



Inner Child Work: A Road to Becoming a Healthy and Emotionally Mature Adult

“So, like a forgotten fire, a childhood can always flare up again within us.”
- Gaston Bachelard

It can be hard to be an adult. Even though our bodies have physically matured to their adult proportions; even though we may have reached the age of majority and can drive, vote and drink; and even though we may present ourselves as fully capable, self-assured directors of our own lives, there are times when all of us, in some deep place within, feel like a child or adolescent. Though we might try to rationalize or justify this invasion of foreign psychic material, we are nevertheless usually powerless at these times from turning into *adult children*, losing our ground as the emotionally balanced, interpersonally effective adult we would like to be.

The circumstances or people that trigger our being overtaken by a much younger or broken version of ourselves may vary considerably. It may occur in the middle of a visit with our family of origin. Or in the presence of an authority figure or someone to whom we feel sexually or romantically attracted. It might be that we are thrown back into our pasts by something as simple as a raised voice, a judgmental tone, an arched eyebrow or a facial smirk. We can be overthrown by something as ordinary as an unreturned phone call, a teasingly sarcastic comment about us overheard in passing, or being stood up for a lunch date.

We know that these ruptures to our ordinary adult consciousness are occurring when we admit to ourselves (often only long after the inner drama has subsided) that *the reactions we displayed were way out of proportion to the event or person that seemed to trigger them.*

What I suggest is occurring in these circumstances is that facets of the leftover emotional pain from our childhood or adolescence are rising up to show themselves to us. Ranging in intensity and severity from irksome and humbling to self-destructive and toxic to others, these wounds and hurts of an earlier time can be projected onto the people and events of our present-day lives, turning them upside down in the process.

Let's look at some of the major "motion picture screens" upon which this buried film or template, comprised of the shadows from our past, are projected. These screens and the outlines of the shadows that sway upon them can be discerned in the baffling and frustrating questions that I hear every day in my counselling practice. They are posed by the intelligent and fundamentally decent people sitting before me, who, in spite of their best intentions, have become thwarted and undermined by their very own symptoms, patterns and behaviors.

1. **My Behaviors** – Why are my emotional reactions so charged to something that my parent, spouse, friend or boss just said or did? Why am I prone to frequent emotional outbursts? Why do I have such a strong need for money, position or power? Why am I so driven and restless? Why am I always so stressed? Why can't I just enjoy the moment more?
2. **My Relationships** – Why can't I fully trust another such that I can't be in a love relationship for very long, if at all? Why can I feel so independent and self-reliant when I am living on my own and yet become so needy, possessive and insecure when I am with a partner? Why do I pick people who I know will not meet my needs in the long run? Why am I so afraid of disapproval? Why is honest communication so difficult for me? Why is my self-esteem so shaky? Why does rejection tear me apart?
3. **My Symptoms** – Why do I sleep so poorly and hardly ever wake up refreshed and restored? Where does that pit of anxiety in my stomach come from? Why do I get so much neck and shoulder pain? Will these migraine headaches ever go away? Why do I experience mood swings and depressive episodes?
4. **My Addictions** – Why am I absolutely hooked on the Internet? Why do I eat when I'm not really hungry? Drink too much and too often? Work all the time? Rely on weed to chill out? Watch T.V. as much as I do? Use sex as a mood elevator?

It is my professional experience that the origins and causes of these chronic self-sabotaging and life diminishing issues and conditions are rarely understood or accurately explained by the present day adults who are their bearers. Nor can they heal themselves of them. That is why they are in my office to begin with. However, if they are willing to consider the possibility that they are carrying more emotional pain and fear than they have ever imagined or conceived of, and if they can learn to see their current unwanted experience through the eyes of a child consciousness within, *then perhaps for the first time they can make perfect emotional sense out of these previously baffling and frustrating symptoms, patterns and behaviors* and begin to heal them.

“Grown-ups never understand anything for themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them.”

– Antoine de Saint Exupery, *The Little Prince*

I assert that inside of each and every one of us there is a broken or adaptive inner child. This child is who we were in our formative years at our most vulnerable, impressionable, defenseless, and emotional. The unknown and unexamined wounds, hurts and disappointments from our childhood, adolescence and Family of Origin, including all manner of ways that we fear and brace ourselves against their recurrence with the people and circumstances in our lives today, overtake us like an occupying force in those times when we are an adult in name only. In those times when we lose our inner peace and power and instantaneously become a ball of reactive fear and emotion.

Put differently, these are the calls for help and compassionate and committed inner parenting rising up from the neglected and forgotten child or adolescent within us who still today is crying out for attention. And this time around it must be us, and not our biological mothers, fathers or caregivers, who respond and attend to this child's feelings, needs and wants.

Inner Child Work, paradoxically the work of becoming an emotionally mature, healthy, consistently grounded and interpersonally effective adult is an extremely powerful method by which to experience this type of emotional and spiritual healing.

HEALING THE ORIGINAL PAIN OF YOUR LIFE: THE INNER CHILD SEMINAR

Many of us are aware that we are stuck emotionally or spiritually somewhere in our journey through life. These stuck places may show up as unwanted and self-defeating behaviors or symptoms such as:

- unhealthy relationships
- relationship breakdowns
- an excessive need for money, position or power
- constantly seeking the approval of others and fearing rejection
- constant, unstoppable busyness
- workaholic tendencies
- loneliness
- explosive emotional outbursts with loved ones
- dependency on alcohol, drugs, sex or shopping as a mood- enhancer
- family strife
- low self-esteem
- depression
- eating and sleep disorders
- internet addictions

All of these conditions are expressions of a soul in too much emotional pain and fear, recycling it over and over again in the present day, often onto people and in situations that have nothing to do with the original wounds which produced it.

This seminar will gently and powerfully escort you into some of the most formative moments, relationships and events of your early life so that you can identify the original source of your emotional pain and fear and learn how to heal and release it at its roots. It is my personal and professional experience that doing so can free you up in the present day to live a qualitatively new and fresh life and not just some re-enactment of your past.

**Cost - \$350.00 + GST per person (deferred payment plan available)
bursaries available to those in financial need**

**When: Saturday, June 1st, 2024
Sunday, June 2nd, 2024
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If you have further questions or would like to register contact:
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