUNDARY STRENGTHENING REFLECTION

Take some time to consider:

Where do I abandon myself to maintain connection?

Where do I tolerate discomfort simply to keep the peace?

Whose emotions do I feel responsible for?

Where am I rescuing rather than supporting?

What am I afraid will happen if I say no?

What does my body tell me around certain people?

Where do I need more protection?

Where do I need more honesty?

Where do I need more distance?

What boundary would make the greatest difference to my life right now?

And finally:

What would self-respect look like if I turned it into an action?

THE SOUL SCHOOL PERSPECTIVE

At The Soul School, boundaries are not viewed simply as learning to say no.

We look at the deeper question:

Why did it become difficult to say no in the first place?

Sometimes the pattern began in childhood.

Sometimes it developed through trauma.

Sometimes it is connected to family dynamics, generational patterns, codependency or the Drama Triangle.

Sometimes the mind understands the boundary perfectly — but the body still associates setting it with danger, rejection, abandonment or conflict.

This is why our approach can explore boundaries across the mind, body, relationships, nervous system and deeper emotional patterns, drawing on integrative counselling and psychotherapy, kinesiology, somatic awareness, generational work and other holistic approaches where appropriate.

Because ultimately healthy boundaries are about more than keeping things out.

They are about creating a safe enough space within yourself for your own voice, needs, truth and identity to exist.

You can love without rescuing.

You can care without carrying.

You can say no without becoming unkind.

You can understand somebody without accepting harmful behaviour.

You can forgive and still have boundaries.

You can let go of what isn’t yours and take responsibility for what is.

And perhaps one of the most important boundaries of all is learning:

I do not have to abandon myself in order to be loved.

Foundation Four

Foundations & Security

“If my foundations didn’t feel safe, how could I ever feel secure?”

Before we ever learned mathematics...

Before we learned to read...

Before we learned who we wanted to become...

We were learning something far more important.

We were learning...

Is the world safe?

Can I trust people?

Will someone protect me?

Do my feelings matter?

What happens if I tell the truth?

What happens if Mum cries?

What happens if Dad gets angry?

What happens if there isn’t enough money?

What happens if people leave?

Children don’t need someone to explain these things.

They absorb them.

Every single day.

Without realising it...

they are building the foundations upon which the rest of their lives will stand.

Home Is Where We Learn Safety

Some people grew up in homes filled with laughter.

Others grew up constantly reading the room.

Listening for footsteps.

Listening for doors closing.

Listening for voices becoming louder.

Trying to work out...

“What mood is Dad in today?”

“Is Mum upset?”

“Should I stay quiet?”

“When is the next argument coming?”

Children become experts at survival.

Not because they choose to.

Because they have to.



Sometimes Love Wasn't The Problem...

Sometimes...

your parents loved you deeply.

But they were overwhelmed.

Perhaps Mum stayed because she couldn't afford to leave.

Perhaps she worried...

"How would I feed the children?"

"Where would we live?"

"What would people think?"

"Would he take the children?"

"Would we lose everything?"

So she stayed.

Perhaps Dad worked incredibly hard.

But carried stress, anger or trauma that he never learned how to express.

Perhaps money became a source of fear.

Or control.

Or constant arguments.

Perhaps everyone loved each other...

yet nobody felt emotionally safe.

Children don't understand mortgages.

Or financial dependence.

Or coercive control.

They simply learn...

"Keeping the family together is more important than telling the truth."

When Silence Feels Safer Than Truth

Many children growing up in difficult homes make an unconscious decision.

“I won’t tell anyone.”

Not because they’re protecting the abuse.

Because they’re protecting the family.

They worry…

“If I tell someone…”

Will Dad get arrested?

Will Mum cry?

Will we lose our home?

Will there be enough money?

Will it be my fault?

Will my brothers and sisters hate me?

Will everything fall apart?

So they stay silent.

Not because they are weak.

Because silence feels safer than uncertainty.



The Lessons We Carry

As adults, these early lessons often become invisible rules.
Without even noticing, we may begin living as though…
Security is more important than happiness.
Money equals safety.
Conflict destroys families.
Speaking up causes pain.
It’s better to stay than leave.
Being alone is dangerous.
I must always have a backup plan.
I must hold everything together.
If I don’t, everything will collapse.
These beliefs can shape decades of our lives.

How This Can Show Up As An Adult

You may…
Stay in a relationship that no longer feels healthy because financial security feels safer than starting again.
Remain in a job you hate because uncertainty feels unbearable.
Panic whenever money is tight—even if you’ve experienced this before and recovered.
Constantly worry about the future.
Need everything planned.
Feel anxious when life feels uncertain.
Struggle to relax because you’re always preparing for the next crisis.
Keep quiet rather than risk upsetting someone.
Believe your value depends on how much you provide.
Carry the emotional weight of your entire family.
Feel responsible for everyone’s security.

As A Mother...

You may think...

“If I leave, will my children suffer?”

“Can I afford to do this alone?”

“What if I make the wrong decision?”

“Perhaps it’s better if I just keep going.”

You may become exhausted trying to create the stable home you never experienced yourself.

Carrying everyone.

Protecting everyone.

Holding everything together.

Until there is nothing left for you.

As A Father...

You may quietly carry thoughts like...

“Everything depends on me.”

“If I fail financially, I’ve failed my family.”

“I can’t show weakness.”

“I have to keep going.”

“I don’t have time to feel.”

Pressure can slowly become anger.

Fear can become control.

Shame can become silence.

Not because you are uncaring...

But because somewhere along the line, you learned that your worth depended on what you could provide rather than who you were.

Security Isn't Just About Money

Many people assume security simply means having enough money.
But true security is much deeper.
It is knowing...
You are safe to speak.
Safe to feel.
Safe to make mistakes.
Safe to ask for help.
Safe to be yourself.
Safe to leave what is unhealthy.
Safe to build something better.
You can have a beautiful house...
A successful career...
Money in the bank...
And still carry a frightened child inside who never truly felt secure.

Reflection

Take a moment and finish these sentences.
When I was growing up, home felt...
The message I learned about money was...
The message I learned about conflict was...
The message I learned about speaking up was...
Today, I notice those lessons affecting...
☐ My relationships
☐ My parenting
☐ My finances
☐ My confidence
☐ My career
☐ My health
☐ My ability to trust
☐ My ability to rest

The Truth

Children cannot choose the foundations they are given.
But adults can strengthen the foundations they build.
Your past may explain your fears.
It does not have to define your future.
Security built upon silence is fragile.
Security built upon truth is lasting.
Sometimes the bravest thing we can do is stop asking,
“How do I keep everything together?”
and begin asking,
“What kind of foundation do I want to build from here?”

Soul School Insight

At The Soul School, we often see that difficulties with security are not just about finances or practical stability. They can also be rooted in early experiences of emotional safety, family roles, unspoken rules and the belief that survival depended on keeping the peace.

When these patterns are understood with compassion, they no longer have to run your life. They become part of your story—not your identity.



Foundation Five
Personal Power

“Why do I always blame myself?”

Perhaps no sentence has caused more suffering than this one...

“It must be my fault.”

For some people...

That sentence becomes a way of life.

Not because it is true.

But because, as children, it felt safer than believing the adults around them were unable—or unwilling—to protect them.



The Child's Logic

Imagine you are five years old.
Dad comes home angry.
Mum is frightened.
Everyone is walking on eggshells.
The house feels tense.
As a child you have two choices.
The first is terrifying.
"The people who are supposed to protect me can't keep me safe."
Or...
"It must somehow be my fault."
Children almost always choose the second.
Why?
Because if it's your fault...
Perhaps you can change it.
Perhaps if you're quieter...
Better...
Kinder...
More helpful...
Less emotional...
Less needy...
Maybe Dad won't shout.
Maybe Mum won't cry.
Maybe everyone will be okay.
Blaming yourself creates the illusion of control.
It is a survival strategy.
Not a truth.

The Invisible Burden

Many adults are still carrying responsibilities that never belonged to them.

Not because anyone asked them to.

Because somewhere in childhood they quietly decided…

“I’ll make everything okay.”

“I’ll stop everyone arguing.”

“I’ll look after Mum.”

“I’ll protect my brothers and sisters.”

“I’ll never be any trouble.”

“I’ll make everyone happy.”

The heartbreaking part?

No child has shoulders broad enough to carry those responsibilities.

Yet millions spend a lifetime trying.

Do You Recognise Yourself?

You may…

Apologise constantly.

Blame yourself when relationships fail.

Feel guilty resting.

Feel guilty saying no.

Feel guilty spending money on yourself.

Feel guilty being successful.

Feel guilty when someone else is unhappy.

Replay conversations for hours wondering what you did wrong.

Believe everyone else’s needs are more important than yours.

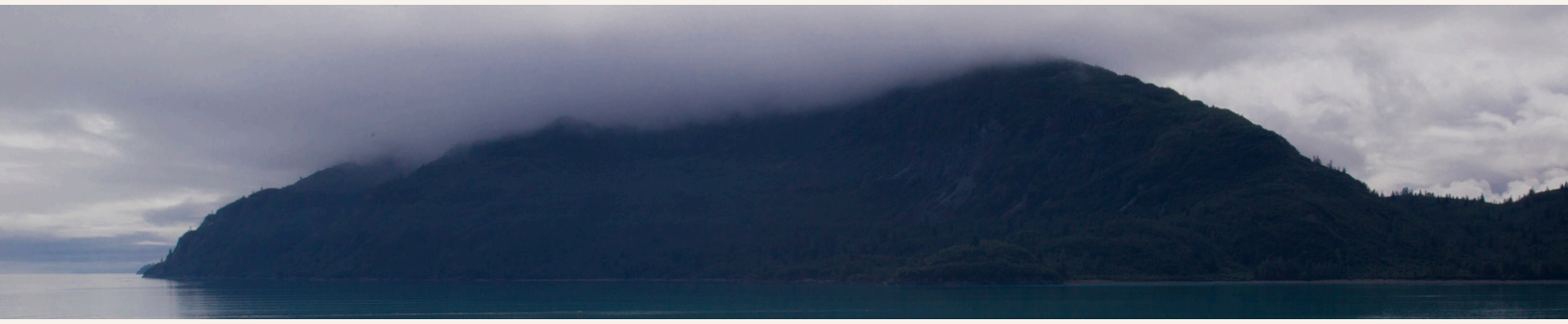
Feel responsible for fixing problems that aren’t yours to solve.

Believe you should always have done more.

Self-Persecution

Sometimes the harshest person in your life...
Isn't someone else.
It's the voice inside your own head.
The one that says...
"You should have known better."
"You've ruined everything."
"You're not good enough."
"They're right about you."
"You always get it wrong."
"If only you'd tried harder."
This inner critic can become so familiar that we mistake it for truth.
But often...
It is simply an echo.
An echo of criticism.
An echo of impossible expectations.
An echo of fear.
An echo of shame.





Self-Sabotage

People often ask me...
“Why do I keep sabotaging myself?”
But what if self-sabotage isn’t really sabotage?
What if it’s self-protection?
Think about it.
If, deep down, you believe...
“I’m not good enough.”
“I’m not safe.”
“I don’t deserve success.”
“People leave.”
“Money disappears.”
“If I shine, people will reject me.”
Then success itself can feel dangerous.
So you procrastinate.
Undercharge.
Stay small.
Give up just before the finish line.
Choose people who confirm your beliefs.
Not because you want to fail.
Because your nervous system is trying to keep you in what feels familiar.

Guilt Can Become An Identity

Healthy guilt says...

“I made a mistake.”

Toxic guilt says...

“I am the mistake.”

There is a profound difference.

One leads to growth.

The other leads to shame.

Many people I meet don’t simply feel guilty.

They feel guilty for existing.

For taking up space.

For needing help.

For saying no.

For resting.

For succeeding.

For having more than their parents.

For being happy when others are struggling.

If that resonates with you...

Please hear this.

Feeling guilty doesn’t necessarily mean you’ve done something wrong.

Sometimes it simply means you’re doing something different.



The Cost of Giving Your Power Away

When you believe you're responsible for everyone else's emotions...
You stop listening to your own.
When you believe your worth depends on what you do...
You forget who you are.
When you believe everyone else's happiness comes before yours...
You slowly disappear.
And perhaps the greatest tragedy of all...
You begin living a life that isn't truly yours.



Reflection

Complete these sentences honestly.
I blame myself for...

I feel guilty when...

The responsibility I carry that may not belong to me is...

If I truly believed I was enough...
I would...

One way I could begin reclaiming my power this week is...

The Truth

Power is not controlling others.

Power is recognising where your responsibility begins… and where it ends.

You are responsible for:

✔️ Your choices.

✔️ Your words.

✔️ Your healing.

✔️ Your boundaries.

✔️ Your growth.

You are not responsible for:

✘ Other people’s emotions.

✘ Other people’s reactions.

✘ Other people’s choices.

✘ Other people’s healing.

✘ Other people’s happiness.

The moment you stop carrying what was never yours…

You finally have the strength to carry what is.





Soul School Insight

One of the most important shifts we help people make at The Soul School is learning to distinguish between compassion and over-responsibility.

Compassion says, “I care about you.”

Over-responsibility says, “Your wellbeing depends on me.”

Those are not the same.

When we begin working together, we don’t simply ask why you feel guilty or why you keep repeating the same patterns. Through our integrative approach—including professional kinesiology, therapeutic exploration and whole-person assessment—we look for the deeper beliefs, emotional patterns and life experiences that may have shaped them.

Because when you understand why you’ve been carrying the weight of the world, you no longer have to keep carrying it.

Foundation Six
Self-Expression

“Why can’t I say what I really think?”

Have you ever walked away from a conversation thinking...

“Why didn’t I say anything?”

Or...

“Why do I always say yes when I mean no?”

Or perhaps...

“Nobody really knows who I am.”

For many people...

Finding their voice has very little to do with confidence.

It has everything to do with safety.



We Learn Whether It Is Safe To Speak

As children we quickly discover...
What happens when we tell the truth?
What happens when we disagree?
What happens when we cry?
What happens when we say no?
What happens when we express anger?
What happens when we make mistakes?
Some children are encouraged.
Others are ignored.
Some are criticised.
Some are laughed at.
Some are punished.
Some are told...
“Stop crying.”
“Don’t answer back.”
“Children should be seen and not heard.”
“Don’t upset your father.”
“Keep that in the family.”
“You’re too sensitive.”
“Don’t make a fuss.”
Every one of these messages teaches something.
Not just about speaking.
But about worth.

When Silence Keeps You Safe

Imagine a little girl who learns…
Every time she disagrees…
Dad shouts.
So she stops disagreeing.
A little boy cries…
Someone laughs.
So he stops crying.
A teenager shares a dream…
Someone tells them it’s unrealistic.
So they stop dreaming.
Eventually…
Silence becomes normal.
Not because they have nothing to say.
Because speaking no longer feels safe.

The Adult Who Lost Their Voice

Years later…
You may become the adult who…
Can’t ask for a pay rise.
Can’t tell your partner you’re unhappy.
Can’t tell your children when you’re struggling.
Can’t tell your parents how deeply they hurt you.
Can’t say…
“This isn’t okay.”
You smile.

You cope.
You avoid conflict.
You swallow your feelings.
Until one day…
Your body starts speaking instead.
Anxiety.
Tension.
Fatigue.
Headaches.
Digestive issues.
Tight shoulders.
Jaw clenching.
Feeling stuck.
Your body often expresses what your voice has been unable to.

The Fear Of Judgement

Many people don’t fear speaking.
They fear what will happen afterwards.
What if they reject me?
What if they don’t like me?
What if they leave?
What if I’m wrong?
What if they get angry?
What if they laugh?
So instead…
We edit ourselves.
Shrink ourselves.
Hide ourselves.
Until eventually…
We no longer recognise ourselves.

Being Stuck

People often tell me...

“I feel stuck.”

But being stuck isn’t usually because we don’t know what we want.

It’s often because...

We know exactly what we want...

We’re simply frightened of what it might cost.

Speaking the truth.

Leaving the relationship.

Changing career.

Starting the business.

Charging what we’re worth.

Writing the book.

Applying for the job.

Saying...

“This isn’t working anymore.”

The problem isn’t usually clarity.

The problem is permission.



How This Affects Every Area Of Life

When you lose your voice...

You often lose...

Opportunities.

Relationships.

Confidence.

Money.

Creativity.

Purpose.

Health.

Because every time you silence yourself...

A part of you disappears.

Reflection

Complete these sentences honestly.

The thing I find hardest to say is...

The person I most struggle to be honest with is...

Growing up I learned that speaking up meant...

The dream I have been afraid to speak aloud is...

If I truly believed my voice mattered...

I would...

The Truth

Your voice was never the problem.

The environment in which you learned to use it may have been.

You were not born afraid to speak.

You learned when it was safe...

and when it wasn't.

The beautiful thing about learning...

is that it can also be unlearned.

Every honest conversation.

Every healthy boundary.

Every truth spoken with kindness.

Every dream shared.

Every need expressed.

Is another step back towards yourself.



Soul School Insight

One of the greatest privileges of my work is watching people find their voice again.
Sometimes that happens in words.
Sometimes through tears.
Sometimes through movement.
Sometimes through the body.
Sometimes through finally saying something they have held inside for decades.

At The Soul School, we recognise that when someone has spent years adapting, silencing themselves or surviving, simply telling them to “be more assertive” rarely creates lasting change.

We gently explore why your voice became hidden in the first place. Through integrative therapy, professional kinesiology, body-based awareness, nervous system regulation and emotional exploration, we work with the whole person—not just the behaviour.
Our aim isn’t to teach you how to become louder.
It’s to help you become more authentic.

Because your greatest power isn’t found in having the loudest voice. It’s found in having the courage to speak your truth with honesty, compassion and confidence.

Foundation Seven

Letting Go & Transformation

“Why can’t I move on?”

Perhaps you’ve heard it before.
“You just need to let it go.”
“Forgive and forget.”
“That happened years ago.”
“Move on.”
If only it were that simple.
If letting go were simply a decision…
none of us would carry pain.
The truth is…
we don’t usually hold on because we want to.
We hold on because, somewhere deep inside, a part of us still believes it needs to.



Sometimes the Past Feels Safer Than the Future

This may sound strange, but even painful memories can become familiar.
If you've spent years expecting disappointment...
hope can feel risky.
If you've spent years preparing for rejection...
love can feel unsafe.
If you've spent years living in survival...
peace can feel unfamiliar.
Your mind may long for change.
But your nervous system often prefers what it already knows.
Not because it's good for you.
Because it's predictable.

The Weight We Carry

Many of us carry things that were never meant to be carried for a lifetime.

- Old conversations.
- Words spoken in anger.
- Childhood rejection.
- Broken relationships.
- Loss.
- Betrayal.
- Abuse.
- Guilt.
- Shame.
- Dreams that never came true.
- People who never apologised.

Parents who couldn't become who we needed them to be.
Every one of these leaves a mark.
Not because we're weak.
Because we're human.

The Prison We Don't Realise We're Living In

Resentment often feels like protection.
"If I stay angry, they can't hurt me again."
Control can feel like safety.
"If I plan everything, nothing bad will happen."
Perfectionism can feel like survival.
"If I never get anything wrong, nobody can reject me."
Holding on can create the illusion that we're preventing future pain.
Yet often…
it's preventing future peace.

What Forgiveness Is… And Isn't

Forgiveness is one of the most misunderstood words in healing.
Forgiveness is **not** saying what happened was acceptable.
It is **not** pretending it didn't hurt.
It is **not** trusting someone who continues to harm you.
It is **not** removing healthy boundaries.
And it certainly is not allowing abuse to continue.
Forgiveness is choosing **not** to let someone else's actions continue to define your future.
It is releasing the grip that the past has on your present.
Sometimes that happens quickly.
Often it happens one small step at a time.

Grieving More Than People

When we hear the word grief, we often think of death.
But grief is much bigger than that.
We grieve...
The childhood we never had.
The parent we wished we'd had.
The marriage we hoped would last.
The family we dreamed of.
The version of ourselves we lost while surviving.
The years spent living for everyone else.
The opportunities fear made us decline.
Healing often begins when we allow ourselves to mourn—not only people, but possibilities.

The Story We Keep Telling Ourselves

We all carry stories.
"I'm too much."
"I'm not enough."
"People always leave."
"I can't trust anyone."
"Nothing ever works out for me."
These stories can become so familiar that we mistake them for facts.
But they are often conclusions we reached while trying to make sense of painful experiences.
Healing asks a gentle question:

"Is this the truth... or is this the story I've had to tell myself to survive?"

Reflection

Complete these sentences honestly.
The thing I find hardest to let go of is...

If I released it, I worry that...

One person I still carry emotionally is...

One belief about myself I am ready to question is...

The future I secretly long for is...

Transformation Begins With Truth

Transformation doesn't happen because we erase the past.
It happens because we stop allowing the past to write every chapter that follows.
Healing doesn't ask you to forget.
It asks you to remember differently.
To see the child who was adapting instead of blaming.
To see the adult who has survived instead of only the wounds they carry.
To honour your story without becoming trapped inside it.





Soul School Insight

At The Soul School, we don't believe healing is about forcing yourself to "move on."

Real transformation happens when your mind, body and emotions begin to feel safe enough to release what they have been holding.
Sometimes that involves understanding your story.
Sometimes it involves processing emotions that were never safe to express.

Sometimes it involves calming a nervous system that has been living in survival for years.
And sometimes it involves rediscovering hope.

When the weight of the past begins to lift, you don't become someone new.

You begin returning to the person you were before life taught you to hide.

"The opposite of holding on is not forgetting. The opposite of holding on is freedom."

Foundation Eight
Flow, Abundance & Receiving

"Why does everything feel like such a struggle?"

Have you ever looked around and wondered...

"Why does life seem so much easier for everyone else?"

"Why do I always feel like I'm pushing uphill?"

"Why do opportunities seem to pass me by?"

"Why is receiving so uncomfortable?"

Perhaps you've become incredibly good at giving.

Giving your time.

Giving your energy.

Giving advice.

Giving love.

Giving money.

Giving support.

Giving everything...

Except allowing yourself to receive.





We Learn What We Believe We Deserve

As children, we don't just learn about love.
We learn about worth.
If affection depended on behaving well...
You may have learned...
"I earn love."
If praise only came through achievement...
You may have learned...
"I must perform to be worthy."
If your needs were ignored...
You may have learned...
"Other people matter more than me."
If money was a constant source of fear...
You may have learned...
"There is never enough."
These beliefs don't stay in childhood.
They quietly follow us into adulthood, shaping the way we relate to relationships, careers, health and prosperity.

Why Receiving Can Feel Unsafe

Imagine someone offers you help.
What happens inside?
Do you gratefully accept?
Or do you immediately think...
"I don't want to be a burden."
"I should manage on my own."
"I'll owe them something."
"No, honestly, I'm fine."
Many people instinctively reject support—not because they don't need it, but because independence once became their safest strategy.
If nobody came when you needed them as a child, relying on yourself may have been the only option.
As an adult, that strength can become isolation.



Scarcity Isn't Always About Money

Scarcity can sound like:

"There isn't enough time."

"There isn't enough love."

"There aren't enough opportunities."

"There aren't enough good people."

"There'll never be enough money."

"If someone else succeeds, there's less left for me."

Scarcity is a mindset born from fear.

It keeps us gripping tightly.

Abundance doesn't ignore reality.

It simply believes that life has more possibilities than fear can see.

The Cost of Constant Striving

Many of us were taught that rest must be earned.

That productivity equals value.

That slowing down is laziness.

So we become human doings instead of human beings.

We work harder.

Push harder.

Give more.

Sleep less.

Achieve more.

Yet no matter how much we accomplish...

It never feels enough.

Because no achievement can fill a wound that was created by believing we were never enough to begin with.

Success Can Feel Frightening Too

It may seem strange, but success can feel just as threatening as failure.
Success may bring visibility.
Responsibility.
Judgement.
Envy.
Higher expectations.
If, deep inside, you believe that standing out is dangerous, you may unconsciously keep yourself small.
You delay launching the business.
You undercharge for your work.
You avoid applying for the promotion.
You talk yourself out of opportunities.
Not because you lack ability.
Because your nervous system is trying to keep you safe.

Reflection

Complete these sentences honestly.
Receiving feels difficult because...

The message I learned about money growing up was...

If I became truly successful, I worry that...

One area where I constantly over-give is...

One thing I could allow myself to receive this week is...

The Truth

Abundance is not measured by the balance in your bank account.
It is measured by your ability to receive life without believing you have to earn your place in it.
You do not have to prove your worth before you are worthy.
You do not have to exhaust yourself before you deserve to rest.
You do not have to suffer before you deserve joy.
You do not have to become perfect before you deserve love.
These are not rewards.
They are part of what it means to be human.

Soul School Insight

One of the patterns we often see is that people who struggle to receive are usually the very people who have spent a lifetime giving. At The Soul School, we gently explore the beliefs and experiences that have shaped your relationship with worth, success and abundance. Using an integrative approach—including therapeutic work, professional kinesiology, nervous system support, nutrition and emotional healing—we help you move from constant striving towards greater balance.
True abundance isn't about having more.
It's about no longer believing you are less.
When you begin to live from a place of truth rather than fear, you create space for healthier relationships, meaningful work, greater peace and a life that feels more aligned with who you really are.

"Flow begins where fear loosens its grip, and truth becomes stronger than survival."

Foundation Nine
Purpose & Alignment

“What if I’ve never really met the real me?”

Perhaps you’ve spent years asking…
“What is my purpose?”
“Why am I here?”
“Why do I feel like something is missing?”
“Surely life is meant to feel different than this?”
Many people believe purpose is something they must find.

As though it’s hidden somewhere outside themselves.
But what if purpose isn’t something you discover…
What if it’s something you uncover?
Beneath the fear.
Beneath the conditioning.
Beneath the expectations.
Beneath the survival.



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"Flow begins where fear loosens its grip, and truth becomes stronger than survival."

We Weren't Born Lost

Think about a young child.
They don't question whether they're good enough to play.
Whether they deserve love.
Whether they have permission to laugh.
Whether they're allowed to dream.
They simply are.
Curious.
Creative.
Authentic.
Present.
The tragedy isn't that we lose our purpose.
The tragedy is that life often teaches us to abandon the very qualities that pointed us towards it.

Survival Can Become An Identity

Some people become...
The carer.
The achiever.
The perfectionist.
The peacemaker.
The rescuer.
The strong one.
The invisible one.
The funny one.
The successful one.
The independent one.

These identities often begin as brilliant survival strategies.
But eventually we forget...
They are roles.
Not who we truly are.
The question is no longer...
“Who am I?”
It becomes...
“Who would I be if I no longer needed these roles to feel safe?”

Purpose Isn’t Just About Your Career

When people hear the word purpose, they often think of jobs.
But purpose is much bigger than work.
Purpose is how you live.
How you love.
How you parent.
How you speak.
How you respond to pain.
How you care for yourself.
How you contribute to the lives of others.
You don’t need a different career to live with purpose.
You need a deeper connection with yourself.

Living In Alignment

Imagine waking each morning...
Knowing your decisions are guided by your values rather than your fears.

Imagine saying yes because you truly want to.
Saying no without guilt.
Choosing relationships that nourish you.
Creating work that energises you.
Resting without believing you have to earn it.
Trusting yourself.
Listening to your intuition.
Feeling at home within yourself.
That is alignment.
Not perfection.
Not a life without challenges.
But a life that feels honest.

Signs You May Be Living Out Of Alignment

You feel successful but empty.
You constantly seek approval.
You ignore your intuition.
You stay busy to avoid feeling.
You feel disconnected from joy.
You wonder whether this is really the life you were meant to live.
You know something needs to change...
But you don't know where to begin.



Reflection

Complete these sentences honestly.
The life I truly long for looks like...

The part of myself I miss most is...

If fear wasn't making my decisions, I would...

The gift I most want to offer the world is...

The first small step towards living more authentically is...

The Truth

You were never created to spend your life merely surviving.
You were created to live.
To love.
To grow.
To contribute.
To laugh.
To create.
To connect.
To become.
Purpose isn't found by becoming someone else.
Purpose is found by remembering who you have always been beneath the layers of protection.
Perhaps nothing is wrong with you.
Perhaps your anxiety...
Your people-pleasing...
Your perfectionism...

Your exhaustion...
Your fear...
Your overthinking...
Your self-doubt...
Have all been trying to protect the same precious thing:
The real you.

Soul School Insight

At The Soul School, we don't believe healing is about fixing broken people.
We believe it is about helping people reconnect with the truth of who they are.

Our work brings together integrative therapy, professional kinesiology, nervous system regulation, nutritional support, energy healing, somatic awareness, spiritual exploration and psychoeducation into one truly holistic approach.
Every person who walks through our doors has a unique story.
There is no one-size-fits-all programme.

Instead, we help you understand the patterns that have shaped your life, gently release what no longer serves you and build a future that reflects your authentic self.
When your mind, body and soul begin working together rather than against one another, life often starts to feel lighter, clearer and more meaningful.

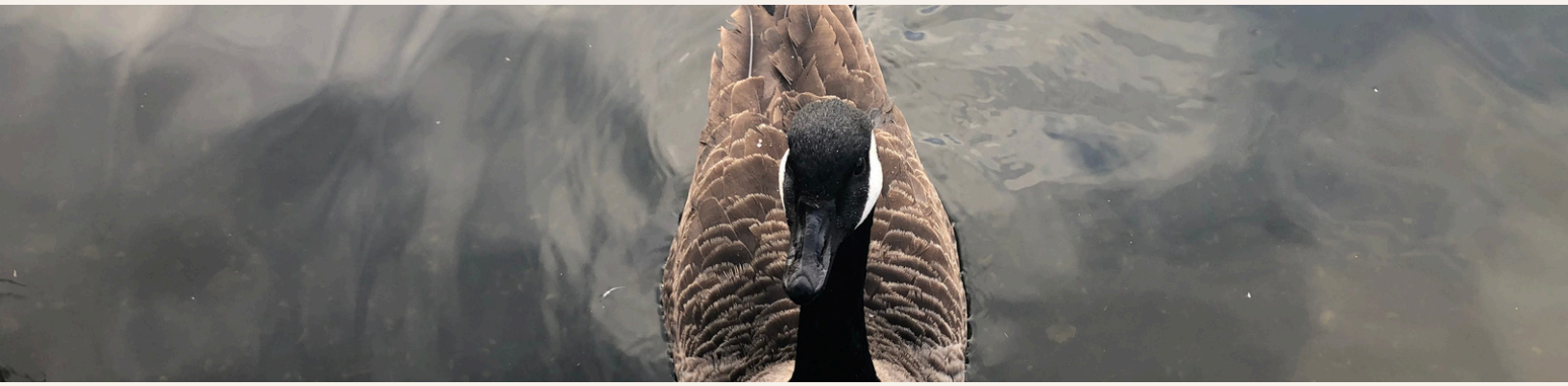


One Final Thought...

If you've recognised yourself throughout these pages...
Please don't put this book down and think,
"Well... that's just the way I am."
Because it isn't.
These patterns are not your identity.
They are adaptations.
And adaptations can change.
You have survived things you may never have chosen.
But survival doesn't have to be your destination.
It can become the place you leave behind.

So... What's Wrong With Me?

Perhaps...
Nothing.
Perhaps the better question is...
What happened to me?
What did I learn?
What did I have to become in order to survive?
And who might I become...
Now that I no longer need to?



Your Next Step

If this book has helped you recognise yourself, imagine what could happen if you understood why these patterns developed—and how to change them.

The Soul School Assessment is designed to explore the connections between your life experiences, relationships, beliefs, emotional patterns and physical wellbeing. It offers a whole-person perspective, helping you identify the areas that may be keeping you stuck and where healing can begin.

This isn't about being judged or labelled.

It's about being understood.

Because once you understand the story behind your symptoms, you can begin writing a different ending.

Welcome Home

The greatest journey you will ever take is not across the world.

It is the journey back to yourself.

And perhaps...

That journey starts today.

Bonus Section

The Hidden Costs of Trauma

The Hidden Costs of Trauma

Most people seek help because of one problem.
“I have anxiety.”
“My relationship is falling apart.”
“I’m exhausted.”
“My child is struggling.”
“I keep attracting the wrong people.”
“I can’t lose weight.”
“I don’t know who I am anymore.”
But what if these aren’t separate problems?
What if they’re different expressions of the same underlying adaptations?
Trauma doesn’t just live in our memories.
It can influence how we think…
how we feel…
how we behave…
how we parent…
how we work…
how we love…
how we care for our bodies…
and how we experience the world.
It doesn’t always shout.
Sometimes it whispers.

The symptoms you never realised could all be connected.

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Sometimes it whispers.

Trauma Can Affect...

Relationships

You may...

- Choose emotionally unavailable partners.
- Fear abandonment.
- Stay too long.
- Leave too quickly.
- Avoid intimacy.
- Need constant reassurance.
- Become controlling.
- Lose yourself in other people.
- Push people away before they reject you.

Parenting

You may...
Become the parent you desperately needed.
Or...
Repeat patterns you swore you'd never repeat.
You may...
Shout when overwhelmed.
Struggle regulating your emotions.
Feel enormous guilt afterwards.
Become overprotective.
Rescue your children.
Find it difficult to allow them independence.
Parent from fear instead of confidence.
Not because you're a bad parent.
Because parenting often awakens the parts of ourselves that still need healing.

Physical Health

Long-term stress can influence many body systems.
While everyone's experience is different and symptoms should always be assessed by a healthcare professional, unresolved stress and trauma can contribute to patterns such as:

- Persistent muscle tension.
- Headaches.
- Fatigue.
- Poor sleep.
- igestive difficulties.
- Appetite changes.
- Skin flare-ups.
- !Reduced resilience during periods of stress.

Digestion

Your body is not betraying you.
Sometimes it is communicating that it has been carrying too much for too long.

Digestion

The digestive system is particularly sensitive to stress.
You may notice...
Bloating.
IBS-type symptoms.
Food sensitivities.
Changes in appetite.
Comfort eating.
Loss of appetite.
Feeling "sick with worry."
Many people are surprised to learn how closely the brain, gut and nervous system communicate with one another.

Work

Trauma can show up professionally as...
Perfectionism.
Burnout.
Overworking.
Never feeling good enough.
Fear of being seen.
Fear of leadership.
Fear of making mistakes.
Constantly proving yourself.
Undercharging.
Avoiding opportunities.
Imposter syndrome.

Money

Some people spend because they are trying to soothe emotional pain.
Others never spend because money represents safety.
Some cannot charge fairly.
Others overwork because rest feels unsafe.
Some fear having money.
Others fear losing it.
Often, our relationship with money reflects much deeper beliefs about worth, security and identity.

Identity

Perhaps the greatest hidden cost of trauma...
Is forgetting who you really are.
Many people can tell you...
Their job.
Their responsibilities.
Their qualifications.
Their family role.
But ask...
“Who are you?”
And silence follows.
Healing is often the journey back to that answer.



The Good News

Everything you've read in this book has one purpose.
Not to convince you that you're damaged.
To help you realise...
You're understandable.
Your mind adapted.
Your body adapted.
Your relationships adapted.
Your nervous system adapted.
Those adaptations helped you survive.
Now...
You have the opportunity to choose which ones still serve you.
And which ones you're ready to leave behind.

The Soul School Assessment

Dear Friend,
If you've reached this page, I want to thank you.
Not because you've finished a book.
Because you've had the courage to ask difficult questions.
Questions many people spend a lifetime avoiding.
Healing doesn't happen because we have all the answers.
It begins when we become curious enough to ask better questions.
If you've recognised yourself in these pages, I hope you'll remember one thing above everything else:
You are not broken.
You adapted.
And if you could adapt to survive, you can also adapt to thrive.
My hope is that this book has given you more than information.
I hope it has given you hope.
Thank you for allowing me to walk a small part of your journey.