

How To Heal From Gaslighting

QUESTION:

How do I recover from gaslighting when my sense of reality has been stolen, and I don't know who to trust anymore?

ANSWER:

Gaslighting is a form of psychological warfare. It erodes your confidence, dismantles your trust in your own mind, and leaves you feeling disoriented, confused, and ashamed for even questioning it. Healing from gaslighting means rebuilding your inner compass, reclaiming your truth, and learning to stand firm in what you know – even when someone else tries to deny it. Here's how to run, not walk, towards this healing process:

1. Reclaiming Your Right to Reality

The first step in healing is giving yourself permission to believe what you *know* you experienced. Gaslighters thrive on making you question your memory, your feelings, and even your sanity. Healing begins when you decide, 'I know what I heard, saw, and felt - my truth is valid.' Write down what happened in your words, not theirs. Each word is an act of reclaiming ownership of your truth and your reality.

2. Separating Intention From Impact

Gaslighters often twist their actions with phrases like, 'that's not what I meant', or 'you're too sensitive'. Healing requires you to remember that impact matters more than intention. Even if they claim innocence, if their words or actions harmed you, the harm is real. Validating impact helps free you from the cycle of endless doubt.

3. Identifying the Tactics

Gaslighting has patterns: denying events, rewriting conversations, minimising, projecting, or using pity to deflect. Naming these tactics turns the fog into clarity. When you can label the behaviour 'this is minimisation', 'this is denial', 'this is projection', you stop internalising the blame and start recognising the strategy. That recognition is power.

4. Rebuilding Self-Trust

Gaslighting damages your relationship with yourself. To heal, you must restore your inner trust. Start small: notice when your intuition gives you a nudge, follow it, and record the outcome. Celebrate each time you act on your instincts. Over time, you rebuild the muscle of trusting your own voice again and you stop outsourcing truth to anyone else.

5. Seeking External Mirrors of Truth

While healing, you may need external validation - not the performative kind, but the grounding kind. Talking with trusted friends, therapists, or even revisiting written records can anchor you back in truth when self-doubt creeps in. Surround yourself with people who reflect reality instead of distorting it. Slowly, these reflections strengthen your confidence in your own perception.

6. Creating a New Inner Narrative

Gaslighting leaves residue. You'll question 'maybe it really was me'. Healing means rewriting that story. Instead of 'I'm too sensitive,' affirm, 'I feel deeply, and that is wisdom.' Instead of 'I must be imagining things,' say, 'I notice patterns, and that awareness protects me.' Your healing is not about erasing the past; it's about reframing it in a way that honours your strength.

Affirmation:

My reality is sacred. I trust what I know, I honour what I feel, and I no longer apologise for holding on to my truth.

Journal Prompts:

1. What truths have I denied because someone convinced me they weren't real?
2. What gaslighting tactics do I now recognise when I look back?

3. Where do I feel most confident in trusting my own intuition?
4. Who can I turn to as an external mirror when self-doubt creeps in?
5. How can I rewrite the false stories I absorbed, into empowering truths?

Visualisation:

Imagine standing in a hall of mirrors. At first, the mirrors are warped, making you appear distorted, broken, or small. Now imagine one by one, those false mirrors shattering. Behind them, new mirrors emerge – clear, sharp, and true. In these, you see yourself exactly as you are: strong, steady, and whole. You step closer and say, this is me, this is my truth, I see it clearly now.

Conclusion:

Gaslighting is meant to sever you from your truth, but healing is the act of returning home to it. Each time you validate your reality, name the tactic, or trust your instincts, you stitch yourself back together. You don't just survive gaslighting, you rise beyond it, stronger than the lies that tried to break you.

Final Thought:

The clearest voice you will ever hear is the one you choose to trust within yourself. When someone has gaslighted us

it can take a while to recover from the shock, the sense of betrayal, and the outright nerve they had to deny your reality! You knew the truth all along. Find peace with that truth and with the deceit that you've carried.