



RE-PARENTING THE INNER CHILD

When the inner child takes the wheel.

A five-step practice for what to do when a reaction feels bigger than what called for it.

WHAT THIS IS

When you find yourself reacting in a way that feels disproportionate to what just happened, you're not being dramatic. You're being five. A wounded part of you is in the driver's seat, using your adult body to ask for what they didn't get.

This is a five-step practice for noticing that part, naming what it needs, and offering it back. Use it the next time a reaction feels too big for the situation that called for it. Adapted from Chapter 13: The Inner Child, in *Ayahuasca for the Modern Mind*.

THE PRACTICE

01 Recognize the trigger.

"Whoa, I'm feeling way more than this situation calls for. Something deeper is being activated."

Don't try to shut the reaction down. Let yourself overreact. Just notice that you are being triggered, and name it, even out loud: *"This is a trigger."* That alone is already a win.

02 Name the emotion.

Is this sadness? Fear? Shame? Anger? Grief? Naming it zooms you into where the wound lives, and moves you from reactivity to relationship. Relationship is what the inner child needs.

03 Trace the origin.

When have you felt this exact way before? Not last week. As a child.

A clear memory may surface, or it may not. Either is fine. If it feels familiar in the body, that's enough. The inner child doesn't need a perfectly remembered story. They need to be felt.

04 Talk to the child.

"What do you need right now?"

Pretend they're sitting next to you. Ask, and wait. They may not answer immediately. They aren't used to being asked. Give them time. Sometimes what they need is the patience to be asked again.

05 Offer what they asked for.

Once they tell you, give it to them. If they want to cry, cry. If they want to be held, hold yourself. If they want to hear something, say it: *"I see you. I know it hurts. I'm here now. You're not alone anymore."*

This is the move that re-parents the wound. The presence is the healing.

CLOSING REFLECTION

Write for ten minutes on this:

The most recent time my inner child took the wheel, I think they were ____ years old. What they needed in that moment, and didn't get, was _____. What I can offer them now is _____.

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