

IDENTIFY THE
WOUNDED CHILD
IN YOU



DR SUSAN KRIEGLER

IDENTIFY THE **WOUNDED CHILD** IN YOU

IN THE MEANTIME, BEGIN TO HEAL YOURSELF

You Can't Play in A Dirty Basement

The presence of love is a healing power. The effects of this healing are what we are all born to discover and experience in every aspect of our lives. It is sometimes difficult to realize this because, in the meantime, we are not getting the love we want, in the way we want it. The meantime is often a time of vagueness. You are experiencing a vague anxiety that you cannot quite pinpoint. It's in our head. No, your chest. No, in your heart. You may look okay on the outside, but on the inside, there is something else going on.

Sometimes that something is sadness. It's like you are walking a tightrope, about to fall. You are trying to hold on, to stay grounded, but slowly, bit by bit, you realize that you or your relationship is falling apart. You are sad about it, but there doesn't seem to be anything you can do about it. In the meantime, you must remember that just when things look like they are falling apart, they are falling into place – the divine place they should be for everyone involved. When you are in the meantime, you are in a time of healing preparation. You are being prepared for the grandest experience of your life – unconditional love. In the meantime, you must be willing to endure the process of feeling vague confusion and helplessness. Remember, that the meantime is not a permanent condition. It is a healing process.

There is always a process involved in any healing endeavour. The first step in the process is to be willing to pray and ask questions. We must stop trying to figure out what is going on! Sooner or later you should realize that if you knew what you were doing to make yourself miserable or crazy, you would not be doing it. Stop! Pray! Ask! In order to do this, you must be willing to stop moving, talking, thinking, and thumping. It would take about thirty seconds, but thirty seconds can be a long time when you are in fear, when you are hurt, or when you are confused. The good news is that prayer helps to alleviate confusion. Once your mind is clear, it is imperative that you ask yourself three probing questions:

1. What am I feeling?
2. What is it that I want?
3. What am I feeling about what I want?

Once the questions are asked, the healing begins, and the answers will pour forth. The answers are always within reach of the questions. You, however, must be open, receptive, and willing to receive answers.

What you are feeling is always at the core of your experience. Feelings and emotions are the energy that motivates us to act and speak.

Feelings are often the answers behind the questions we have in our relationships. When you get in touch with your feelings, you have a major clue to why you are doing or have done certain things. Feelings are the seeds. Experiences are the fruit. By the time the seeds bear fruit, we are usually in the middle of a mess. We react to the mess by getting busy, trying to clean it up when what we should be doing is digging up the seeds – exploring our feelings. In a relationship, it is imperative that you stay in touch with what you are feeling in order to determine what is motivating your behaviour.

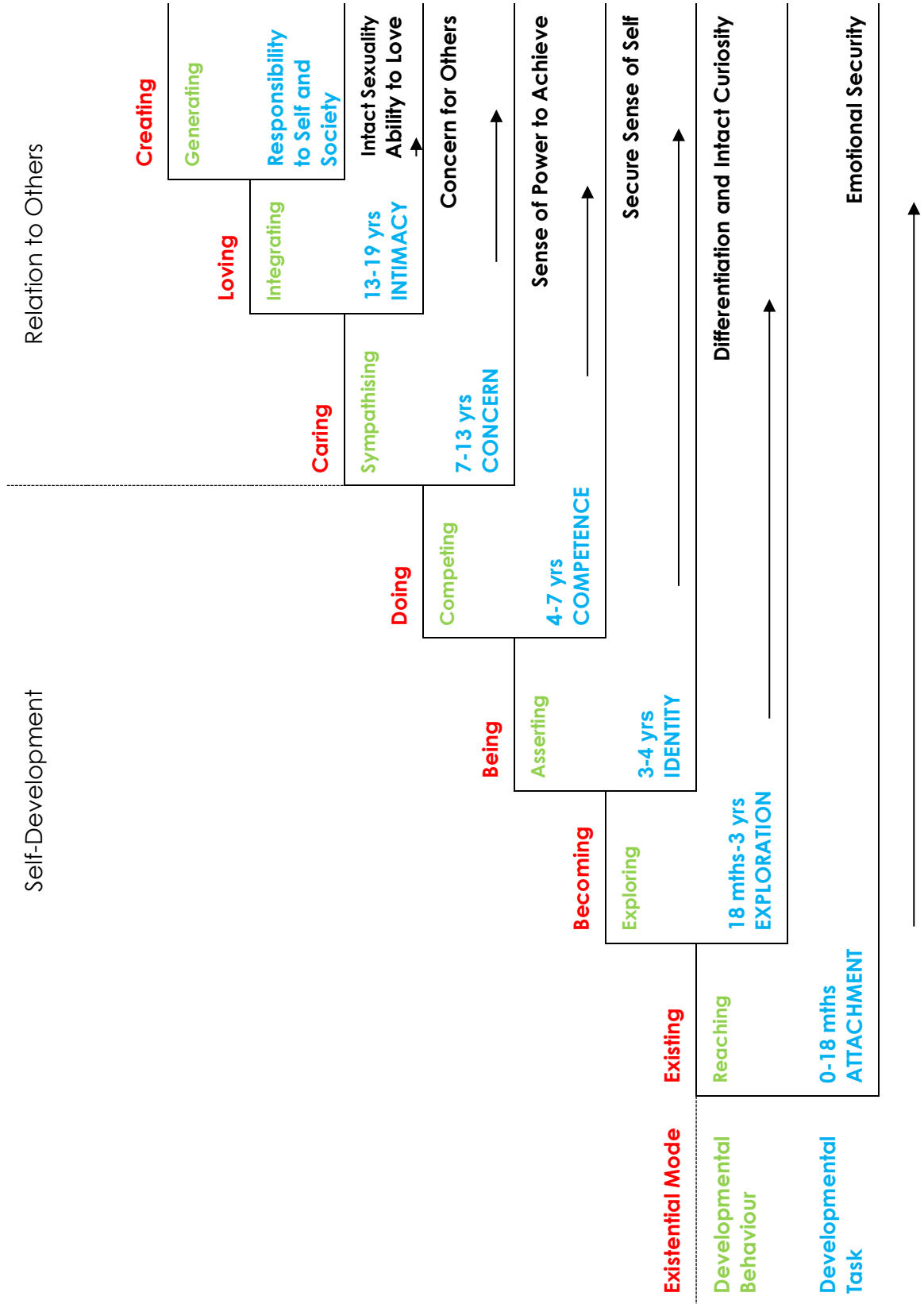
What you feel usually determines what you want. More important, what you feel about what you want always determines what you do. If you feel that you can't have what you want, you may be acting out toward others in anger or resentment. If you have judged what you want as wrong or believe you are wrong for wanting it, you may be acting out of fear – the fear of being found out. In any relationship, what you want and what you feel or believe about what you want will determine the quality of your interactions. At a very personal and intimate level, these feelings and beliefs help you determine your boundaries, the ways in which you will allow yourself to be treated and how you treat others. When a relationship goes sour or falls apart, you must examine yourself by asking questions.

What you do in response to what you feel is called meantime behaviour. This is the behaviour that gets you into trouble in your relationships – the basement of love's house. This is the passive or clinging behaviour that makes you feel bad, weak, dumb, or stupid, and the aggressive or avoidant behaviour that makes you angry with others, and makes you feel guilty or ashamed of yourself. It is the experiences you have in response to such behaviour that confirm your belief that love hurts. Love does not hurt! It heals! What hurts is what you do or fail to do in the name of love. These actions, or non-actions, are the origins of the basement patterns that drive you nuts. And you know what? This behaviour has absolutely nothing to do with love. It is, on the other hand, the very essence of the fears and fantasies that take us all into the heart of the meantime experience.

Childhood Wounds

The Imago is the pattern of childhood wounds which we carry with us into adulthood, which then determines the relationship choices we make. The next exercises are meant to help you explore these wounds, because the more you bring them into your consciousness, the easier it becomes to heal them. The following figure shows the six stages of child and adolescent development and their appropriate timetable.

The Psychosocial Journey of the Self



Each phase has its own agenda, its own tasks to perform. Though all of life is, in some sense, a development process, the first four to six years, when we are most dependent, receptive, and malleable, have a profound effect on the rest of our lives. As the figure demonstrates, each stage is built upon the preceding one; each is the foundation for accomplishing the task of the next phase. Each stage has its own timetable. At the end of each phase, another task emerges whether the preceding task was completed or not. So how we negotiate the hurdles of each stage determines how freely and capably we can move on to the next.

At each stage, there is a norm with a healthy outcome. But if at any point along the way something goes wrong with the way we are nurtured; we instinctively find a way to compensate for what is lacking in order to survive. But it is a defensive move, and in our desperation and ignorance we develop a maladaptive way of coping with the task at hand. It leaves a weak spot in our development. Lacking in vital skills, and weakened in confidence, we resort to inadequate responses which accumulate like scar tissue around the central core of our wound.

Since inevitably our caretakers were to some degree less than perfect at all stages, we all carry forward some degree of maladaptive response from all stages. We are all wounded, to some extent, at every stage of development. But there is almost always one stage in which we really “got stuck”. This may have to do with our inherent temperament and how we responded to a problem; more likely, it is the result of the way our caretakers handled a particular stage. The sad fact is that the people who raised us were only human and therefore fallible. Even parents with the best intentions, who make the greatest effort, still sometimes get the flu, have a financial crisis, a relationship problem, some problem that means the nurturing we received was less than perfect. The purpose of these exercises is not to seek a place to lay the blame for our relationship problems. The purpose is to help us become more aware of our inner motives and agendas, that we may take responsibility for healing ourselves and our relationships.

Whatever the case, the major task left uncompleted, or improperly completed, at this stage will have followed us through life, and will turn out to be the core issue around which our current problems turn. The accumulating coping mechanisms have a “snowball” effect. The earlier in life we get “stuck”, the more inadequately we handle subsequent stages, and the more debris and maladaptive behaviour accumulate around the core problem. How does our coping behaviour translate in adult life, and how does it show up in relationships? Here is where the Imago comes into play. First and foremost, like heat-seeking missiles, we will almost certainly find partners who treat us, in critical ways, much as our caretakers did, and we will use the same childish ploys to deal with them – and end up just as frustrated.

We will re-enact those old childhood scenarios and reopen the old wounds that we had bandaged over with our defences, which we had so hoped to heal when we first fell in love. Alternately, when our spouses fail us as our parents did, and if our childhood reactions produce no effect, we (having no other model of dealing with life than the example our parents provided) will treat our partners the way our parents treated us. This will reopen our partners' childhood wounds and s/he will respond to us much as s/he reacted to his or her parents when s/he was a child.

Furthermore, the way things seem to work is that we tend to choose partners who became stuck in the same or adjacent stage as we did. However, our partners will have adapted to those early frustrations with the opposite coping mechanisms, or ways of handling the situation. For example, if you responded to being ignored by jumping through hoops to get attention, your partner may have "solved" the same problem by becoming a loner who doesn't need people. It is obvious what type of conflict we would find in such a relationship.

You can see how important it is for you to recognise your personal quicksand if you hope to change the outcome of your future relationships. Now we will examine each stage of development. The exercises will help you pinpoint the stage at which you got "stuck" and you will be able to use this information as a model, a predictor of what goes wrong in your relationships, and as a basis for behaviour change. We will go through each of these developmental stages, discussing why and how we can get "stuck" in each one, and then you will fill in a little questionnaire for each to see at which stage you were wounded most. Read through each part carefully and see if you can feel which description resonates with you the most. At the end of these exercises will be a wrap-up exercise to help you make sense of it all.

THE ATTACHMENT STAGE: THE STRUGGLE TO EXIST

When the new-born utters his first cry and reaches for the mother's warmth and the nipple, the psychosocial journey is activated. The infant has a vital agenda – to close that gulf of separation that opened so threateningly at birth, and securely reattach itself to the nurturing, protective source of survival. It is responding to its internal mandate to exist. It is easy to suppose, from its sucking, grasping and crying, that what the infant needs most to survive is food, and that if it is fed regularly, all is well. But that is not the case. What babies need even more to survive is physical and emotional contact; they need a reliable source of love and comfort. In response to deficit nurturing at the Attachment stage, the infant adapts either by clinging or detaching.

The Clinging Child: Fear of Abandonment

If the caretaker is inconsistent – appropriately warm sometimes, but emotionally cold or absent at others – the child will develop a compulsive clinging response. In response to unreliable or inconsistent nurturing, the

infant's brain sounds an alarm, signalling that it is in danger. Because the caretaker does not come through sometimes, the infant keeps trying, feeling that if he can just figure out what to do – cry loud enough or long enough, or respond in a certain way – everything will work out. A clinging child has a highly ambivalent relationship to her caretaker. Tormented by the caretaker's unpredictable availability, he is simultaneously addicted to getting her attention and finding a way to get her to respond; at the same time, he is angry that his needs aren't being met. She spends half her time crying and holding on, the other half being rejecting, pushing her caretaker away.

The Adult: A Clinger

These defences will become cemented into the child's character and show up in his basic personality in adult life. The core complaint of her relationships will be: "You are never there for me." He is still saying to himself, "I can't count on my needs being met. I am good, but the other (my caretaker, or partner) is bad. I will hurt my partner until she meets my needs." But at an even deeper level of the subconscious is another belief left over from childhood: "I am bad for having these needs. I can't let him meet them." Of course, given the way things work, the Clinger will choose a partner who, like his caretaker, is emotionally detached, an Avoider.

The Detached Child: Fear of Rejection

Other caretakers are consistently emotionally cold and inconsistently available, physically. For them it is not that the child's needs are a burden, but the child itself is felt to be one. Such caretakers give rise to the detached child. Such a child fears the attachment it so desperately needs, because all attempts to attach result in emotional pain. Contact itself becomes painful. Therefore, her defence is to "not approach" her caretaker, because if she is present at all, she is routinely depressed, disinterested, and emotionally distant. This leads him into a primitive but effective defence: "I don't have needs." Detached children don't cry very much, and they don't seem to need very much; they take whatever they can get and don't ask for more.

The Adult: An Avoider

Avoiders tend to hook up with Clingers. It is not that Avoiders have no needs; rather, they gave up on getting their needs met long ago and lost contact with their desires. So, they never have to approach their Clinger partners, because the partners' intense needs to be in contact fulfils the Avoiders' denied needs to be in contact. But contact is still painful. The partner's need for closeness both attracts her and makes her feel desperate for escape. The Avoider says: "You are just too needy," projecting his own denied needs onto the partner by implying that he doesn't need anything.

For the Avoider, the need for attachment is a secret hunger; for the Clinger, it is an ever-present demand. If nothing comes along to mitigate their experience, this behaviour becomes fixed – the infants become adults frozen in a lifelong pattern of clinging or distancing.

Exercise 5: Was I Wounded at the Attachment Stage?

Keeping in mind what you have just read, and how relevant it feels to your life, complete the following chart by scoring each item on a scale of 1 (“that’s not me at all”) to 5 (“that’s exactly the way it is for me”).

THE AVOIDER: Rigid Boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Basic Fear (Wound): Contact may lead to emotional and physical rejection, loss of self through contact with parent (partner)					
Internal Message: Don't be					
Core Belief: I have no right to exist					
Relationship Belief: I will be hurt if I initiate contact with you					
Image of Partner: Demanding, all consuming					
Relationship to Partner: Detached; avoidant					
Core Issue: Too much togetherness; too many feelings; too much chaos					
Typical Frustration: You hate me; you feel too much					
Recurrent Feeling: Terror and rage					
Conflict Management: Hyperrational; avoidant; passive /aggressive withdrawal and coldness					
Growth Challenge: Claim right to be; initiate emotional and physical contact; express feelings; increase body awareness and sensory contact with environment					
THE CLINGER: Diffuse Boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Basic Fear (Wound): Separation and abandonment; loss of self through loss of contact with parent (partner)					
Internal Message: Don't need me					
Core Belief: I can't get my need met					
Relationship Belief: I am safe if I hold on to you					
Image of Partner: Unavailable; has no feelings; a rock wall					
Relationship to Partner: Clinging; demanding; attempts to fuse					
Core Issue: Separateness					
Typical Frustration: You are never there					
Recurrent Feeling: Voracious rage and terror					
Conflict Management: Hyperemotional, uncompromising; demanding, then giving in					
Growth Challenge: Let go; do things on your own; negotiate					

THE EXPLORATION STAGE: LOVE AFFAIR WITH THE WORLD

This stage is usually, erroneously, referred to as Separation and Autonomy, because it has been believed that the child's desire is to break away from its mother, and that the rebellious "no" is a sign that she wants to be on her own, free from the caretaker's domination. But the child's drive is not to be autonomous or separate, but to explore the world. He is torn between his newfound fascination with the world and his conflicting need for reassurance of the caretaker's continued availability. She wants to leave, but only if everything will be the same when she returns. (You can see why inadequate nurturing during the Attachment stage hampers the ability of the child to explore confidently.) When the exploration phase is mishandled, children tend either to distance themselves from their parents or become ambivalent.

The Distancing Child: Fear of Absorption

If the caretaker is overly protective, setting strict limits on the child's wanderings, checking up on her the moment she wanders off; if the caretaker holds her on her lap, blocking her access to the world, the child feels stifled, and holds herself aloof. If the mother grasps at the child as he tries to move away, the distancing child will stay away and not want to return, fearful that he will be absorbed back into the mother's orbit. Or her response will be to outwardly adapt to the mother's needs, returning physically while cutting off emotionally. Here is the passive/aggressive syndrome. The difference between the detached child and the distancing child is that the detached child never approaches, while the distancing child is not afraid of contact, but needs to maintain careful boundaries, for fear of becoming trapped and unable to explore on his own.

The Adult: An Isolator

In adulthood, the Isolator is physically and emotionally aloof. She needs her "space" and feels threatened if demands are made for her presence, or her emotions. "You want too much," is the complaint, or "You're trying to control me," or "I need some space for myself." Although she had buried needs for closeness, she fears smothering, so she keeps them to herself, and maintains a distance through anger and strict limits on availability. Only guilt, or a desire to please, or her own fear of abandonment keeps him from fleeing. Their behaviour is a case study in passive aggression. Passive aggression is what's going on when we say we're going to do something – spend time with our partner, for example – and then don't do it.

The Ambivalent Child: Fear of Loss

The ambivalent child is the product of a caretaker who is anxious to be free of the dependent child's needs. She encourages him to go off on his exploratory journey before he is ready, or she is not there when he returns, shattering the

bonding that maintained his original sense of wholeness through the Attachment stage. The result is a child who is fearful and dependent. Fearing abandonment, she exaggerates her affect with any ploy – tears, threats, stories, questions, anything that will keep her caretaker’s attention.

The Adult: A Pursuer

The Pursuer employs all sorts of tactics to keep his partner close by. Like the Clinger, the Pursuer fears abandonment, but as the Pursuer accomplished attachment well enough, her issue is remaining attached. To keep the childhood terror from returning, the Pursuer is always nice and upbeat, trying to keep things comfortable and entertaining, always of service, fearful of anger and conflict that would lead to the partner leaving. Terrified if being alone, or of being abandoned, there are always plans for things to do together.

You can see why Isolators and Pursuers tend to pair up: each offers what the other lacks. The Isolator withholds feelings; and fears that if he opens up even a little bit, the Pursuer will just march through the door (which is true). The Pursuer feels that if she doesn’t keep up the pressure for contact, there won’t be any.

Exercise 6: Was I Wounded at the Exploration Stage?

Keeping in mind what you have just read, and how relevant it feels to your life, complete the following chart by scoring each item on a scale of 1 (“that’s not me at all”) to 5 (“that’s exactly the way it is for me”).

THE ISOLATOR: Rigid Boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Basic Fear (Wound): Being smothered, absorbed, humiliated, loss of parent (partner)					
Internal Message: Don’t be separate					
Core Belief: I can’t say no and be loved					
Relationship Belief: I will be absorbed if I come too close					
Image of Partner: Insecure; too dependent; needy					
Relationship to Partner: Sets limits on togetherness; passive/aggressive; acts out absorption fears by distancing					
Core Issue: Personal freedom; autonomy					
Typical Frustration: You need too much					
Recurrent Feeling: Fear and impotent fury					
Conflict Management: Oppositional; distancing					
Growth Challenge: Initiate closeness; share feelings; increase time together; integrate positive and negative traits in partner					

THE PURSUER: Diffuse Boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Basic Fear (Wound): Unreliability of others, abandonment; loss of parent (partner)					
Internal Message: Don't be dependent					
Core Belief: I can't count on anyone					
Relationship Belief: If I act independent, you will abandon me					
Image of Partner: Distant; has no needs					
Relationship to Partner: Ambivalent pursuit and withdrawal					
Core Issue: Partner reliability; support; standing					
Typical Frustration: You are never there when I need you					
Recurrent Feeling: Panic and anger					
Conflict Management: Blaming, demanding; chasing; complaining; devaluing					
Growth Challenge: Initiate separateness; develop outside interests; internalise partner; integrate positive and negative traits of partner					

THE IDENTITY STAGE: "THIS IS ME"

Now the child experiences a complicated new reality. She wants to know who she is as a separate person in relation to the rest of the world: she embarks on the process of becoming a self. To do that, he must develop a stable and consistent inner image of himself and a correspondingly firm and constant inner image of the significant others in his life. This image must be so clear that she can evoke it and feel connected. In the normal course of events, the child makes a series of transient identifications, trying them on for size – with animals, things, people – which are later synthesised into a unique self.

The Rigid Child: Fear of Being Shamed

The two possible ways in which things can go wrong at the Identity stage both centre around the issue of invisibility; both have to do with the way the child is mirrored, and how that mirroring affects the child's sense of personal boundaries. Many parents are threatened by the child's identifications that do not fit their cultural biases and suppress the child's emergent identity by rejecting or refusing to mirror those self-assertions that do not fit their preconceived notions of what they want their child to be. The child, fearing shame, or loss of the parents' love, represses the rejected aspects of himself and resentfully becomes what the parents approve of. Because her identity is consolidating at this stage, she ends up with a "split self", hiding the disapproved parts from others, and even herself. The boundaries around the disowned core of the natural self are tightly held, to prevent any leakage.

The Adult: A Rigid Controller

In adulthood this child becomes a Controller, often opinionated to the point of being boorish, leading a narrowly focused, often self-centred life. He has little access to feelings and lacks empathy with others. She will choose a partner who carries the traits of her Lost Self, and then find fault with him. Domineering and critical, his complaint is: "You don't seem to know what you want," or "Make up your mind." Others are not seen for themselves, but as objects to be controlled, often for her personal and instant gratification.

The Invisible Child: Fear of Being a Self

Some parents are almost completely lacking in the mirroring responses that release the chemistry of individuation and self-integration. The child loses sight of himself and remains amorphous and undefined. Failing to integrate and synthesise her transient identifications for lack of consistent mirroring, they float around loose and disorderly in her unconscious, producing a fragmented self. With such diffuse, undefined boundaries, he is unable to distinguish between himself and others. He seems to have more than one personality. She experiences herself as "not existing". His complaint is "You don't even notice me."

The Adult: A Complaint Diffuser

In adulthood the Diffuser's complaint is: "I don't know who I am," or "I don't know what I want," or "I feel invisible to you." Not knowing himself, he is forever scanning the faces of others for clues as to how he should be, forever dependent on the other for self-definition. Many men have had experience with the Diffuser woman, the flirtatious seductress who turns out to be such a let-down in bed. She is trying to be what she thinks her partner wants her to be, but at the same time she is bitterly resentful that she is not seen for herself, and fearful of the self that she wants to be. A loose cannon of boundaryless rage that she is not valued as a person, she makes her partner invisible.

When the Controller and the Diffuser end up together their power struggle centres around dominance and submission. One is attracted by expansiveness and openness; the other by decisiveness and clarity. One leads, the other follows. One is excessively dependent and seeks definition by others, while resentfully rejecting it; the other is rigidly independent, compulsively and angrily refusing any input from others.

Exercise 7: Was I Wounded at the Identity Stage?

Keeping in mind what you have just read, and how relevant it feels to your life, complete the following chart by scoring each item on a scale of 1 ("that's not me at all") to 5 ("that's exactly the way it is for me").

THE CONTROLLER: Rigid Boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Basic Fear (Wound): Being ashamed; loss of control; losing face; loss of parental (partner) love					
Internal Message: Don't be what you want to be; be what we want you to be					
Core Belief: I can't be me and be accepted and loved					
Relationship Belief: I'll be safe if I stay in control					
Image of Partner: Unorganised; scatter-brained; over-emotional					
Relationship to Partner: Domineering; critical; invasive; withholding					
Core Issue: Partner's emotional liability, chaos, and passivity					
Typical Frustration: You want me to be somebody else; you don't know what you want					
Recurrent Feeling: Shame and anger					
Conflict Management: Rigidly imposes will; super rational with occasional angry outbursts; takes charge; punishes					
Growth Challenge: Relax control; mirror partner's thoughts and feelings; develop flexibility and sensitivity					
THE DIFFUSER: Diffuse Boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Basic Fear (Wound): Being invisible, self-assertion, loss of parental (partner) love					
Internal Message: Don't assert yourself					
Core Belief: I'll never be seen, valued, and accepted					
Relationship Belief: I'll be loved if I go along and please others					
Image of Partner: Insensitive; controlling					
Relationship to Partner: Submissive; passive-aggressive; manipulative					
Core Issue: Partner rigidity and dominance					
Typical Frustration: You never see me; you want everything your way					
Recurrent Feeling: Shame and confusion					
Conflict Management: Confused; alternates between compliance and defiance; exaggerates emotions; makes few suggestions; self-effacing					
Growth Challenge: Assert yourself; set boundaries for yourself; respect boundaries of others					

THE STAGE OF COMPETENCE: "I CAN DO IT"

Now you begin to compete with others, especially your parents and siblings (or peers) to discover your personal power and its limits, as well as to determine what belongs to you and what doesn't. At this stage, the child is trying to become competent in the management of himself in the world of others and things. She experiments with what effect she can produce on her world by impacting it with all her strength in any form she can devise, against all comers. The degree to which he succeeds will determine the way he values himself. If all this is done well, the child experiences herself as able to manage her environment and will have a high level of self-esteem.

The Competitive Child: Fear of Failure / Disapproval

Some parents, feeling threatened by their child's initiative and competitiveness, selectively reward and punish their child's expression of competence. Since the child's efforts sometimes meets with approval, he keeps trying, never knowing when his efforts will produce results. Driven by feelings that nothing she does is good enough, that if she just tries a little harder, she will make it, she gets "stuck" performing and competing, trying to win, to get noticed, to produce an effect. He gives up on intimacy and settles for success as an indirect bid for approval. But no matter how successful she becomes, she is unable to enjoy life, because she never feels successful.

The Adult: A Compulsive Competitor

The competitive child is, not surprisingly, often outwardly successful as an adult, but without empathy for others; he occasionally skirts moral values. She's preoccupied with winning and enjoys beating the daylights out of others to do it. "You're not even trying, he complains, or "Can't you do anything right?" What happens is that she often ends up overreaching, unable to employ subtler tactics when called for; or she reaches her goal, and then can't figure out why she still feels empty.

The Helpless / Manipulative Child: Fear of Aggressiveness / Success

Some parents are consistent in their lack of support of the child's attempts to achieve a sense of personal power. Their constant criticism confuses the child about how to express himself; he alternates between feelings of helplessness and resentment. The child's way of winning is a kind of manipulative passive/aggressive stance. She never competes openly; she wins by not appearing to compete, or by getting others to fail. He gives up, feeling he can't do it right anyway. She shuns self-assertion because of the pain of repeated deflection, disapproval, and fear of failure. He withdraws from the competition, complaining that he is not appreciated, or never given a fair chance to win. Full of resentment, she feels at the mercy of her environment.

The Adult: A Manipulative Compromiser

The grown-up Compromiser never wants to play games or do anything where he is compared to others. When placed in a competitive situation, she behaves in a way that will make the other person look bad, and she seldom feels remorse over the other's discomfort. At work, he keeps a low profile, staying in jobs below his capabilities, and he may subtly undermine the efforts of colleagues. She never openly pursues the partner who is "too good" for her but arranges to be pursued while denying any interest in being courted. His complaint is "You don't value anything I do," or "Can't we just play for fun?" Behind these complaints is a hidden resentment: "I'll get even."

The repercussions in adulthood of a malfunction at the Competence stage are not as devastating as if it happened earlier. The Compromiser is not as volatile and intrusive, the Competitor is not as closed off and rigid as they might be if their wounding occurred earlier in childhood. In some situations, the Competitor can relax and enjoy himself without having to win; the Compromiser can assert herself in a comfortable situation. Fluidity and rigidity are relative and situational, affected by the interrelationship with others.

Exercise 8: Was I Wounded at the Stage of Competence?

Keeping in mind what you have just read, and how relevant it feels to your life, complete the following chart by scoring each item on a scale of 1 ("that's not me at all") to 5 ("that's exactly the way it is for me").

THE COMPETITOR: Rigid Boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Basic Fear (Wound): Being a failure, guilt and disapproval; fear of parental (partner) disapproval					
Internal Message: Don't make mistakes					
Core Belief: I have to be perfect					
Relationship Belief: I'll be loved if I am the best					
Image of Partner: Manipulative; incompetent					
Relationship to Partner: Competitive; aggressive; puts partner down					
Core Issue: Control; battle for who's boss					
Typical Frustration: You are never satisfied					
Recurrent Feeling: Anger and guilt					
Conflict Management: Competes for control					
Growth Challenge: Accept competence; become cooperative; mirror and value partner's efforts					

THE COMPROMISER: Diffuse Boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Basic Fear (Wound): Being aggressive, successful, competent, and powerful, losing parental (partner) approval					
Internal Message: Don't be powerful					
Core Belief: I don't know what to do; I can't be aggressive or express anger					
Relationship Belief: I'll be loved if I am good and cooperative					
Image of Partner: Never satisfied; has to win					
Relationship to Partner: Manipulative; compromising; sabotaging					
Core Issue: Partner rigidity and dominance					
Typical Frustration: You always have to win					
Recurrent Feeling: Helpless and resentful					
Conflict Management: Compromises; manipulates					
Growth Challenge: Be direct; express power; develop competence; praise partner's success					

THE STAGE OF CONCERN: "I BELONG"

Now the child's attention turns for the first time to the world outside himself and his home. Her focus shifts to others who are equal rather than superior. Then her task is to form a special bond with a same-sex person within her peer group. The relationship with this best friend is intense, serious, and exclusive, based not on competition but cooperation. The child learns that this bond can't be taken for granted; it has to be nurtured and developed. The child learns that interest in her friend's welfare is the best strategy for success; it is an adaptive response, necessary for survival. Since the friend is also a mirror of himself, he becomes more self-aware, more compassionate, and empathic.

The Lonely Child: Fear of Others/Ostracism

Some children fail to make friends and are thwarted in their attempts to be included in the group. This may be because her parents, fearing the loss of the child, are overprotective and over-restrictive. They are quick to criticise the new friends and the child's social behaviour. Failure may also be due to the lack of social skills in the home; his parents are unable to guide him in his new task of developing friendships and resolving conflicts. The child may also be ostracised because she is different. Though she looks independent, and denies that she needs or wants friends, she is acutely lonely.

The Adult: A Loner

The lonely child becomes a Loner in adulthood, a private person who has a hard time sharing his feelings. At the core of her being is a void, for she has failed to satisfy her needs for healthy dependency and interdependency. He is filled with intense, often painful feelings, including the powerful belief that he is unlovable. This may have positive value as the source of creative output, but she is also vulnerable to addiction. To make up for what he lacks, he is attracted to someone gregarious, intrusive, and self-sacrificing, who will draw him, kicking and screaming, out of his privacy.

The Gregarious Child: Fear of Neediness / Being Alone

The gregarious child is excessively interested in the welfare and caretaking of others. She asks little for herself, seemingly prematurely taking on her parents' role. The problem is that his self is defined by the approval of others and is sacrificed to their views and needs. Defined by others' view of her, she cannot see herself. Thus, he is terrified of being alone, for he feels invisible to himself, not sure if he exists except in others' eyes. Parents of the gregarious child convey their belief that self-care and self-worth are bad, and that personal feelings and concerns are unimportant. The child is trained to give, to feel bad when she doesn't give, and to overly appreciate whatever she receives.

The Adult: A Sacrificing Caretaker

The Sacrificing Caretaker gets his recognition – at work, in his community, in his relationships – by making himself indispensable. She finds out what others need and provides it. He's respected and admired; others see him as self-sufficient and turn to him for advice and help. She is a magnet for needy people, and sometimes supports them when they should be supporting themselves. But often, under his "I can do it" exterior, he is depressed, and feels that something is missing. And sometimes, weary and exhausted, she is angry that no one cares about her, or appreciates all that she is doing.

Of course, the Loner usually seeks out a Caregiver, who will spearhead the making and keeping of friends, while at the same time he does his best to exclude his partner from his inner life. The Caregiver, in her classically co-dependent way, tries to make his life better, but cannot understand why he doesn't appreciate her efforts to care for him and bring him out of himself, and is hurt by his refusal to share his inner world with her.

Exercise 9: Was I Wounded at the Stage of Concern?

Keeping in mind what you have just read, and how relevant it feels to your life, complete the following chart by scoring each item on a scale of 1 ("that's not me at all") to 5 ("that's exactly the way it is for me").

THE LONER: Rigid Boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Basic Fear (Wound): Ostracism by peers; parental (partner) rejection					
Internal Message: Don't be close					
Core Belief: I am not lovable					
Relationship Belief: I'll be hurt if I try to be close					
Image of Partner: Gregarious and intrusive					
Relationship to Partner: Exclude partner from inner world; make unilateral plans; counter dependent					
Core Issue: Partner intrusiveness					
Typical Frustration: You don't like me; you won't leave me alone					
Recurrent Feeling: Resentment and depression					
Conflict Management: Avoids conflict; sulks					
Growth Challenge: Develop same-sex friends; join partner in socialising; share feelings and thoughts with partner; become inclusive					
THE CARETAKER: Diffuse Boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Basic Fear (Wound): Having or expressing needs; being excluded; parental (partner) rejection					
Internal Message: Don't have any needs of your own					
Core Belief: Others need me					
Relationship Belief: I'll be loved if I meet your needs					
Image of Partner: Unappreciative					
Relationship to Partner: Self-sacrificing; intrusive					
Core Issue: Partner's exclusion					
Typical Frustration: You don't appreciate me or my efforts					
Recurrent Feeling: Resentment; depression					
Conflict Management: Tries to be understanding and nice					
Growth Challenge: Express needs to partner and others; self-care; respect partner's privacy; take time alone					

THE STAGE OF INTIMACY: "I CAN BE CLOSE AND LOVING"

The adolescent's task is to separate more definitively from the family, to solidify his place in the social order of his peers, and to establish a satisfying sexual and emotional intimacy with someone of the opposite sex. At this point the parents are charged with accepting the budding sexuality of the emerging adult while providing a model of appropriate behaviour as to the boundaries of intimacy. The message they want to convey is, "We are close and loving with each other, and we want the same for you. We are going to support you. We hope you find a nice boy-/girlfriend. We look forward to meeting him/her and getting to know her/him."

The Rebellious Child: Fear of Being Controlled

Some parents, fearful and envious of the child's power, freedom, and sexuality, pull in the reins at this point. "Don't grow up," they are saying. The child is angry at any restriction of freedom as she tries her wings, angry that her parents don't trust her to make the right choices. His only defence is to break the rules that he finds too limiting, for he fears that to acquiesce would trap him, that he would lose his fragile sense of self. The rebel has a hair-trigger sensitivity to anyone telling her what to do. His dress and language are not just indicators of his individuality; they're meant to provoke. Any negative response gives her an excuse to rebel further and confirms her belief that all authority figures are rigid and reactionary.

The Adult: A Rebel

In adulthood, the rebellious child becomes a crusading Rebel, railing against social rules and behaviour, compulsively going against the grain, even though no one is telling him what to do anymore. She's full of contrary opinions and goes out of her way to set herself apart. He's suspicious of others' motives, wary that they are trying to control him or enforce the status quo. Her relationships tend to be adversarial, and she fears that her partner will dominate her if she isn't on her guard. He needs his freedom and his "space" but can easily be made to feel guilty.

The Model Child: Fear of Being Different

Conservative, rigid caretakers who are afraid of being different often raise a model child. The parents never stop pointing out what's odd, of weird, or unusual about the child's friends or clothes, interests, or taste, sending the unmistakable message: "Don't be different." Their range of acceptability falls into a very narrow band. The child buys the party line that the only way you'll be loved is to be like everyone else and "do what is right." Though the child may still have secret longings, opinions, or interests, he is afraid he will lose the love and acceptance of his peers, his parents, and other adults if he dares to be different. Thus, is born the model child, the well-behaved, well-groomed paragon of TV commercials and family sitcoms.

The Adult: A Conformist

The Conformist lives in a world of model citizens, fighting for the status quo. She is full of self-righteousness about what's wrong with the world, full of certitude about how things should be, convinced of the decadence of the new generation, pining for the "good old days". Conformists don't make waves, and they are offended by the wave's others make. They see themselves as preservers of the common good, traditional values, and moral standards.

The Rebel is usually attracted to a Conformist, since he desperately needs the structure and order he defies, and projects this need upon his model partner, while criticising her for being so proper. Conformists are attracted to rebellious, childlike partners who carry their rebelliousness, their resentment of their failed adolescence, missed opportunities, and lost freedom. Yet Conformists are condescending to rebellious partners and try to control them and make them behave. The push/pull dynamics of couples whose wounding occurred at the later stages of Concern or Intimacy is more fluid. Their character structure is looser, and the partners tend to alternate roles more easily than those injured at earlier stages when the character structure is more rigid. Character structure is always relative to the person we are relating to when the Distancer comes closer or starts to pursue, the Pursuer suddenly becomes distant.

Exercise 10: Was I Wounded at the Stage of Intimacy?

Keeping in mind what you have just read, and how relevant it feels to your life, complete the following chart by scoring each item on a scale of 1 (“that’s not me at all”) to 5 (“that’s exactly the way it is for me”).

THE REBEL: Rigid Boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Basic Fear (Wound): Being controlled by others (parent/partner)					
Internal Message: Don't grow up					
Core Belief: I am not trusted					
Relationship Belief: I'll be controlled if I give up dissent					
Image of Partner: Too nice; counter-controlling; guiltting; parental					
Relationship to Partner: Rebellious; controlling; devalues partner					
Core Issue: Freedom to break the rules					
Typical Frustration: You are never on my side					
Recurrent Feeling: Anger and disappointment					
Conflict Management: Rebellious; suspicious of motives					
Growth Challenge: Maintain self-identity; be responsible to others; learn to trust others					
THE CARETAKER: Diffuse Boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Basic Fear (Wound): Being different from others; disapproval of parent (partner)					
Internal Message: Don't make waves					
Core Belief: I have to be good					
Relationship Belief: I have to hold things together					
Image of Partner: Rebellious child					

Relationship to Partner: Condescending; critical; controlling					
Core Issue: Stability and cooperation					
Typical Frustration: You won't grow up; you always want to be different					
Recurrent Feeling: Angry self-righteousness					
Conflict Management: Tries to impose rules					
Growth Challenge: Experiment with being different; take risks, develop identity					

Exercise 11: Rigid or Diffuse Boundaries?

If you are at all uncertain about whether you have diffuse boundaries or rigid boundaries, look at the chart below. On the left is a list that describes a person with rigid boundaries; the traits on the right describe a person with diffuse boundaries. In the spaces provided, place a tick mark next to the phrases that describe you.

Rigid Boundaries		Diffuse Boundaries	
Implodes feelings inward		Explodes feelings outward	
Diminishes effect		Exaggerates effect	
Denies dependency (counter dependent)		Tends to depend on others	
Generally denies needs		Generally exaggerates needs	
Shares little of his inner world		Is compulsively open; subjective	
Tends to exclude others from his psychic space		Tends to be overly inclusive of others in psychic space	
Withholds feelings, thoughts, behaviours		Tends toward clinging and excessive generosity	
Has rigid self-boundaries		Has diffuse self-boundaries	
Inner-directed; takes direction mainly from self		Outer-directed; generally asks for direction from others, distrusts own directions	
Mainly thinks about himself		Focuses on others	
Acts and thinks compulsively		Acts impulsively	
Tries to dominate others		Usually submissive, manipulative	
Tends to be passive-aggressive		Alternates between aggressiveness and passivity	

Exercise 12: Identifying the Wounded Child in the Adult

Now take a few minutes to complete the following summary. Look back over your responses in the preceding exercises to determine at which stage most of your responses fell in the 4 to 5 range and note if there were any other stages where your responses were consistently at the high end of the scale.

I am a person with _____ (rigid or diffuse) boundaries who was most deeply wounded at the stage of _____ (Example: Identity).

Therefore, I am a _____ (Coping response. Example: Controller). My Basic Fear (Wound) is _____

_____ (line 2 of chart for pertinent stage).

I also seem to have problems in the area of _____

_____. (any additional stage or stages where your responses consistently fall in the 3 to 5 range).

My Basic Fear (Wound) there is _____

_____.

Thus, my Growth Challenge is _____

_____.

Well, that's depressing, isn't it? It's a wonder we can get out of bed in the morning, and dress and feed ourselves, with all the baggage we're carting around, all the indirection and defensiveness. Certainly, this is the hardest part; but it is also the hopeful part. Fortunately, we can repair the damage if we work at it. In fact, in doing so we are aligning with our fervent unconscious wish to be whole.

Would You Like to Know the Way Home?

I once heard a story about a little boy who asked his minister, "If we all come from God and he wants us to find our way back home to him, why doesn't he just keep us there in the first place?" Right out of the mouths of babes! If we come from the love of God, why can't we just stay there? What is the purpose of being born, forgetting where we come from, only to discover it so we can go back? I have asked myself this question at least a million times. The answer, as best as I can make of it, is that the journey through life helps us rediscover and remember what home looks like. Life is home. Home is God's house, the place where God keeps all Godly possessions and creations. At home, we can explore and examine the architecture of the house from top to bottom, inside out. The exploration is called living. The purpose of this exploration – and everything in life has a definite purpose – is to learn to stand firm upon life's foundation. The foundation of life at home is to remember and experience pure, unconditional love.

Relationships are the tour guides that move us through various levels and parameters of home. They are like rooms, each one a little different, offering a little more or a little less than we want, or need, to remember. Relationships also give us the opportunity to choose and decide where we would like to sleep and how we want to be treated during the exploratory journey through life. For us to help ourselves along the way, we are given a map in a tiny suitcase called a heart. The map contains the floor plan of our true home and is filled with directions that lead to the truth about love.

Along with the map, we come prepared with a compass. It is called the mind. The purpose of the mind is to support in the use of the map. Somehow, along the way through the rooms of the house, we get confused. We allow the compass filled with thoughts, beliefs, judgments, and, of course, patterned perceptions about the house to take over as the guide. In the meantime, while we are trying to read the compass, we leave the packed suitcase in the corner of some room, while we drag ourselves up and down the steps of the house, trying to figure out the right direction. Using the compass without the map takes us over obscure lumps in the carpet, into frightening cracks in the wall, through rooms that are under renovation, and into dark, lonely closets.

From time to time, we will admit we are lost. We realize that what we are thinking about and doing is not getting us where we want to be. This is when we check to see if the compass is in good working order.

Most of us do not stop to think about what we are thinking about until we find ourselves in a deep hole in the floor, or amongst the clutter of some pile of garbage. It's also about this time that we will remember the suitcase, the heart. We remember that it is the heart that we have been ignoring that gave us the first warning.

It is the heart that we have been afraid to hear, that has helped us find our way through the twists and turns of the house. Even when we are brave enough to hear and trust the heart, we behave as if its guidance is only a fleeting idea. An idea to which we pay very little attention, because we have been told by those who have taken the journey before us, "Do not under any circumstances trust your heart!" In the meantime, while we are trying to make the compass work and give us an accurate directional reading, we continue to explore, search, and rummage through the house, missing the treasure buried within us.

There's No Need to Be Afraid of Heights

You are now approaching the level of understanding and healing work where there is no more urgency of anxiety attached to it. This is a state of consciousness in which you know you are beginning to understand what needs to be done. All things begin to make absolute sense. And when they do not, you don't worry about it. At this level of your development you will be willing to surrender, and become open to forgiveness, and to trust yourself. You have enough love in your heart to be an active participant in any further healing that needs to be done for yourself or anyone else. You have arrived at this level of understanding to begin to perfect how and why you do what you do.

By this time, you can begin to recognize that your poor choices, faulty decisions, and bad judgments were made in fear and impatience rather than in pursuit of love and truth. The good news is that you rarely do this anymore because prayer, meditation, and reflection are a staple diet for you. You have now developed the courage to accept total responsibility for every aspect of your life, without the need to beat up on yourself for what you think or feel. When you are not feeling bruised and battered by life, you can look at yourself in the mirror every morning and be pleased with who you see. This is what is called – easy living! What may not be so easy are the adjustments that will have to be made. You see, this is where a shift really begins to happen, when you are doing what you have learned, and the people around you will also have to adjust. You have learned what to do and you are doing it in a different way. People are not going to be happy about this! They liked the old you, the hysterical you. Now you are trying to be different, and people won't like it!

Everything you know is beginning to take on a different meaning. Surrender will now mean that you are willing to surrender every relationship you have. That's right! Every relationship that is based on the old you must shift, change, or be released. These are the relationships that tempt you to engage in basement behaviour.

These are the conditional relationships born in the chaos of your stuff. By this time, you are consciously aware that as you shift out of your old patterns, some people and things are going to fall away. The things that once made you happy can no longer make you happy. The attitudes and behaviour that once occupied your life, making it a dramatic production, will no longer be worth your time and energy. This will probably be the hardest stuff you will ever do, because it is here that the old you are going to challenge the new you. It's called internal conflict. Don't let this worry you! You will know exactly what to do. If you don't, rest assured that is why you are here, on this level of life's house, to practice and master how to do it.

As you move around in your new dwelling space, you will realize that because you have new information you now have the perfect opportunity to do things in a new way. This is miraculous! You will know that your role in life is to serve and support people while honouring yourself. These are the only spiritual cleansers you will need from this point on – acceptance, service, support, and honour. You will also know that if you use these four cleansers as the basis of your decisions and actions in your relationships, everything you do will turn out just fine – eventually. When it doesn't look the way, you thought it would look, you now know better than to worry about it.

How does this happen? How do you get so wise? Somewhere, as you diligently work to clear away your stuff, you will come to a startling realization. You will realize that you are not alone, have never been alone, and will never be alone. In response, you will no longer feel isolated. Your mind and your heart will be united through the power of unconditional love, which means you can be perfectly content being with yourself. You will love yourself just that much. This is really, good for you! From this point on, all you must do is remember that everyone in your life reflects you and a reflection of God. This will make it very easy for you to determine how to treat people and how to expect them to treat you. When unconditional love is your reality, you will treat people the way you would want to be treated, the way you would treat God. And you know what? They will treat you the same way.

Many people can live in this state of consciousness for many years and be totally satisfied. You can remain here following the death of your life partner or after the termination of a long-term relationship. You come to this level of understanding to rest, rejuvenate, reflect, and deepen your awareness of life. You will find things to keep you busy, and you just don't worry about life anymore. Instead you just live it. You will work on the house, in love. You will have wonderful neighbours, good friends, and your life will be a pleasant dream. You will realize that there is a floor above you, and you will also realize the only thing you need to do to get up to that level is make a slight shift. That level is the roof garden. In the meantime, you know that what is in your soul will set up the circumstances and experiences of your life. Those experiences will either heal you or cripple you in your soul. When love and willingness are added to the life equation, you will, despite all of your bad choices and poor decisions, be healed.

This booklet on Identifying the Wounded Child in You is also available electronically on my website. To download this booklet as well as a collection of other booklets and CD's, please visit my website – www.susankriegler.com - or scan the QR Code below. If you would like to schedule an appointment, please contact my reception.

-Susan-

Dr Susan Kriegler
Educational Psychologist

181 Beckett Street
Arcadia
Pretoria
0083

Tel: 060 6215 398
Email: reception.smk@yebo.co.za

www.susankriegler.com
www.facebook.com/DrSusanKriegler
www.facebook.com/SusanKrieglerArt



WEBSITE



FACEBOOK



**SUSAN KRIEGLER
ART**

