

## WORKSHEET

# INNER CHILD WORK

*“The wound is not my fault. But the healing is my responsibility.” — Marianne Williamson*

Our inner child is the part of us that carries the memories, emotions, and experiences of our childhood. As we grow into adults, this inner child doesn't disappear; instead, it resides within us, influencing our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

Your inner child, much like a real child, needs nurturing and healing, and in doing so, we can experience profound personal growth. By healing the wounds of our inner child, we can also heal our adult selves, free ourselves from outdated beliefs, and create a more fulfilling present and future.

This series of exercises will guide you through the process of connecting with your inner child, understanding their needs, and offering them the love and support they may not have received during childhood.

### Part One: Visualization

- 1. Find a quiet space:** Begin by finding a quiet and comfortable space where you won't be disturbed. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to center yourself.
- 2. Choose an age:** Select an age from your childhood that you would like to connect with during this exercise. It could be a specific age that holds significance for you (e.g. because of an impactful event).
- 3. Visualize your younger self:** Imagine yourself at that age as vividly as you can (if you have access to photos of yourself at that time, use them as reference points). Visualize where you are, what you're wearing, and what your surroundings look like. Allow the details to come to life, as if you are watching a scene from your past unfold before your eyes.
- 4. Connect with your emotions:** Now, tune into the emotions of your younger self. How did you feel at that age? What brought you joy? What were your fears, hopes, and dreams? How did you feel about yourself and the world? Take a moment to fully immerse yourself in those feelings.
- 5. Identify any unmet needs:** As you connect with your younger self, pay close attention to any unmet needs they may have had at that age (e.g. related to love, care, understanding, or support). Acknowledge these unfulfilled needs with compassion and empathy.

## Part Two: Conversation

Now that you've reconnected with your inner child on an emotional level, it's time to start a conversation with them. You can do this mentally or even out loud if that feels comfortable. Let your inner child express their feelings, fears, and needs and try to offer them love and comfort.

This conversation can flow completely naturally and might end up in unexpected places. But in case you are not sure how or where to start, here are a few ideas:

- ***Make them feel seen, heard and understood:*** Start by greeting (and hugging) your inner child and telling them that you care about them. Let them know that you see and love them for who they are.
- ***Offer reassurance:*** Tell your inner child the things they would have needed to hear back then. For example, you can say, "You are loved", "You are enough just as you are", or "I believe in you".
- ***Apologize and forgive:*** If there are any past actions or experiences that you feel require an apology, offer it to your inner child. Then forgive yourself, knowing that you didn't know any better back then.
- ***Express gratitude:*** Let your inner child know that you are grateful for their wisdom and the strength they showed during challenging times. Point out how their resilience shaped who you are today.
- ***Offer encouragement:*** Encourage your inner child to continue healing and growing. Let them know that you are committed to nurturing, supporting, and protecting them.
- ***Tap into their wisdom:*** Your inner child holds valuable insights that can guide you towards a more fulfilling life. To access this knowledge, ask them questions like, "What's lacking in our life right now?" or "What forms of play or creativity would you like to reintroduce?" Explore what you loved doing as a child and why you stopped doing it. Together, brainstorm ways to reintegrate those joyful activities into your adult life.

## Part Three: Letter Writing (Optional)

As a variation of this exercise, you can also choose to write a letter to your inner child. Simply address the letter to the age you visualized in part 1 and express your love, encouragement, and gratitude in writing.