

CHILDHOOD



Childhood Trauma: Caregiver Wounds

**A TRAUMA-INFORMED IDENTIFICATION
GUIDE TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY, HEAL,
AND TRANSMUTE YOUR CHILDHOOD
WOUNDS**

What are Father and Mother Wounds?

The mother wound and father wound are not labels of blame — they are emotional imprints formed in childhood when our caregivers could not meet our needs for safety, nurturing, protection, and unconditional love. These wounds show up in our adult lives as patterns: the partners we choose, our reactions to stress, the way we speak to ourselves, and the love we believe we deserve. This guide is designed to gently bring you into awareness of how those early experiences shaped your nervous system, your identity, and your relationships. As you read, you'll begin recognizing the subtle ways unmet childhood needs still influence you today — not as a life sentence, but as a roadmap back to yourself. Healing begins the moment you see the pattern with compassion instead of shame.



The Mother Wound Signs:

- Feeling responsible for everyone's emotions.
- Low self-worth and perfectionism rooted in fear of disappointing others.
- Avoiding your own needs because you learned they were 'too much'.
- Difficulty trusting other women or feeling unsafe around feminine energy.
 - Chronic people-pleasing and conflict avoidance.
 - Feeling like love must be earned through performance.
 - Internalized self-criticism and a harsh inner voice.
- Attraction to emotionally unavailable or critical partners.
 - Fear of visibility, success, or being 'too big'.
 - Taking on a caretaker role in all relationships.



The Father Wound Signs:

- Seeking validation from men who are inconsistent or emotionally unavailable.
- Struggling with boundaries due to fear of abandonment.
 - Over-functioning or over-achieving to feel worthy.
- Difficulty trusting masculine figures, including partners or authority.
- Attraction to controlling, dominant, or narcissistic men.
 - Self-sabotaging when things feel stable or secure.
- Fear of depending on anyone, leading to hyper-independence.
 - Believing you must 'earn' safety or protection.
 - Choosing partners who mirror your father's wounds or behaviors.
- Feeling unseen, unprotected, or unsupported.



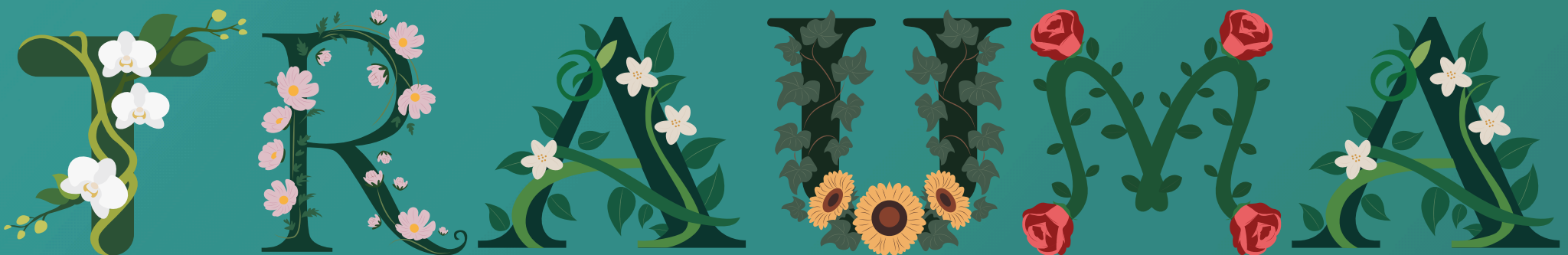
How These Wounds Show Up in Adulthood

- Choosing partners who resemble the parent who hurt you.
- Fear of abandonment and fear of intimacy at the same time.
 - Chronic relationship anxiety or fawning behavior.
 - Emotional caretaking and parentified roles.
 - Difficulty regulating emotions or trusting your intuition.
 - Over-giving, under-receiving dynamics.
 - Low self-worth masked by achievement or caretaking.
- Hypervigilance in relationships, waiting for the *'other shoe to drop'*.
- Self-rejection: shrinking, dimming, or silencing your truth.



Identification Checklist

- I feel responsible for fixing other people's emotions.
- I choose partners who make me feel unseen or unimportant.
- I fear being 'too much' or 'not enough'.
- I have a harsh inner critic.
- I shrink myself to avoid conflict or rejection.
- I feel unworthy of rest, care, or affection.
- I confuse chaos for chemistry.
- I feel safer giving than receiving.
- I distrust my needs or minimize them.
- I fear abandonment and also fear closeness.



Journal Prompts

- **“When I think about my childhood, what emotions or sensations show up in my body first?”**

Explore where the wound lives somatically — the body remembers what the mind normalizes.

- **“What were the emotions I had to silence or hide as a child in order to stay safe or accepted?”**

This reveals the authentic self versus the survival self.

- **“In what ways do I still try to earn love, approval, or safety in my adult relationships?”**

A direct link between childhood conditioning and current attachment patterns.

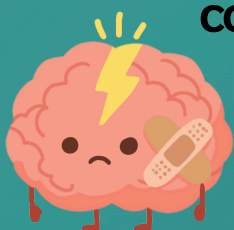
- **“Who did I have to become to survive my parents’ wounds — and who am I becoming now that I’m healing?”**

Helps separate trauma-driven identity from your true self.

- **“What kind of mothering or fathering do I most needed then — and how can I begin offering those things to myself now?”**

This begins reparenting from a place of compassion and agency.

These wounds are not your fault. They are emotional imprints shaped by childhood environments that lacked safety, consistency, and nurturing. Through reparenting, nervous system healing, and compassionate self-awareness, you can rebuild the inner safety you never received.



You are worthy of the love you give so freely to others.

