

Another

FIVE WAYS

of working with
the Inner Child



Deep Release Online
Professional Training for Counsellors

1. Left and Right Hand dialogues
2. Using the Core Needs cards
3. The Rejected Inner Child
4. The World of the Inner Child
5. My child self – past, present and future



As therapists, many of us know how to care for wounded children in others, while still struggling to fully recognise or comfort the wounded child within us.

Which clients activate the strongest emotional response in us – what might that reveal about our own unfinished story?



Many of us have spent years speaking over our inner child, correcting them, silencing them, or abandoning them internally.

Today, we invite them to join us.

Today, we let them speak.

Today, we listen.



- +
 - • **Left/Right Hand Dialogues**



What brought you joy?

- What did you love doing?
- What made you feel alive?
- What did you find funny?
- What made you feel free?
- Where did you feel safest?

What brought you joy?

Drawing, colouring, singing,
Ladlie.

We don't sing any more and I don't have a dog.
But I do drawing - or I used to. I feel sad.

It's not your fault but I miss
it.

- I felt alive and free when I rode my bike
- It was nice when we all watched something funny on the TV
- I felt safest when it was just me and mum...or me, mum and Mo... or when we were with our friends







Take a Moment

What brought you joy?

- What did you love doing?
- What made you feel alive?
- What did you find funny?
- What made you feel free?
- Where did you feel safest?

Exercise Time Remaining

07:00

7-minute limit



Using Photos



Dreams & Expectations

- What did you think I would become?
- What did you imagine our grown-up life would be like?
- What did you hope for us?
- What worried you about our future?



What did you think I would become?

A teacher!

What did you imagine our grown-up life would be like?

No more arguing

What did you hope for us?

Not to get sick

What worried you about our future?

People dying.

Going to Hell.



Take a Moment

Dreams & Expectations

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- What did you imagine our grown-up life would be like?
- What did you hope for us?
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Exercise Time Remaining

07:00

7-minute limit

Possible Ideas to share in Buddy Groups

- As much as feels safe, share what has come up for you with your group.
- Don't counsel each other, but hold any pain in the group with empathy.
- Send any comments or questions to Hannah.

15 minutes



TAKE A BREAK



5:00

- +
 - # The Core Needs Cards
-

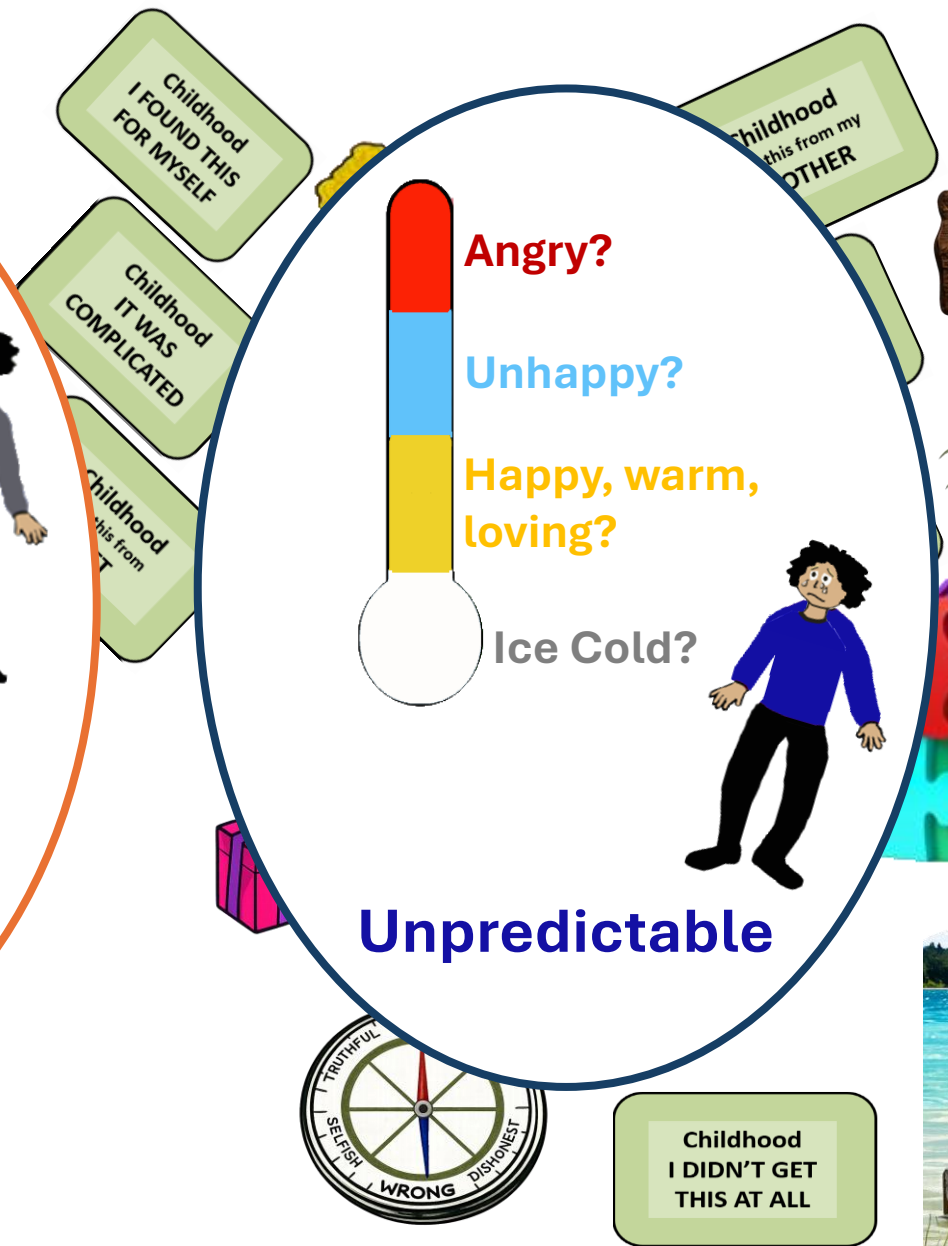


The Wounds

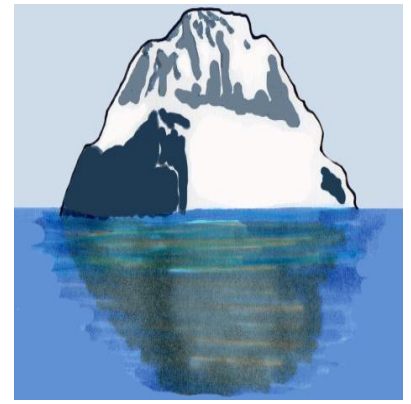
- What hurt you most?
- When did you feel most alone?
- What were you afraid of?
- What did you learn to hide?

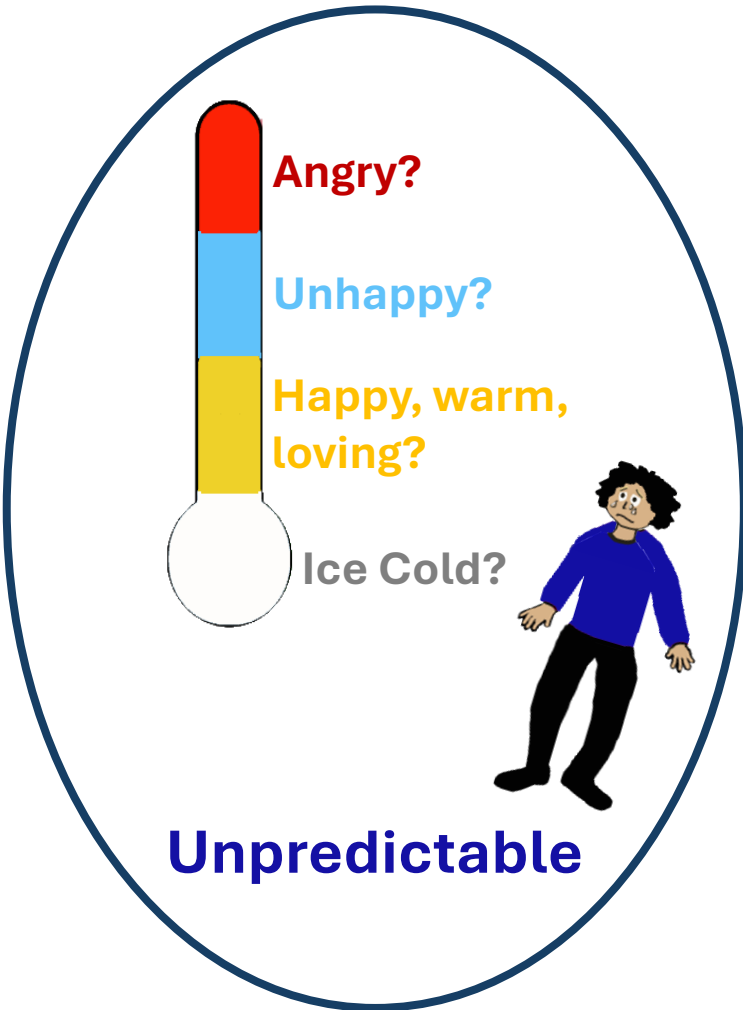


Using the Core Needs cards



How do I get the love I need?





I had to
become self-
reliant...



Childhood
I FOUND THIS
FOR MYSELF



Childhood
IT WAS
COMPLICATED

I got so
confused...



I stopped
expecting my
needs to be
met...

Childhood
I DIDN'T GET
THIS AT ALL

Adulthood
relationship with
MOTHER

Adulthood
relationship with
FATHER

Adulthood
relationship with
BROTHER

Adulthood
relationship with
SISTER

Adulthood
relationship with
**SPOUSE/
PARTNER**

Adulthood
relationship with
CHILD(REN)

Adulthood
relationship with
GRANDPARENT

Adulthood
relationship with
STEPPARENT

Adulthood
relationship with
A TEACHER

Adulthood
relationship
with
SOMEONE ELSE

Adulthood
relationship with
GOD/MY FAITH

Adulthood
relationship with
A PET

Counsellor?

Adulthood
**IT'S
COMPLICATED**

Adulthood
**I'M WORKING
ON IT**

Adulthood
**I HAVE FOUND
THIS FOR
MYSELF**

Adulthood
**I'M STILL NOT
GETTING MY
NEEDS MET**



Questions
Comments
Discussion

+
o •

The Rejected Child

+
• o

Rejection and the child self

Children experience rejection through:

- Emotional neglect, criticism or harsh parenting, bullying or exclusion, inconsistent caregiving, lack of emotional safety (Gilbert, 2009)
- Instead of seeing rejection as an event, children begin to see it as their identity.
- Research shows that early attachment disruption and emotional rejection are strongly linked to shame development and insecure attachment patterns later in life. (George, 2025)

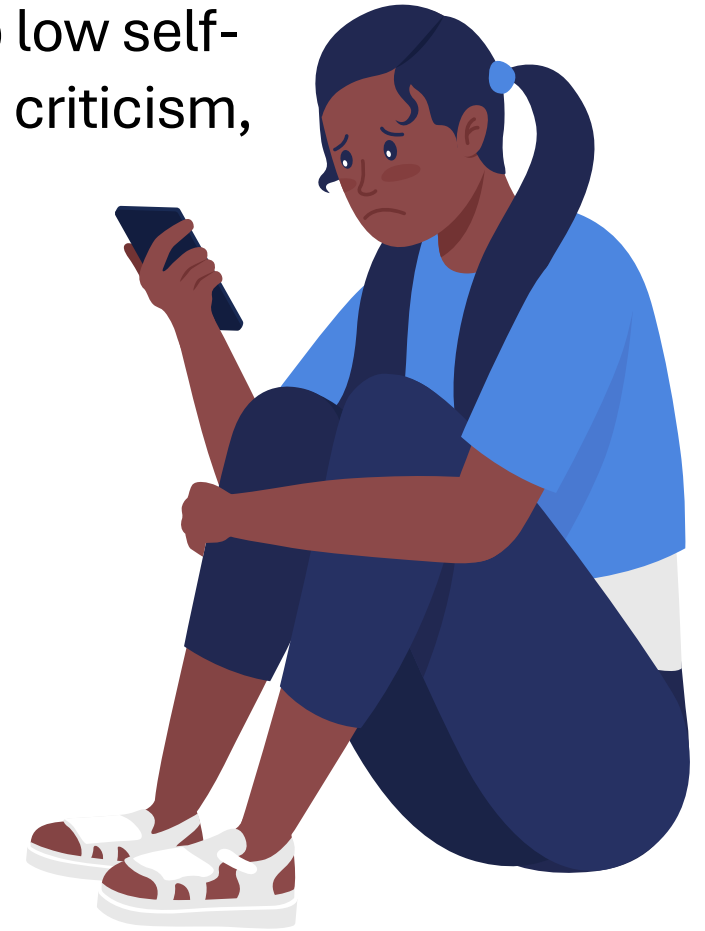


Rejection and the teen self

Teen Years: Rejection Sensitivity Intensifies

- During adolescence, peer acceptance becomes highly important.
- Children who experienced rejection earlier in life often develop low self-esteem, social anxiety, fear of abandonment, hypervigilance to criticism, strong “rejection sensitivity”
- This can lead to:
 - Withdrawal and isolation
 - People-pleasing
 - Anger or emotional reactivity
 - Risk-taking or unhealthy relationships

Marici et al., 2023, Gilbert & Irons, 2009, McDonald et al., 2010



Rejection and the adult self

Adulthood: Long-Term Emotional Patterns

- Without healing, shame and rejection patterns often continue into adulthood through:
 - Fear of Intimacy
 - Difficulty trusting others
 - Avoidant or anxious attachment
 - Perfectionism
 - Chronic self-criticism
 - Depression and anxiety
- Adults may unconsciously expect rejection, even in safe relationships.
- Studies show childhood trauma and rejection sensitivity significantly affect adult relationships, emotional regulation, and interpersonal thinking patterns.



George (2025). *Attachment and shame: Neurobiological and psychological implications of unresolved trauma*. *Brain Sciences*, 15(4), 415. <https://doi.org/10.3390/brainsci15040415>

The Link Between Rejection and Shame

Rejection says: “I was excluded.”

Shame turns that into: “I am unworthy.”

When rejection is repeated during development, shame can become deeply embedded in identity and attachment systems.

This influences how people see themselves and others throughout life.

Brown, B. (2006) *Shame resilience theory: A grounded theory study on women and shame. Families in Society*, 87(1), 43–52.

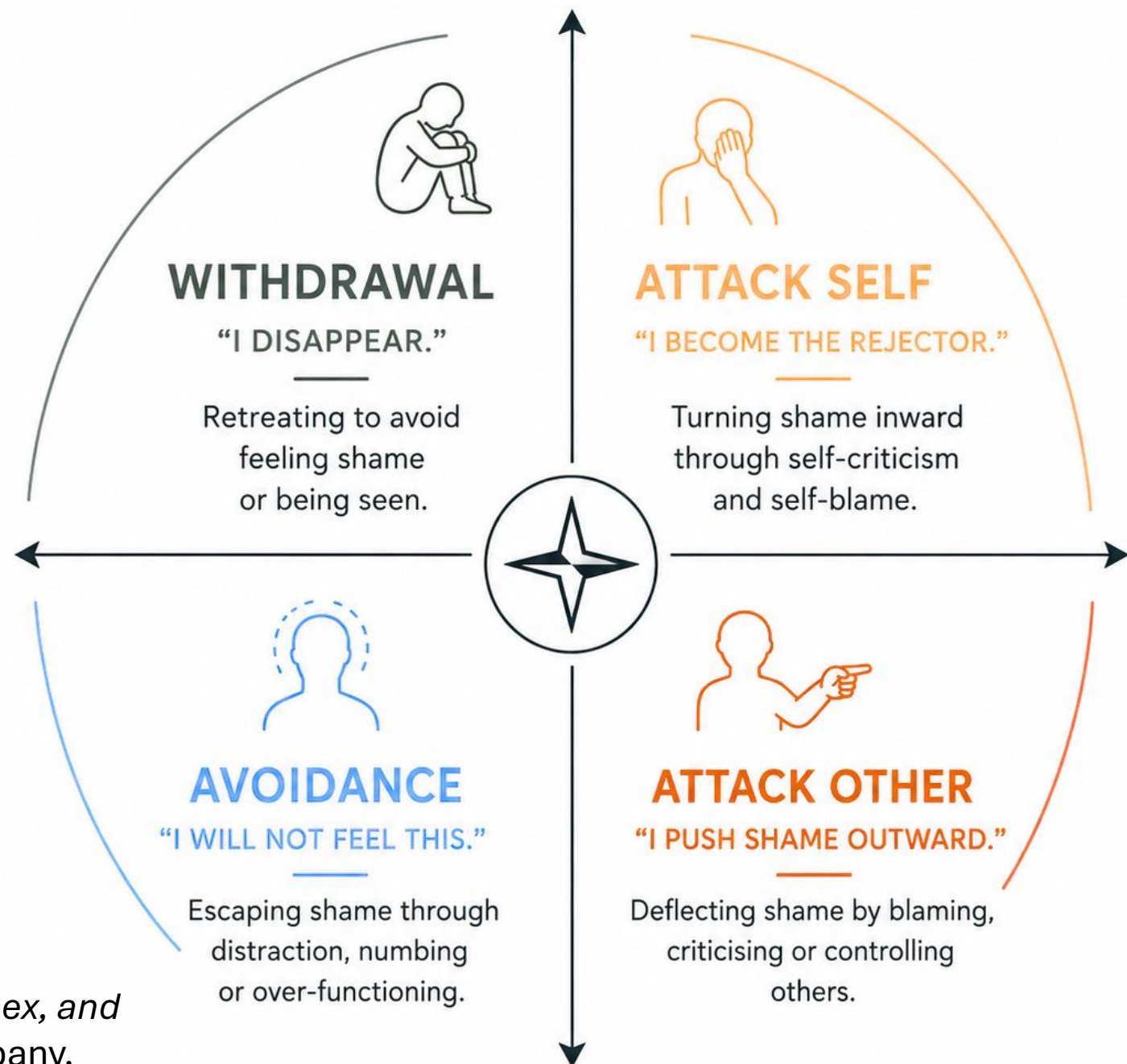


THE COMPASS OF SHAME

Donald L. Nathanson

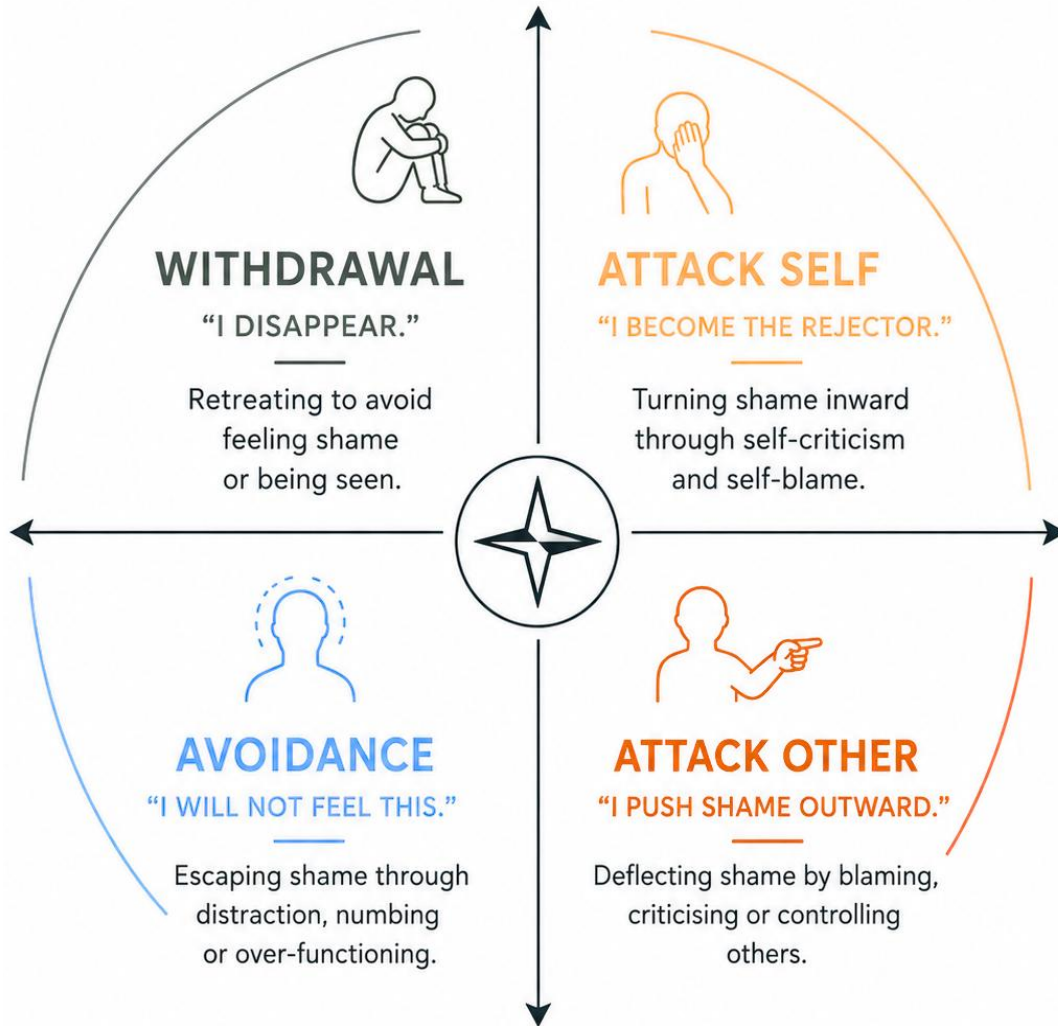
When shame is triggered, we unconsciously move in one of these directions to protect ourselves.

Nathanson, D. L. (1992). *Shame and pride: Affect, sex, and the birth of the self*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.



THE COMPASS OF SHAME

Donald L. Nathanson



Child adaptations may sound like:

“I became quiet.”

“I was angry and took it out on my brother/sister”

“I hid my feelings and just felt like a bad person.”

“I disappeared into a fantasy world.”

Teenage adaptations may sound like:

“I stopped caring.”

“I became sarcastic.”

“I pushed people away.”

“I made sure nobody could embarrass me.”

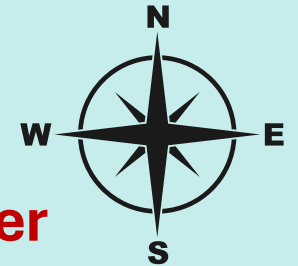
“I acted like I didn’t need anyone.”

THE COMPASS & BRIDGE EXERCISE

- 1) Think of a moment (not necessarily a major one) where you felt misunderstood, criticised, dismissed, emotionally exposed, or somehow not fully received.
- 2) Which of these protections (compass points) feels most familiar?

Based on Donald L. Nathanson's Compass of Shame

When shame or rejection is triggered, I tend to...



Withdraw

- pull away
- go quiet
- isolate
- shut down
- avoid being seen

“I disappear”



Attack Self

- criticise myself
- feel defective
- blame myself
- become perfectionistic
- turn anger inward

“I reject myself”



Avoid

- distract myself
- overwork
- numb
- over-function
- intellectualise or minimise

“I will not feel this”



Attack Other

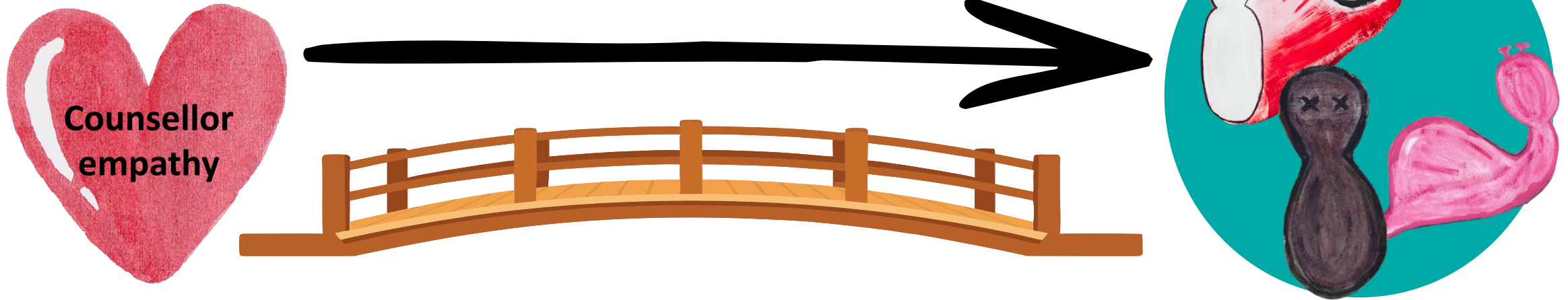
- become defensive
- criticise
- blame
- become angry
- try to regain control

“I push shame outward”



Bridge to the younger self

- 3) Can you sense when this response may first have become important?
- 4) What happened when this part of you wasn't protected?



“That makes sense”, “I am feeling for that little girl/boy”, “I would like to understand”

Evidence suggests shame is most effectively reduced through therapies emphasising compassion, empathy, emotional safety, and secure relational experiences (Gilbert, 2009; Greenberg, 2011; Rogers, 1951). The counsellor’s empathy and UPR internalised over time, and the client develops self acceptance and their own internal nurturing parent.

BUDDY GROUPS

1. Think of a moment (not necessarily a major one) where you felt rejected, misunderstood, criticised, dismissed, emotionally exposed, or somehow not fully received.
2. Which of these protections (compass points) feels most familiar?
3. Can you sense when this response may first have become important?
4. What happened when this part of you wasn't protected?



Possible Ideas to share in Buddy Groups

- Share with one another as you engage with the exercise.
- Don't counsel each other, but hold any pain in the group with empathy.
- Send any comments or questions to Hannah.

15 minutes



TAKE A BREAK

5:00





The World of the Inner Child



The World of the Inner Child



Working with the Inner Child cards



Video Claire



+
○

My Child Self Past, Present and Future

+
○

What shaped my Inner Child?

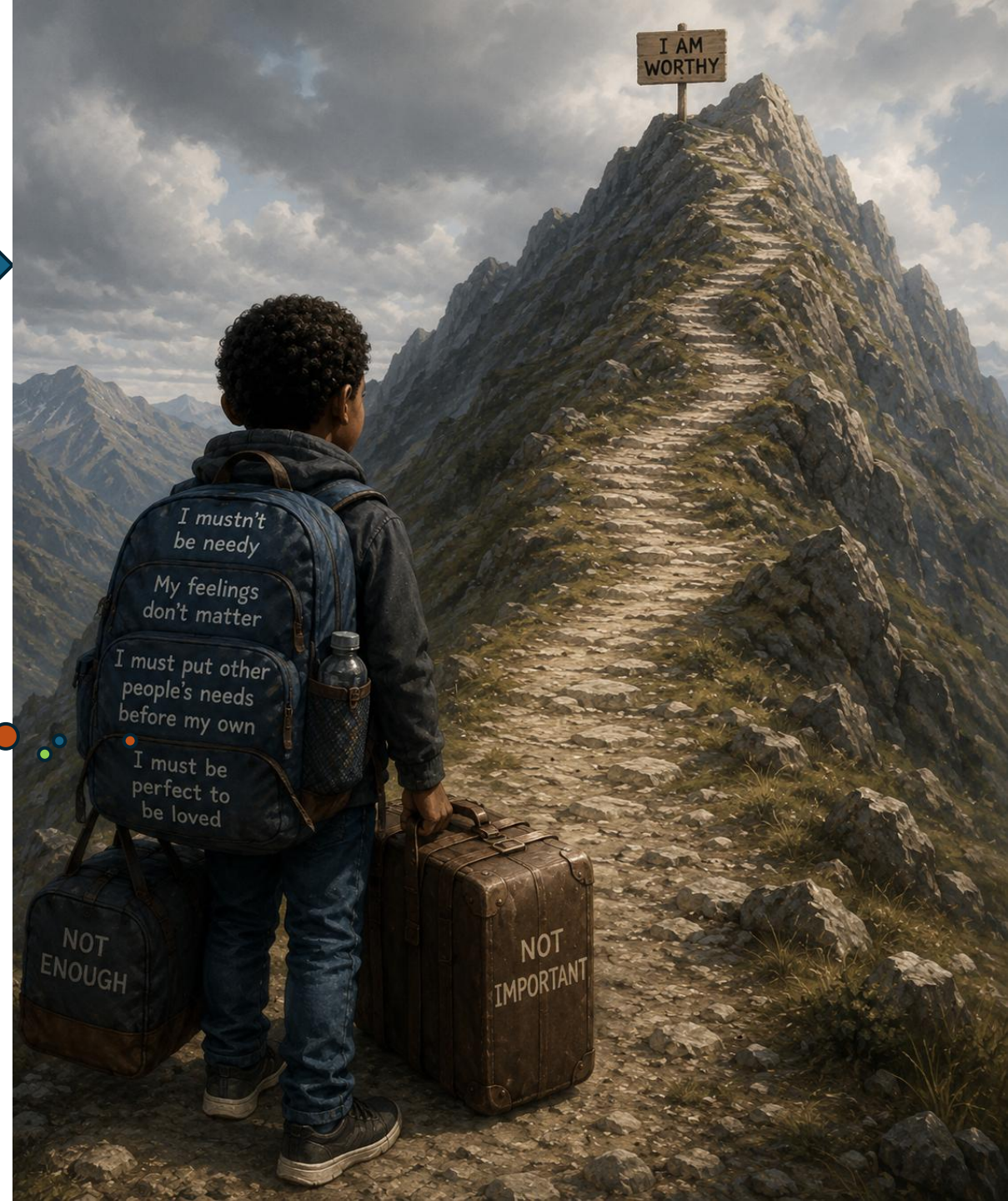
- Childhood experiences
- Emotional wounds
- Unmet needs
- Beliefs formed in early life



Love must be earned

My needs make me less lovable

Who I am is not enough



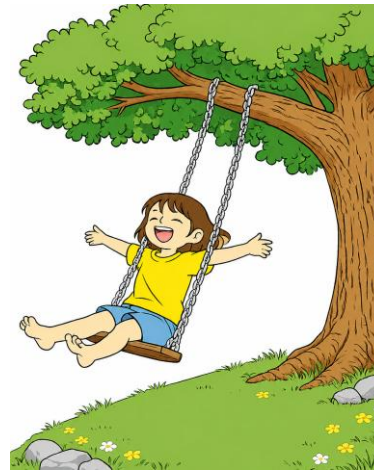
How is my Inner Child showing up now?

- Relationships
- Anxiety
- Anger
- People pleasing
- Perfectionism
- Emotional withdrawal
- Fear of abandonment
- Hyper-vigilance
- Overworking
- Needing validation

*do I really belong?
the world is unsafe
?*

*fear of rejection
I must get it right
?
?*

*checking...
performance driven
am I really (doing) ok?*



- You don't have to earn love
- You were always enough
- Your needs matter too
- You don't have to carry those bags any more
- You are loved exactly as you are
- None of this was your fault
- You can rest now
- I've got you now
- We belong together



Nurturing Parents Affirmations

Integration

- What future would make you happy?
- What should we never forget again?
- What do you want us to protect?
- What would help you feel seen?



Past



Encounter

Present



Discovery

Future



Connection



Questions
Comments
Discussion

Final Buddy Group

- Share what your 'take home' message will be
- Exchange details if you wish to keep in touch

5-10 minutes





Resources

[PACT-RESOURCES.CO.UK](https://pact-resources.co.uk)

ORIGINAL & CREATIVE
COUNSELLING RESOURCES



Beyond The Label: Working With Diagnosed Clients with Dr Chris

Saturday 6th June
9.30am-1.00pm
via Zoom

Counsellors Together



WEEKEND



The Deep Release Counsellors Together Weekend

Friday 18th-Sunday 20th Sept
Moor Hall, Cookham

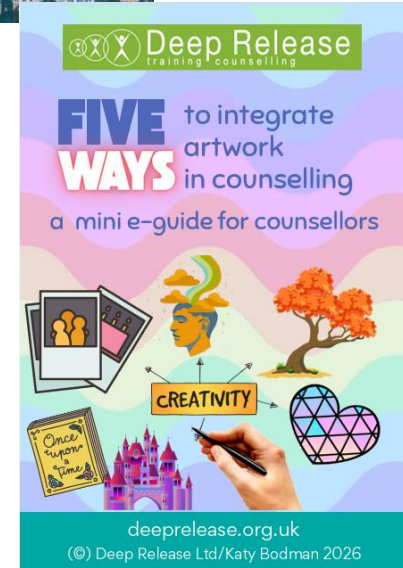
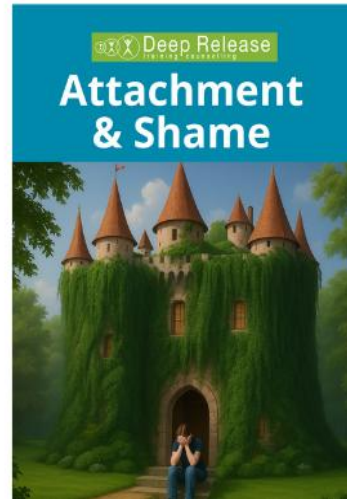
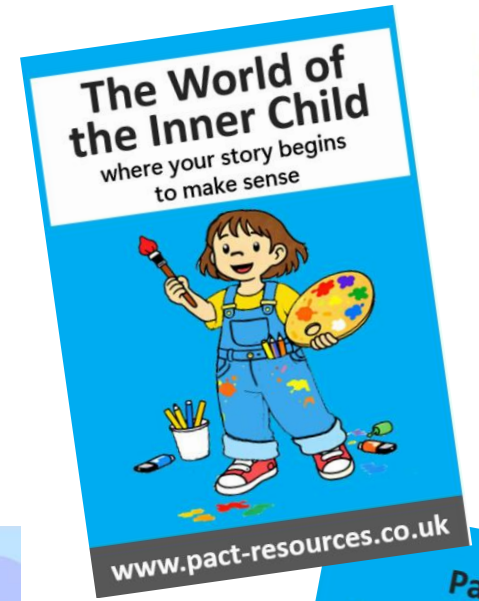


Understanding Burnout: Supporting Clients to Reconnect to Self with Katy Bodman

Friday 26th June
9.30am-1.00pm
via Zoom

deeprelease.org.uk

What's new!

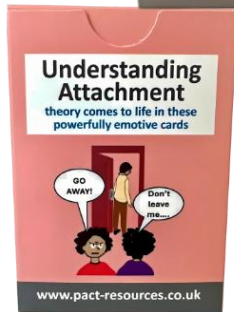


pact-resources.co.uk

Cards



From
£28.50

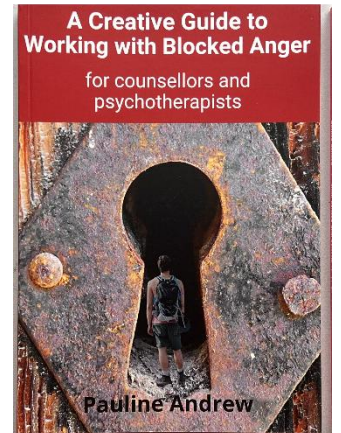
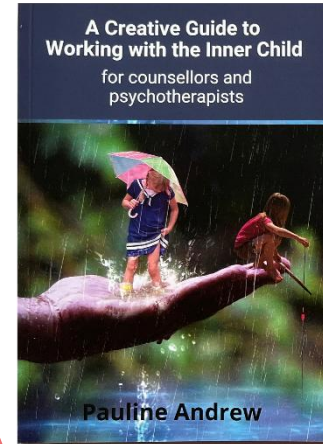
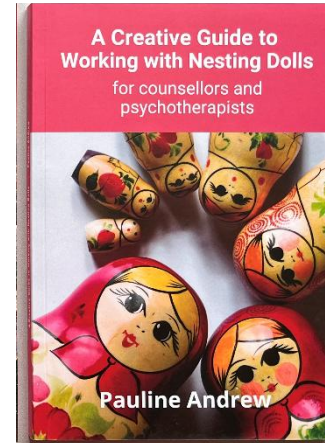


Extra Set A characters available!



Books

Also available on Kindle



£11.50
each
Or 3 for £32
(save £2.50)

Have you explored our Online WebApps?!

- Use Pauline's cards online!
- Working with Sand Trays
- Working with Nesting Dolls
- Free Erikson's Life Stages
- Free Wheel of Life
- Free Working with Stones



Works With  zoom

 Microsoft Teams

 Google Meet* And more!

pact-resources-online.co.uk

Expressing Difficult Emotions

when feelings are hard to put into words

a visual therapy tool



Who they are for?


- ✓ Adults
- ✓ Teenagers
- ✓ Clinical supervision

What counsellors say:

“Highly recommend, such a powerful resource.” – Caroline

“Freed up my supervisee’s reaction to their client in moments.”
– Jacqueline

HARD
FEELINGS

Explore the cards 
hardfeelingscards.co.uk



Deep Release Ltd - Counselling & Training



Pauline Andrew Creative Counselling

Working with fairy tales in counselling



Choosing your Nesting Dolls



Working with aspects of self using nesting dolls



6 ways of working with plain nesting dolls in counselling



How to introduce creative interventions in counselling



How to paint and work with stones in counselling



How to work with animal figures in counselling



Brain Body & Beyond

Left and Right Brain



The Top Down Brain



Catch Up



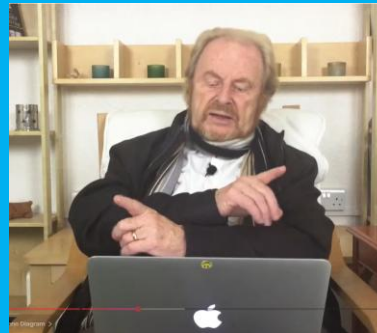
The Left and Right Axes

Sciences
Objective
Prose
Particular
Analyse
By the book
Hardware
Law
Quantitative
Zoom in

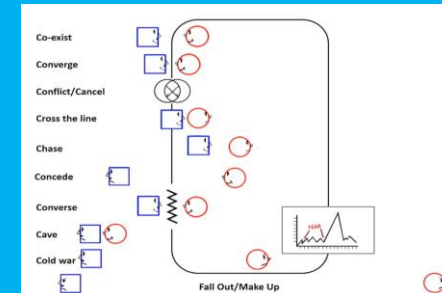


Arts
Subjective
Poetry
General
Synthesise
Extemporise
Software
Liberty
Qualitative
Zoom out

The Warzone



Fixing Broken Relationships Part 1



Fixing Broken Relationships Part 2



**Please send
us your
feedback!**



Thank you so much for joining us and supporting our work!
If you have found the day helpful, please would like leave
some feedback in the Deep Release Facebook group, or
send us an email at info@deeprelease.org.uk. It would
mean so much to us! 😊

info@deeprelease.org.uk

deeprelease.org.uk

pact-resources.co.uk

Thank you