The Cost of Silence

Breaking the Cycle of Bottled Pain

The Silence We Learn

What did you learn about how strong people handle pain?

[ ] Push through [ ] Keep it private [ ] Stay busy [ ] Ask for help

[ ] Do not burden others [ ] Other: _____

Where did you learn that message?

Family, military service, work, or personal experience

The Emotional Iceberg

What others may see (above the surface):

[ ] Anger [ ] Withdrawal [ ] Control [ ] Numbness [ ] Humor

What may be underneath:

[ ] Fear [ ] Grief [ ] Shame [ ] Loneliness [ ] Helplessness

When I am hurting, others usually see...

What might I actually be feeling underneath?

What Silence Costs

Recognizing the patterns and the protection

The Cost of Carrying It

Where has unspoken pain shown up in your life?

[ ] Sleep/body [ ] Relationships [ ] Isolation [ ] Irritability

[ ] Alcohol or other numbing [ ] Overworking [ ] Other: _____

What is one pattern I would like to change?

Notice without judging yourself.

The Armor Exercise

Our defenses often helped us survive. We can honor them and reassess them.

What armor have I learned to wear?

Examples: toughness, independence, humor, control, emotional distance

How did that armor protect me?

What did it help me get through?

Where might that same armor be costing me today?

Think about home, friendships, and connection.

Breaking the Cycle

The NAME framework: from bottled pain to safe expression

NAME | Practice the Skills

N | NOTICE

Recognize your warning lights.

What happens in my body or behavior when pain builds?

A | ACKNOWLEDGE

Name what is real without judging it.

What is one feeling I can admit to myself?

M | MAKE MEANING

Explore what is underneath the reaction.

What loss, fear, need, or hurt may be beneath it?

E | EXPRESS

Choose a safe, intentional outlet.

Who or what could help me express this safely?

Remember

Expression is not explosion. You choose what to share, when, and with whom.

One Person. One Truth.

Turning awareness into connection

Practice a Safe Conversation

A simple way to begin:

"I have been carrying something, and I would like someone to listen."

Who is one safe person I could connect with?

Someone trustworthy who can listen without judgment.

_____

_____

What is one true sentence I am ready to say?

You do not have to tell your whole story.

_____

_____

My 48-Hour Challenge

[ ] I will reach out to: _____

[ ] By this date/time: _____

[ ] If talking feels too hard, I will start by writing or asking for support.

When More Support Is Needed

If pain feels unsafe, overwhelming, or hard to manage, reach out to a trusted clinician, chaplain, peer supporter, or other qualified professional.

For immediate U.S. suicide or emotional crisis support, call or text 988.