



From Childhood Survival to Adult Healing: Understanding ACA Trauma Patterns

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Abstract

Adult children of alcoholics (ACA) carry a unique framework towards healing and interpersonal trauma outcomes. Research on adult children of alcoholics emphasizes the importance of healing in community belonging. Trauma-informed approaches highlight peer-support models by addressing intergenerational trauma. Reparenting practices are essential for adult children of alcoholics in alleviating interpersonal trauma outcomes. This framework allows healing not only in individuals but also in families that are impacted by alcoholism. This improves attachment security and emotional regulation. Often, these interpersonal traumas can leave many with long-term psychological and emotional issues. To overcome this, survivors must show resilience by finding strength in community support and therapeutic environments that allow for emotional validation. An emphasis on reparenting and inner child work should be integrated to amplify such healing. These approaches can be found in THRIVE's mission across the therapeutic framework, highlighting mental health, social awareness, and trauma recovery.

Literature Review

Scholarly research regarding adult children of alcoholics highlights the increased risks for psychological, emotional, academic, and even occupational problems compared to those of non-alcoholic adult children of alcoholics (DiVento & Saxena, 2017). However, research also suggests the strength and resilience that adult children of alcoholics incorporate into their daily lives. The need for emotional regulation is a key factor to incorporate for survivors of interpersonal traumas. Coping strategies that participants heavily rely on require

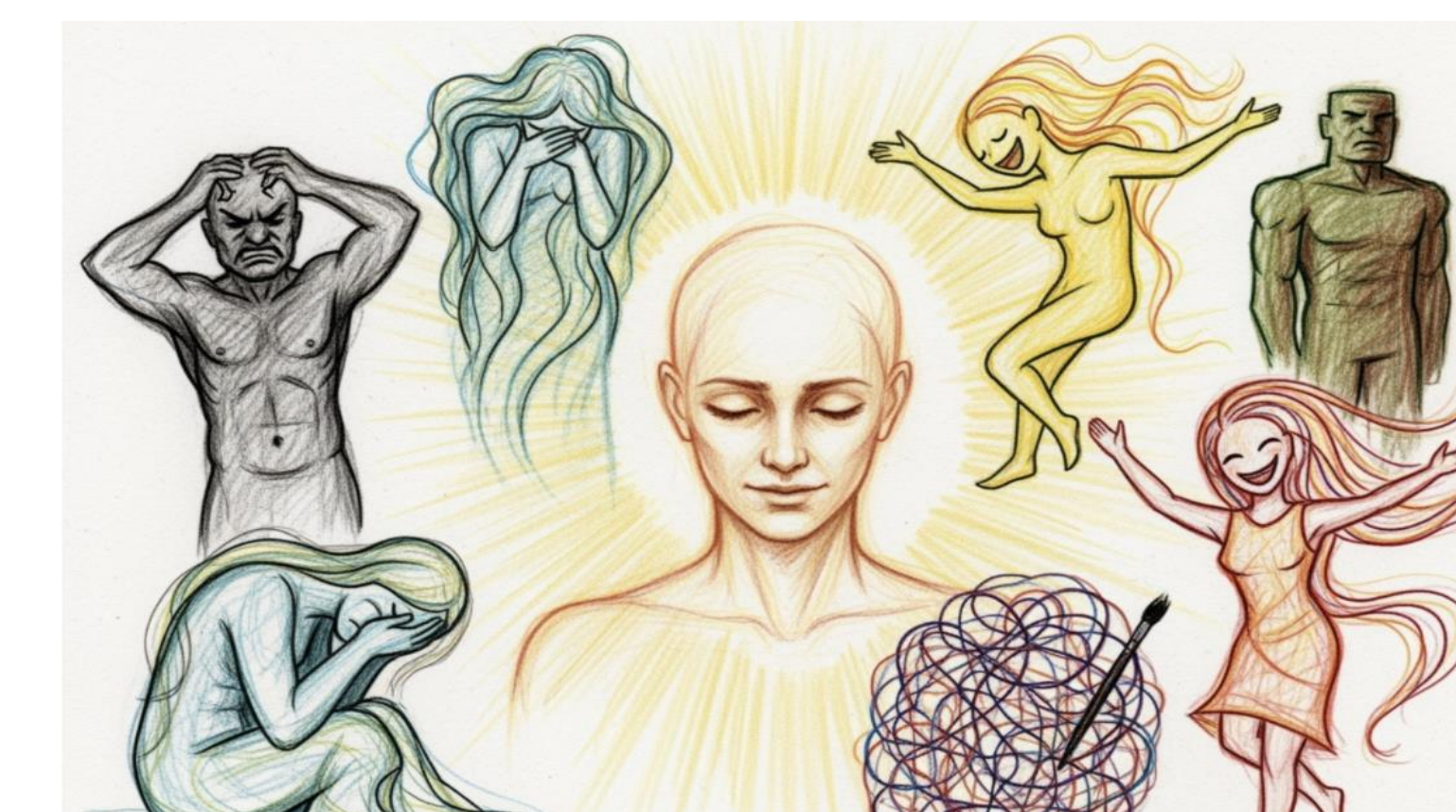
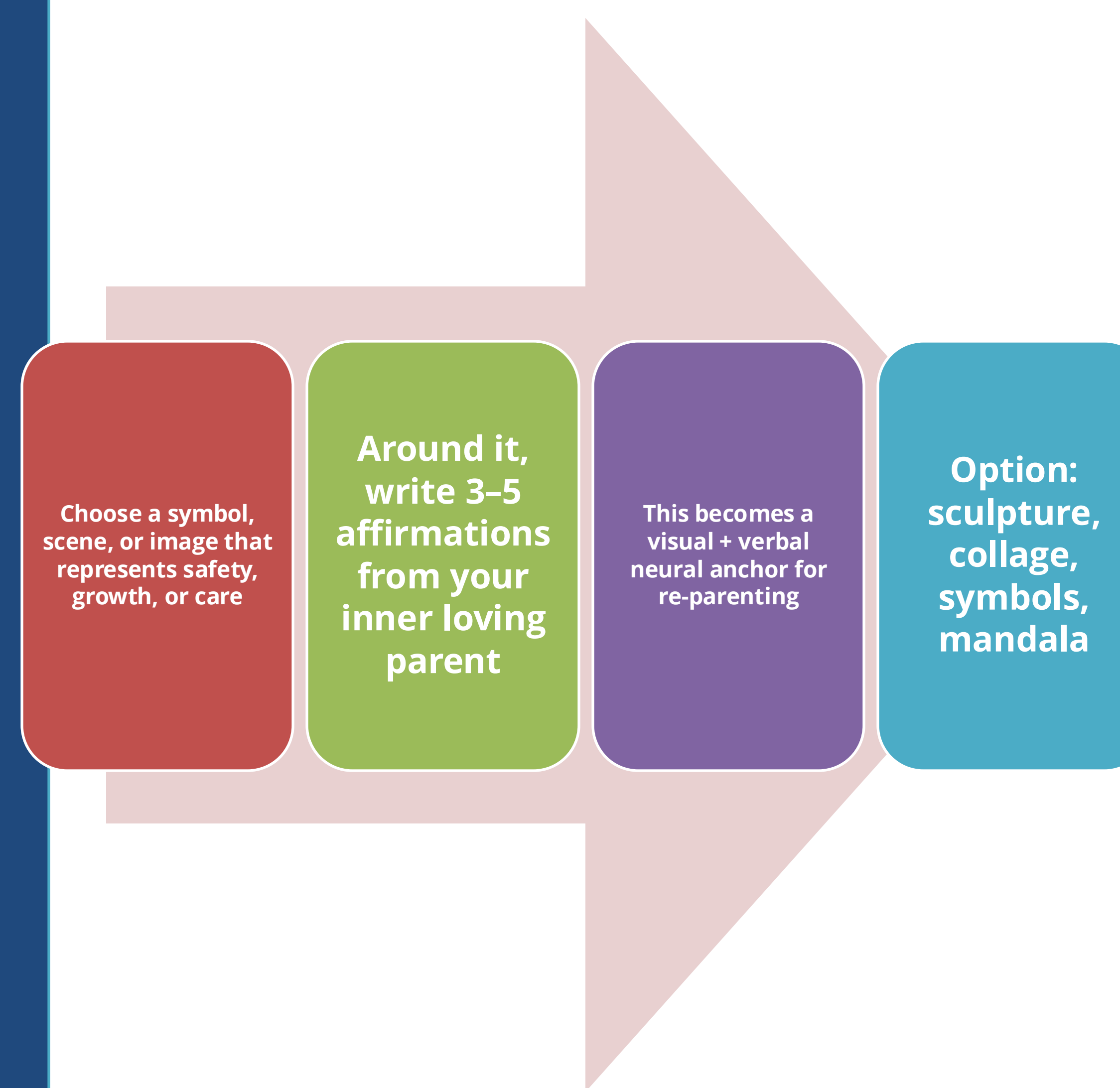
self-acceptance, emotional coping, social support, and maintaining boundaries (Bugeja & Galea, 2022). While each individual is unique in their preference regarding their own personal healing journey, there is a clear distinction in the need for emotional regulation in forms of social support. Yet many adult children of alcoholics report lower levels of self-esteem and lack of social connectedness, which contributes to higher psychological issues, such as depression with women having a higher level than men (Domenico & Windle, 1993). Validation in a therapeutic setting will allow for long-term recovery support. THRIVE's practices aim to help improve these holes with a connection to emotions, safety, and inclusivity, all of which will help regulate and overcome interpersonal traumas for adult children of alcoholics.

Practical Application

Attaching the concept of inner reparenting, safety, self-work, and community experiences into a structured practice helps internalize them. 'Drawing the New Inner Landscape' provides for both a visual and verbal affirmation to reinforce a secure attachment. This security is essential when focusing on adult children of alcoholics. This application can allow for trauma processing in an expressive and healing way. Participants can decide their own form of inner reparenting with their own sense of support. Within the THRIVE curriculum, this activity serves as a tool for personal growth and development that is characterized by one's own needs. An individualized approach for a persons inner landscape and reflections. This practice self-kindness, self-worth, and self-efficacy, which fosters positive attributes.

In addition to self-efficacy, the participant has the opportunity to build relationships with others by strengthening group connections. Sharing these landscapes can reduce an individuals isolation by sharing common feelings among adult children of alcoholics. Overall, a practical application like 'Drawing the New Inner Landscape' fosters a unique approach towards healing interpersonal trauma.

Drawing the New Inner Landscape



References

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