



And a Mother Thing

For the Woman You Will Be:
A Journey of Healing
and Rebirth

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Your truth matters. Even if she never heard it. Even if she never will. This is about giving yourself permission to speak, to release, and to say what has been trapped inside for too long.

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For my sisters

And for all the little girls who became women struggling
with self-identity. I see you.

Hello

There's a unique kind of pain that comes from having a mother who couldn't love you the way you needed to be loved. It's not the sharp, clear loss of death, but a quiet ache that lingers in the spaces where warmth should have been shaping how we love, trust, and see ourselves. You feel it in the way you second-guess yourself, in the way you shrink to avoid criticism, in the way you long for warmth that never quite reaches you.

Maybe your mother was critical or emotionally distant making you feel like nothing was ever good enough. Maybe she was absent physically, emotionally, or both, leaving you to raise yourself in ways no child should have to. Maybe she loved you in the only way she knew how, but it left you feeling unseen, unheard, and unworthy. Maybe her love came with conditions.

And so, you grew up. You built a life. You moved on. But that mother-shaped wound followed you into adulthood whispering old stories of inadequacy, shaping how you love others, how you trust others, and how you see others. You've spent years carrying the weight of that wound, unsure of how to release it. You are not broken, and you are not alone.

'And a Mother Thing' is a healing journey. It's a conversation, a safe space, somewhere for you to lay down the burden of your past and begin the journey towards healing. Through deeply reflective prompts, transformative exercises, and guided self-mothering practices, this book will help you:

- Acknowledge the pain without minimising or excusing it.
- Release the weight of guilt, grief, and inherited beliefs.
- Reclaim your voice and rewrite the story of who you are.
- Step into self-mothering and become the person you've always needed.

This book is for you if you've ever felt the weight of the mother-wound. If you've ever wrestled with the guilt of loving someone who hurt you, if you've ever wondered who you might have been if your mother had been different. It's for you if you've ever longed to be free from the emotional burdens you've carried.

This book won't ask you to forgive or force reconciliation where there is none, or to gloss over the heartache with trite affirmations and pretend the pain isn't real. Instead, it will guide you to understand, to grieve, and most importantly, to reclaim yourself. It will walk with you as you

heal, let go, and finally reveal the person you were always meant to be. The mother you needed may not have existed but the person you need now is you.

"There was a time when my mother's voice was louder than my own. I'd hear her in my head anytime I tried to speak up or take a risk: 'Don't get too big for your boots. No one likes a show-off. Who do you think you are. Shut up and sit down. You're driving me mad!' For years, I let her voice keep me small. But then I asked myself: What if my voice matters more? That question changed everything. Now I speak with confidence and honour who I am."

Part 1: Understanding the Mother Wound

The Legacy of Pain

The mother wound is inflicted by the emotional pain inherited from a mother who couldn't love, support, or nurture you in the way you needed.

It's a wound that shapes how you see yourself, your relationships, and the world around you. The mother wound is not just one moment of hurt: it's a lifetime of echoes. It's the silence after an unspoken expectation of praise. The ache of love that felt just out of reach. It's the tightness in your chest when you hear the word "mother" and recall only sadness and regret.

What does it mean to be shaped by a mother who couldn't love you the way you needed? For some, the mother wound is obvious; a childhood marked by neglect, cruelty, or absence. For others their wound is quieter, harder to define. The subtle messages that chipped away at self-worth, the love that came with conditions, the feeling of never quite being enough. No matter how it manifests, the mother wound does not stay confined to childhood. In our adult lives our mother wound manifests as:

- People-pleasing and perfectionism - because love once felt like something to be earned.
- Feeling responsible for other people's emotions.

- Fear of rejection and abandonment; being left out, dismissed, or belittled is a familiar pain.
- Feeling like you're "never enough".
- Struggling with self-doubt.
- Carrying guilt for setting boundaries or needing space.
- Struggles with self-worth because the first person who should have cherished you, made you question your own value.
- Difficult relationships with other women because the blueprint for female connection was built on hurt, competition, or conditional love.
- Difficulty trusting or forming healthy relationships with men.
- A deep longing for mothering even as an adult, despite convincing ourselves we don't need it.

The mother wound *does not have to define us*, but first, we must acknowledge its existence. This book is your invitation to:

- Face what was
- To name what still lingers
- To begin the work of stepping out from the shadows of the past

You're allowed to feel this pain, you're allowed to grieve what was missing, and you're allowed to choose a different future.

Reflection Prompt:

What messages about love and self-worth did you inherit from your mother? What ideas did she model for you about what it means to be a woman? Do these messages and ideas still serve you, or are they simply old wounds asking to be released?

The Inheritance of Pain

The mother wound is often passed down generationally. Your mother may have been carrying wounds of her own, unable to give what she never received. But knowing this does not mean excusing the harm; it means understanding where it came from so you can choose a different path.

Generational patterns to consider are:

- When she was growing up, did your mother struggle with emotional unavailability from her own mother, competition, or harsh criticism?
- Was love conditional, only given when she was "good enough"?
- Were emotions dismissed, ignored, or punished?

- Did she feel safe to express her true self, or was she expected to conform?

How many of her possible experiences did she repeat in your childhood as your mother?

Reflection Prompt:

Write a letter to the version of your mother before she became a mother. What do you think she was missing? What do you wish she had known before having you? How has her pain affected you? Write it all down:

You don't have to send this letter; it's for you to acknowledge what you inherited and begin untangling it.

How the Mother Wound Shows Up in Your Life Today

Even if childhood is long behind you, the mother wound often lingers in subtle - or not-so-subtle - ways. It can show up in:

- The way you talk to yourself - do you criticise yourself the way she did?
- The way you set boundaries - do you feel guilty for saying no?
- The relationships you attract - do you find yourself drawn to emotionally unavailable or critical people?

Reflection Prompt:

Identifying Your Mother's Voice

Write down a self-doubt or negative thought you often have about yourself.

Where did this belief come from?

Whose voice does it sound like?

If you could rewrite this thought, what would it say instead?

The Truth You Need to Hear

Your mother's wounds are not your destiny. You are not required to carry her pain, repeat her patterns, or shrink yourself to fit the version of you she could accept.

Affirmation:

"I am allowed to break free from inherited pain. My worth is not defined by my mother's wounds."

We'll begin the process of releasing and reclaiming yourself in the next section. Take a deep breath. You are on the path to healing and emotional freedom.

Challenging the Rules You Were Taught

How many times have you heard:

- Mothers should always be honoured.
- You should love your mother no matter what."
- A mother's love is unconditional.
- You owe her respect, even if she hurt you.
- You should be grateful for what she did give you.

If any of these statements are true for you, who benefits from you believing them? You or your mother? What would happen if you gave yourself permission to break these rules? How would your mother respond?

Not all mothers are loving, not all love is safe, and not all relationships should be honoured just because they're labelled 'family'. You don't have to deny what you went through just to fit into a world that says mothers should be sacred. You can love her if you choose but let go of her expectations simultaneously. You can grieve what never was and still move forward. Honour yourself first without apology.

Affirmation:

"I release the guilt that was never mine to carry. I am free to choose what honours me."

The Masks We Wear

When our mother's love comes with conditions, or never comes at all, we learn that we're unlovable as we are. We become the versions of ourselves that are *acceptable, tolerable, less likely to cause conflict.*

We learn to wear a mask of survival. These masks may have helped us navigate childhood but in adulthood, they keep us small, silent, and disconnected from who we really are.

Common Masks of the Mother Wound

The People-Pleaser

Says yes when they mean no.

Feels responsible for keeping others happy.

Avoids conflict, even at the cost of their own needs.

The Perfectionist

Believes they must be "good enough" to deserve love.

Feels anxiety over mistakes or perceived failures.

Struggles to rest without guilt.

The Emotional Suppressor

Hides emotions to avoid rejection or criticism.

Feels uncomfortable expressing vulnerability.

Believes that needing help is a weakness.

The Chameleon

Adapts their personality depending on who they're with.

Prioritises being "liked" over being authentic.

Struggles to know who they really are.

The Overachiever

Feels the need to prove their worth through success.

Correlates productivity with being valuable.

Finds it hard to celebrate achievements; there's always "more" to do.

Reflection Prompt:

When Have You Worn a Mask?

Think about a time when you hid your true self to keep the peace or feel loved.

What happened in that moment?

What version of yourself did you present?

What emotions did you suppress?

What did you fear would happen if you showed your true self?

What would it have looked like to honour your real feelings instead?

What do you think would have been different if you felt *safe* to be yourself?

Breaking Free from the Masks

You don't have to earn love by performing, perfecting, pleasing or being who 'she' expected you to be.

Who are you when no one is watching?

Who would you be if you stopped apologising for existing?

This is where your healing begins; not in becoming who they wanted, but in reclaiming who you truly are.

Affirmation:

"I no longer hide who I am to make others comfortable. I am safe to be my true self."

Now that you have begun to identify the masks you've worn, the next section will guide you toward releasing them and embracing your true identity.

Part 2: The Journey to Healing

Naming the Pain

Healing does not begin with moving on; healing begins with the truth. Before we can release what no longer serves us, we must first name what hurt us, where it came from, and how it shaped us.

For years, you may have minimised, excused, or ignored the pain of your mother wound. Perhaps you were told it wasn't that bad, or that acknowledging it was a betrayal. But you're allowed to tell the truth, you're allowed to say, 'this hurt me', you're allowed to say, 'I needed more' and start there.

For many, the mother wound is complex. It's not just one painful moment but a pattern, an accumulation of experiences that shaped our sense of self. Some of these wounds were obvious, while others were so subtle that we only recognise them in hindsight.

Maybe it wasn't one big moment but a collection of small moments that taught you love was conditional, unpredictable, or out of reach.

Reflection Prompt:

The First Time You Knew Something Was Wrong

Think back to your childhood. Can you remember the first moment you felt unseen, unloved, or emotionally abandoned by your mother? Is it a specific memory? A phrase she said, a look she gave, was it a pattern - something that happened again and again?

How old were you?

What did you feel in that moment?

What was said (or not said)?

What did you tell yourself about that experience?

Did you believe it was your fault?

Did you decide you had to be different to be loved?

How did this experience shape your understanding of love and safety?

Do you see patterns in your adult relationships that connect back to this moment? Can you give examples?

If you learned that love had to be earned, do you still over-give or over-perform to feel worthy? If so, how?

If you learned that emotions were punished, do you still silence yourself to keep the peace? How?

Where Did the Pain Begin?

Take a moment to reflect on the ways your relationship with your mother affected you. Did you feel seen and valued, or were you made to feel invisible?

Were your emotions met with compassion or dismissal?

Did you receive love unconditionally, or only when you met her expectations?

Were you allowed to express your needs, or did you learn that your feelings were a burden?

The pain may have started in childhood, but its echoes often remain in adulthood.

Facing the Wound: The Pain You Couldn't Express

For many of us, expressing emotions as a child was met with criticism, dismissal, or punishment. Maybe you were told to 'stop being so dramatic, you're too sensitive, you always have to make everything about you.'

Over time, you learned to swallow your feelings, to hold back your tears, to quiet your needs because it felt safer than being shamed for them. But that pain never disappeared. It just stayed silent. Now, it's time to give it a voice.

Did you feel like you had to suppress your emotions around your mother?

Were your feelings dismissed, mocked, or ignored?

Did you learn to silence your sadness, anger, or hurt to avoid conflict?

Do you still struggle to express your emotions today because of that?

Your emotions were never the problem. The way they were received was.

What Happens When You Give Your Pain a Voice?

What would you like to say to your pain?

What emotions came up as you expressed what had been held inside for so long?

What do you want to tell yourself, now that you've spoken your truth?

Remember:

- You deserved to be heard
- You were not too sensitive.
- You were not being dramatic.

You were a child, with a heart full of emotions that deserved to be held with love.

Affirmation:

"My emotions are valid. My voice matters. I give myself the space to feel."

Reflection Prompt:

Writing to Your Younger Self

Your inner child, the version of you who longed for safety, warmth, and love, still lives within you. They are still waiting to be heard, to be acknowledged, to be comforted.

Write a letter to your younger self. Begin with compassion. Let your younger self know that their feelings were real, valid, and important. Acknowledge what was missing in their childhood. Tell them the truth about what they deserved but never received. Offer them the love they longed for. Speak to them as the nurturing, protective presence they always needed.

Example Opening:

Dear Little Me,

I see you. I see the way you tried so hard to be good, to be perfect, to be small enough not to cause trouble, how you tried to keep the peace. I see how much you longed for love and how deeply it hurt when it didn't come the way you needed. You did not deserve that pain. It was never your fault. I promise I will never abandon you the way others did. I will love you now, in the way you always deserved.

After writing, pause and reflect.

How did it feel to put these words on paper?

What does your inner child need from you now?

What is one way you can show love to yourself today?

The Power of Acknowledgment

Naming the pain is not about blame, it's about clarity. It's about holding up a mirror and finally seeing things as they are, not as we were told they should be. You were never unworthy of love. You were never "too much." You were never broken; you were just waiting to be seen.

Affirmation:

"I honour the child I once was. I will not abandon myself the way others did."

The next section will guide you toward letting go and moving forward with strength.

Releasing the Past

We can't change the past, but we can decide how much power it will have over our future. Letting go is not about pretending the hurt never happened, it's about choosing yourself over the pain. It's about releasing the emotional and physical weight you were never meant to carry.

Reflection Prompt:

What Needs to Be Released?

Ask yourself:

What pain am I still holding onto?

What resentment sits quietly in my heart, shaping my thoughts and actions?

What expectations am I still clinging to? Of my mother, of myself, of the relationship that never was?

What am I waiting for? An apology, an acknowledgment, a different past?

Holding onto anger and hurt does not punish the person who hurt you, it punishes you. It keeps their voice louder than your own, their choices stronger than your freedom.

What Do You Need to Forgive to Feel Free?

Forgiveness is often misunderstood. It's not excusing what happened, pretending it didn't hurt, allowing someone to hurt you again. True forgiveness is forgiving yourself. It's recognising your self-worth is greater than their destructive behaviour and ending the emotional war that you fight with yourself every day.

Reflection Prompt:

Do I need to forgive my mother for what she could never give me?

Do I need to forgive my younger self for believing it was her fault?

Do I need to forgive my present self for the ways I still struggle?

Do I need to forgive life for not giving me the mother I needed?

Write about what you're ready to release.

I am releasing: *(the pain, the expectation, the resentment, the need for closure)*

Instead, I am choosing: *(peace, self-acceptance, self-love, emotional freedom)*

**What if letting go wasn't about them at all?
What if it was your greatest act of self-love?**

What If I'm Not Ready to Let Go?

That's okay. You don't have to force it. Letting go is not a one-time act, it's a process. For now, just hold the idea that one day, you might be able to put this down.

Until then, be gentle with yourself.

Affirmation:

"I am no longer carrying what was never mine to hold. I release the past and step into my freedom."

Now that you have begun to release the past, the next section will help you rewrite your narrative and reclaim your power.

Rewriting the Story

For so long, your story may have been written by someone else's voice. Maybe it was your mother's voice, telling you who you were allowed to be. Maybe it was society's voice, whispering that mothers must be honoured no matter what. Maybe it was your own inner critic, shaped by years of trying to be enough.

Reflection Prompt:

What Story Have You Been Telling Yourself?

Ask yourself: what beliefs about myself were shaped by my mother's words or actions?

Have I lived my life trying to be what she wanted, rather than who I truly am?

You are not bound by the past. You are writing a new chapter. And this time, it's yours to write.

Affirmation:

"I am the author of my life. I claim my story and stand in my truth."

The Power of Boundaries

For too long, you may have believed that love meant self-sacrifice. That keeping the peace meant keeping yourself small. That boundaries were selfish, rather than necessary. But love without boundaries is not love; it's self-abandonment.

A boundary is not a wall to keep people out, it's a fence with a gate, a sacred space that protects you while allowing in only what is safe, respectful, and nourishing. And you, my love, are worthy of protection.

What Boundaries Give You

- Emotional safety: you are not a dumping ground for someone else's pain.
- Mental clarity: you do not have to explain, defend, or justify your choices.
- Freedom from guilt: you are not responsible for how others react to your boundaries.
- A deep sense of self-worth: you set boundaries because you deserve peace.

If your mother (or others) never respected your boundaries, you may have learned that your needs didn't matter. But they do. They *always* have. If you're not in contact with your mother, then use the following prompts

as you would if she was in your life. There's still much to be gained by setting boundaries even if she's not present.

Reflection Prompt:

Where Do You Need Stronger Boundaries?

Reflect on the areas in your life where boundaries feel weak or non-existent:

With your mother: does she guilt-trip, criticise, or push past your comfort zone?

With family: are you expected to tolerate dysfunction because "that's just how they are"?

With work: do you overextend yourself out of fear of disappointing others?

With friends or partners: do you struggle to say no, even when you're exhausted?

Where in your life do you feel resentful, drained, or anxious?

What boundaries could you set to protect your peace?

Reflection Prompt:

Creating Your Boundary Script

You do not owe anyone a long-winded explanation for your boundaries. A simple boundary script will help you enforce your limits clearly and confidently.

Examples:

- State your boundary: "I'm not available for conversations that involve criticism of my choices."
- Be firm but kind: "I know you have your opinions, but I'm asking you to respect my decision."
- Set consequences if necessary: "If this continues, I will need to take space from these conversations."

Your turn:

Write a boundary script where you need stronger limits and practice saying it aloud. Remind yourself that you don't need permission to protect your peace. Choose your scenario and then write your script:

Scenario 1:

Scenario 2:

Scenario 3:

Letting Go of Boundary Guilt

You are not responsible for how others feel about your boundaries. You do not have to explain or seek approval for protecting your well-being. A person who respects you will respect your boundaries. A person who only benefits from you having none will not.

Affirmation:

"My peace is sacred. I set boundaries with confidence and self-respect."

The Beauty of Self-Mothering

You should have been held. You should have been comforted. You should have been reminded, over and over, that you are worthy of love, not for what you did but simply because you existed. If your mother couldn't give you that, it was never because you weren't lovable. **It was because she couldn't give you what she'd never had herself.**

But the love you needed then is still available now. *You* can give it to yourself. This is the power of self-mothering: learning to nurture the parts of you that were neglected, validating your own emotions rather than waiting for someone else to, and holding yourself with the love, care, and gentleness you once longed for. You may not have had the mother you needed but you can become her, for yourself.

Reflection Prompt:

What Does It Mean to Mother Yourself?

Mothering yourself means learning to meet your own needs with love, patience, and care. Ask yourself, what did I crave as a child? Encouragement? Kindness? Safety? Praise?

Write it down:

What do I still long for today?

What are the ways I can give that to myself?

You do *not* have to keep waiting for love to come from the outside. You are fully capable of giving it to yourself right now.

How Will You Mother Yourself?

List five ways you will mother yourself this week. You can use these examples if you need inspiration:

- I will speak to myself with kindness, even when I make mistakes.
- I will rest without guilt, because I do not have to be productive to be worthy.
- I will comfort myself when I feel hurt, instead of dismissing my emotions.
- I will make space for joy, without needing permission to feel happy.
- I will create a safe space for myself, setting boundaries where I need them.

Imagine speaking to yourself as if you were a small child; how would you comfort her and show her love?

5 ways I will mother myself this week:

1. -----

2. -----

3. -----

4. -----

5. -----

Gentle Self-Mothering Ritual

Choose one (or more) of these small but powerful acts of self-mothering:

The Loving Touch

Gently place your hands over your heart or give yourself a hug.

Close your eyes and take a deep breath.

Whisper words of comfort: "I am here for you. I will take care of you now."

The Soft Nest

Wrap yourself in a warm blanket or put on cosy clothing.

Light a candle or dim the lights to create a soothing space.

Allow yourself to rest without guilt.

The Mothering Meal

Make yourself a meal with love; something warm, nourishing, and comforting.

Eat slowly, savouring each bite as if you were feeding a child with tenderness.

The Healing Sound

Play gentle, soothing music, something that makes you feel safe.

Let yourself relax as if you were being rocked in a loving embrace.

Why This Matters

Your nervous system may still hold onto the old patterns of neglect or deprivation. These rituals are about reprogramming your body and mind to understand that:

- You are safe now.
- You are loved.
- You will not abandon yourself again.

Affirmation:

"I am learning to nurture myself with the love I always deserved."

For so long you may have defined yourself by the wounds you carried, by the things you were denied, by the beliefs you inherited about who you were allowed to be. But who would you be if she had never hurt you? That's what's important now. I would be:

Rewriting the Narrative: You Are Not a Burden

If your mother made you feel like your emotions were too much, you may still struggle with feeling like a burden. But you are not too much. You are not a problem to be fixed. You deserve love, patience, and care, especially from yourself.

Affirmation:

"I am worthy of love, care, and kindness, starting with myself."

Living Authentically

For so long, you may have lived in a way that kept others comfortable, quieting your voice, shrinking your needs, and adapting to the expectations of those around you. But who are you when you're not performing? Who are you when you stop editing yourself to fit into someone else's version of you? Authenticity is not about being *liked*; it's about being free and you deserve to live as your fullest, truest, freest self.

Reflection Prompt:

What Does Living Authentically Mean to You?

Ask yourself: what parts of myself have I hidden to make others more comfortable?

Where in my life do I feel like I am pretending?

When do I feel the most alive, aligned, and real?

Living authentically does not mean you never struggle. It means you stop pretending that you don't.

Aligning with Your True Self

What steps can you take to align your life with your authentic self?

What can you say no to that does not reflect your true values?

What can you say yes to that honours your real desires?

How can you show up as yourself in your relationships, work, and daily life?

If the fear of rejection wasn't holding you back, what would you do differently today?

Letting Go of the Fear of Being "Too Much"

You were never too much. You were never "not enough." You were simply not what she expected, and that is okay. She rejected you because she couldn't accept herself, her mistakes, and her regrets. You bedazzled her and she felt unworthy of you. **She was the one who wasn't enough.**

Authenticity is about knowing you are lovable exactly as you are, and your mother couldn't be authentic, truthful, or brave. You don't need to convince anyone of your worth. The right people will see it because you finally see it in yourself.

Affirmation:

"I am done shrinking to fit someone else's expectations. I am safe to be my true self."

Mother's Voice vs. My Voice
Replacing Limiting Beliefs with Your Empowered
Voice and Stepping Fully into Your Power

Now that you've acknowledged your pain, rewritten your story, and learned to mother yourself, it's time to solidify your transformation.

These Reflection Prompts are designed to help you challenge limiting beliefs, reclaim your worth, and redefine your identity on your own terms.

For many of us, our mother's words echo long after we leave her care. They show up when we hesitate to take a risk, when we doubt ourselves, when we wonder if we are too much or not enough. But what if her voice no longer had power over you?

Reflection Prompt:

Think of a moment when you hesitated to speak up, make a bold decision, or stand in your power. Write down what you believe your mother would say about that moment. Use specific phrases or tones you associate with her.

Now respond to her comments as the woman you are becoming. Challenge her words. Replace them with your truth.

How does it feel to let your voice speak louder than hers?

What do you want to tell the younger version of yourself about who she really is?

Write down a belief your mother instilled in you that no longer serves you.

How has this belief affected your choices in life?

How does your new belief feel different in your body?

The Woman I'm Becoming

Writing a Love Letter to Your Future Self

You are not who your mother wanted you to be, you are so much more and now you get to honour the woman you're becoming.

Close your eyes and picture the most confident, radiant version of you. How does she look?

How does she move through the world?

Make a promise to yourself: no matter what happens, I will always stand by you. I will honour your courage by:

Reflection Prompt:

What did you learn about yourself by writing this letter?

What strengths do you now see in yourself that you once doubted?

This letter is a promise, a declaration of the person you are choosing to become.

Redefining Success

Creating Your Personal Definition of Success

For too long your ideas and beliefs about success may have been defined by someone else's standards. Maybe it was about achievement, approval, or being good enough. Success is not about meeting someone else's expectations or about pleasing your mother, society, or anyone else. It's about living in alignment with your values, passions, and joy.

Reflection Prompt

Write your own definition of success.

Success is:

I know I'm successful when I feel:

-

Think about how you've been taught to measure success but how you'll measure it from now on. My success is measured by:

Write down any ideas or beliefs you inherited (wealth, perfection, being liked) about what success is:

Now write your own definition of success using these prompts:

Success feels like:

Success looks like:

Success means I am:

What three qualities stand out to you most?

Commit to embodying them. What is one small way you can live by them today?

Success is not:

True success is not about meeting external expectations;
it's about living in alignment with your truth.

Despised by Her, Loved by Me

Embracing the Traits She Rejected

What did your mother shame you for? Were you told you were too much of something? Too emotional, too bold, too independent? What if those very things are your greatest strengths?

Your mother may have shamed you for parts of yourself that didn't fit her version of who you were supposed to be. Maybe she called you too sensitive, too strong-willed, too loud, too ambitious as if these things were flaws. But what if the very things she rejected in you were your greatest gifts?

What did she criticise in you? Did she tell you to stop being so emotional? Did she make you feel guilty for being independent or outspoken? Did she tell you to tone it down, to be quieter, smaller, easier?

- She said I was too emotional, but I know I'm beautifully empathetic and deeply connected to the world.
- She said I was too independent, but I know I'm strong and capable of creating my own life.
- She said I was too loud, but I know my voice deserves to be heard.

How have these traits served you in life?

What happens when you stop seeing them as flaws and start seeing them as gifts?

The things she rejected in you; they were never flaws. They were your power waiting to be reclaimed.

Stepping into Your Power

You've spent years carrying the weight of who you were *expected* to be. Now, you're stepping **fully into the power of who you are meant to be**. You're not bound by her expectations anymore; you're free to define yourself, on your own terms.

Think about what will happen when you stop seeing her criticisms as flaws? How have these qualities helped you in life? What would it feel like to fully embrace them, without apology?

Affirmation:

"The things she rejected in me were never flaws. They were my power waiting to be reclaimed. I love and accept myself fully, exactly as I am."

Create Your Self-Mothering Plan

You are no longer waiting for someone else to take care of you, you are learning to take care of yourself. Complete these prompts:

When I feel anxious, I will:

When I need comfort, I will:

When I doubt myself, I will:

Owning Your Power as Your Own Mother

You are not alone. You are not abandoned. You do not have to wait for love, kindness, or care to come from the outside - you can give it to yourself. And you deserve it.

Affirmation:

"I am my own safe place. I mother myself with love, patience, and kindness."

Now that we've worked through rewriting your story, defining success, and reclaiming the traits in you your mother rejected, let's go even deeper.

Some wounds have been carried for so long that we hardly notice them anymore until we look closely. This next Reflection Prompt is about identifying the moment when the mother wound first left its mark. There is always a moment, sometimes small, sometimes earth-shattering, when we first understood that our mother was not the mother we longed for. Maybe it was the first time she dismissed your feelings or the way she praised others but never you, ***maybe it was the day you realised you were safer without her.***

Did you believe it was your fault?

Did you tell yourself you needed to try harder, be better,
or ask for less?

How has that moment shaped the way you see yourself
today?

What message did you take from it that still lingers?

What do you wish someone had told you in that moment?

The Unmet Needs That Still Linger

Some wounds are not caused by *what happened*, but by what didn't. The words that were never spoken, the love that was never freely given, and the safety that was never provided.

Even in adulthood, these unmet needs show up in our relationships, our self-worth, and the way we move through the world.

What Did You Need That You Never Received?

Did you need emotional safety, but instead grew up feeling insecure or anxious?

Did you need encouragement, but instead learned to doubt yourself?

Did you need unconditional love, but instead felt like you had to earn affection?

You were not wrong for needing love or wanting safety. Your needs were and always will be valid.

How These Wounds Show Up in Your Life Today

- You seek validation from others.
- You feel like you must prove your worth to be loved.
- You struggle to trust.
- You fear that love will always come with conditions.

- You feel unworthy of love.
- You silence your own needs to make others happy.

These patterns are not personal failures. They are survival strategies that you learned so you could protect yourself. This is not about blame, it's about understanding.

When we see our wounds clearly, we can begin to fill in the gaps for ourselves.

Affirmation:

"My needs are valid. I am worthy of love, care, and emotional safety."

Do I feel like I *should* be more grateful, more forgiving, more understanding?

What do I fear will happen if I stop trying to be the good daughter?

Guilt is often a sign that we are breaking old patterns. It does not mean we're wrong; it means we're choosing something new.

Releasing the Guilt

You don't owe anyone a version of yourself who suffers to make them feel comfortable. You don't have to choose loyalty to them or their pain over loyalty to yourself. You are allowed to love. You are also allowed to walk away, and neither makes you a bad person.

Affirmation:

"I release the guilt that was never mine to carry. I am free to love myself first."

Speaking Your Truth

The Words Left Unsaid

Are there things you've never been able to say? I bet there are. Maybe you held back out of fear. Maybe you tried once, only to be ignored or dismissed. Maybe you never even realised how much you needed to say until now.

This is your space to give those words a voice without interruption, without judgment, without consequence.

Some wounds are created by *what happened*, but also by *what never did*. The apologies that never came, the understanding that was never given, and the love that was never freely offered. Your truth matters. Even if she never heard it. Even if she never will. This is about giving yourself

Releasing with Compassion

You do not have to force this process. You do not have to heal all at once. You just need to begin.

Closing Reflection

You have carried these words inside you for so long and now they belong to the page. They are no longer trapped inside you. You are free to move forward.

Affirmation:

"I release the words I have carried in silence. My truth is mine, and I will no longer hide it."

Rewriting the Story of Love

Before we ever experience love from the world, we learn what love is from our mothers. For some, love meant warmth and safety, for others love meant conditions, sacrifice, or survival.

Reflection Prompt

Was love given freely to you, or did you have to earn it?

Did love feel safe and nurturing or distant and unpredictable?

Were you taught that love and pain were intertwined?

Did love come with conditions like being well-behaved, being quiet, or doing something perfect and amazing?

The love we were given as children becomes the love we unconsciously seek as adults, even when it hurts us. **You no longer need to carry her definition of love;** you're free to choose what love means to you now.

Love is not something to be earned; love flows to us and from us freely. Love is feeling safe to be ourselves; it should feel warm and comforting, not like we're treading on eggshells or navigating through impossible conditions to earn ourselves praise or affection.

Write your new definition of love. How does your new definition of love change the way you treat yourself?

What is one way you can show yourself this kind of love today?

Reclaiming Love on Your Own Terms

Love doesn't need to continue looking like the 'love' you were given. Love can be what you define it to be. You are worthy of a love that encourages you to shine, to rest, to be unconditionally valued, and to feel emotionally and physically safe.

Affirmation:

"I am redefining love on my own terms. I deserve love that is safe, kind, and freely given."

Healing the Mother Wound in Your Body

The mother wound doesn't just live in our minds; it lives in our bodies. It's the lump in our throat when we hold back our words. It's the tightness in our chest when we feel unseen. It's the heaviness in our stomach when guilt and fear settle in. Your body has been holding on to what your heart could not process.

Now, it's time to listen.

Reflection Prompt:

Where in my body do I feel the weight of my mother wound?

Does it feel like tightness, pressure, numbness, or something else?

Is it heavy, sharp, or deep and aching?

If this sensation could speak, what would it say to me?

What emotions does it carry? Sadness, anger, longing?

You may have carried this tension for years, but you don't have to carry it forever.

Releasing What Was Never Yours to Hold

Somatic Healing Prompt: Releasing the Pain

Take a deep breath. Imagine placing your hand over the part of your body where you most feel your mother wound. Breathe into it. Send it warmth, care, and presence. Speak to it with love. Whisper: "you are safe now. You don't have to hold this anymore."

Notice what happens.

Does the sensation shift?

Does it soften, lighten, or change?

Your body has been waiting for you to listen. It has been waiting for love. This pain is proof of your endurance, your resilience, your survival. Now you get to release what was never yours to carry.

Affirmation:

"I honour my body's wisdom. I release the pain I have carried, and I choose healing."

Your mother should have held you. She should have told you that you were enough, that you loved, and cherished. She should have made you feel safe. If she didn't, you still deserve the words you never heard. You still deserve the comfort you never received.

Self-Mothering: The Things You Needed to Hear

Take a deep breath. Imagine you're a child again. See her standing before you. Look at the way she holds herself.

Does she seem small?

Does she look hopeful? Wounded? Lost?

What does she need from you?

What words would have healed her?

What comfort does she long for?

What promises does she need to hear?

Writing the Words You Needed

Affirmations:

Write out these powerful statements and place them somewhere you'll see them Repeat them to yourself daily.

- I am safe. I am loved. I am enough just as I am.
- I do not need to earn love—I deserve it freely.
- I will never abandon myself the way others did.

Write yourself a Bedtime Story:

Once upon a time, there was a little girl who thought she had to be perfect to be loved. Continue...

She learned that she was already worthy, simply by being herself. And from that moment on, she never questioned her worthiness again.

As a Personal Mantra:

A short phrase that grounds you when doubt creeps in.

- I am safe. I am seen. I am deeply loved.

Reflection Prompt:

How does it feel to speak to your younger self with love?

Reclaiming Your Right to Be Loved

You may not have had the mother you needed. But you have yourself now and you will never abandon yourself again.

Affirmation:

"I am the love I have been waiting for. I mother myself with kindness and care."

Your Transformation

This is where your journey becomes your own. Not just words on a page, but a lived experience. Not just healing from the past but building a future where you are free. You've named the pain, released what was never yours to carry, and reclaimed your story, your voice, your worth.

Now, who will you become?

This space is yours to reflect, to dream, to step fully into the woman you were always meant to be. Picture yourself fully healed, fully whole.

What does she look like?

How does she speak?

How does she carry herself?

How does she love herself?

How does she protect her peace?

How does she dress?

What kind of relationships does she allow into her life?

What does she no longer tolerate?

This is not just a dream, this is you. You don't have to wait until you're fully healed to be her. You don't have to wait for permission to step into the woman you're becoming. What is one thing you can do today that brings you closer to her?

Is it setting a boundary?

Is it choosing rest without guilt?

Is it speaking kindly to yourself?

Commit to one action, write it down, then do it.

Affirmation:

"I am stepping into the woman I was always meant to be. She is already within me."

Envisioning the Version of You Who Is Free

Imagine a world where your mother had never wounded you. Who would you be?

How would you feel about yourself?

How would you move through life?

What dreams would you have?

What would you believe is possible for yourself?

How would you treat yourself?

Stepping into Your Freedom

You are allowed to step fully into this whole, unshaken, powerful version of you. You don't have to wait another day to begin.

Affirmation:

"I release the past and step into the fullest, freest version of myself."

Looking Back

How has your understanding of your mother wound changed since starting this journey?

What emotions have surfaced that surprised you?

What beliefs about yourself are you ready to leave behind?

Embracing the Present

How do you feel about yourself today, in this moment?

What is something you can celebrate about yourself right now?

If you could send one message to your younger self, what would it be?

Creating Your Future

How do you want to show up in the world now?

What does emotional freedom feel like to you?

What promises will you make to yourself moving forward?

Create a personal “manifesto” for your life.

Write a declaration of who you are now.

What values define you?

What will you never allow again?

What do you promise to yourself?

Describe how proud you are of the work you've done.

Remind yourself of the strength you carry.

Tell yourself what you hope to never forget about this journey.

Final Thought: You Are Your Own Safe Place Now

You don't have to rush this process. You don't have to have it all figured out today. You just need to remember you are safe now. You are loved by the most wonderful person you know - you! And you'll never abandon yourself again.

Affirmation:

"I am learning to care for myself in the way I have always deserved."

5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise

Writing about childhood wounds can bring big emotions to the surface - grief, anger, sadness, even relief. It's necessary and it's okay to feel them but it's also important to remind your nervous system that you are safe now.

This simple, grounding exercise will help you return to the present moment with stability and self-compassion.

Pause for a moment, take a deep breath.

Look around the space you're in. Notice what is real, solid, and safe.

Notice:

5 things you can see

4 things you can touch

3 things you can hear

2 things you can smell

1 thing you can say to yourself

Repeat as many times as needed until your body feels calmer and more present.

Self-Soothing Practice

Three Ways to Soothe Yourself After Deep Emotional Work

Now that you've grounded yourself in the present, let's take it a step further. Self-soothing is the practice of giving yourself the care, warmth, and reassurance that you may not have received as a child. It's a way to tell your nervous system: I am here for you now; you are not alone.

Place a Hand Over Your Heart

Feel the warmth of your palm. Imagine it as a comforting embrace from your future, healed self.

Whisper something kind to yourself - I see you; I love you; you are safe now.

Wrap Yourself in Softness

Physically comfort your body:

Wrap yourself in a warm blanket.

Hold a soft pillow.

Hug yourself, squeezing your arms like a gentle cocoon.

This tells your body you are cared for and that you deserve softness.

Write a Simple Love Note to Yourself

Take a sticky note or a small piece of paper.

Write one kind, encouraging sentence to yourself.

Place it somewhere visible like a mirror, a journal, your phone lock screen.

Read it whenever you need a reminder of your own love and support.

What would you tell a child who just faced something painful? Offer those same words to yourself.

Closing Reflection

The Safety You Create Now

You are not that little child anymore. You are not trapped in that moment. You are here, in this body, in this present moment and you are safe.

Affirmation:

"I am safe in this moment. I am here, and I am whole."

We break the pattern, or the pattern breaks us

A Closing Message

From my messy heart to your messy heart

Dear Reader,

You've walked through the fire of your past. You've named your pain. You've spoken the words that were once silenced. You've grieved, you've released, you've reclaimed, and now you are free.

This journey was never about becoming someone new; it was always about returning to yourself, the self that was waiting beneath the wounds, beneath the guilt, beneath the fear.

You are not broken.

You are not too much.

You are not unworthy of love.

You are powerful.

You are whole.

You are the love, the safety, the care you have always needed.

And from this day forward, you are your own safe place. Whenever doubt creeps in, whenever old wounds try to pull you back, whenever you wonder if healing is possible, remember this moment. You did this. You chose to face the pain instead of running from it. You chose to break the

cycle instead of repeating it. You chose yourself. That is the most radical, courageous thing you could ever do.

Whenever you need to return to these pages, please come back, review and add to what you've already revealed and released. Revisit the exercises that spoke to your heart. Write the words you still need to say. Remind yourself that you have already done so much work, and you are not alone on this journey. I am so proud of you, and I hope you're proud of you too.

With love and deep belief in your healing.

Alison Rose

"I am whole. I am free. I am exactly who I was always
meant to be."

If You Need More Support

Healing doesn't have to be a solo journey. Consider these next steps:

- Continue your self-mothering practice with a friend whose been through something similar. Make a ritual of checking in with each other daily.
- Explore deeper healing tools. Therapy, coaching, support groups, or mindfulness practices can help.
- Surround yourself with safe, loving connections. Whether through friends, chosen family, or a community; you deserve relationships that honour your healing.

A Reminder

You are not broken.

You are not alone.

And you are so much stronger than the pain you've survived.

Whenever you doubt it, return to these words: I am worthy of love, safety, and peace. My healing is mine, and I claim it fully.

BONUS:

And A Mother Wound Email Coaching Session

Fiona (client): I don't understand it when people say 'I love her, she's my mum' even when they've been treated badly. I don't think I love my mum and that makes me feel like a terrible person.

Me: When someone says, "I love her, she's my mum," even after experiencing poor treatment it can reflect the complex and deeply ingrained emotional ties that often exist between a child and their parent. This love can stem from:

1. Biological Bonding

Humans are biologically wired to form strong attachments to caregivers, particularly in early childhood. This bond can persist even when the relationship is strained or painful, because it's rooted in survival instincts.

2. Societal Conditioning

Society often emphasises the importance of loving and respecting parents, regardless of their behaviour. Many people internalise this message, equating parental love with duty or obligation.

3. Hope for Approval or Reconciliation

Children often seek love and validation from their parents, even into adulthood. Saying "I love her" might express a hope for repair, acceptance, or the relationship they wish they'd had.

4. Ambivalence and Complexity

Love doesn't always mean approving of someone's actions. It's possible to feel both love and anger, gratitude and grief. People can love their parents for giving them life or certain positive moments, even if those moments are overshadowed by pain.

5. Cultural or Personal Beliefs

In some cultures, or personal value systems, love for a parent is seen as unconditional and immutable, reflecting beliefs rather than a felt experience of love.

6. Childhood Memories

Many people cling to memories of love or care from earlier experiences in life, which can reinforce feelings of love, even if those moments were infrequent or inconsistent.

Reflection

Sometimes, people equate love with habit, obligation, or even fear of facing the truth about their relationship. Others genuinely love their parent despite the harm because love is not always logical; it's tied to deep, often

unconscious parts of ourselves. Understanding what "love" means to them and separating love from duty or fear can be a healing step. Do they feel warmth and connection, or is it an expression of longing, guilt, or hope?

Fiona: Is it possible to dislike her even though she's my mum? Do I have to love her and if so, how?

Me: It's entirely possible to dislike your mother, even though she is your mother. Relationships with parents are not exempt from the natural dynamics of human connection, which include the potential for conflict, disappointment, or even fundamental incompatibility. The shame and guilt attached to disliking a parent is something that we all deserve to be free of.

Here are some thoughts on your feelings and the pressure to love her:

Disliking Your Mother. Disliking your mother doesn't make you a bad person. Parental relationships are complex, and you might dislike her behaviour, personality, or the way she treats you. This is especially true if she's caused harm or hasn't met your emotional needs. Recognising and validating your feelings, rather than suppressing them, is an important step toward understanding your relationship.

Do You Have to Love Her? No, you don't have to love anyone, even your mother. Love cannot be forced or manufactured; it must come naturally and authentically. If the relationship is strained or she's hurt you, it's okay to not feel love right now, or ever. What matters is understanding your emotions and finding peace with them, whatever they may be.

How to Approach Love if You Choose To. If you want to explore loving your mother, here are some steps that might help:

- Define love on your terms.
- Love doesn't have to mean approving of her behaviour or having a close relationship.
- It could mean compassion for her as a human being, understanding her limitations, or simply wishing her well from a distance.

Focus on Your Needs First. Before addressing how you feel about her, prioritise your own healing. If the relationship is toxic, creating boundaries might be an act of self-love that allows you to approach the relationship with greater clarity later.

Consider Forgiveness. But only when you're ready. Forgiveness doesn't mean excusing harmful behaviour. It's about freeing yourself from the emotional weight of

resentment. Forgiving someone is a personal process that benefits you more than them. A lot of people who have mother wounds punish themselves. Forgiveness means you stop harming yourself because of what she did or didn't do. Punishment is one side of the coin. Forgiveness is the flip side.

Accept Complexity. It's okay to feel both love and dislike at the same time. You can love her while holding her accountable for the pain she caused.

Seek Support. Talking to a therapist or trusted mentor can help you explore and untangle these feelings. They can provide guidance on processing guilt, anger, or confusion around your relationship.

You Don't Owe Her Love. If the relationship feels harmful or irreparable, it's okay to take space. Loving someone doesn't mean allowing them to mistreat you. In some cases, the healthiest choice might be limiting contact or redefining your connection on your terms.

Reflection. It's brave to ask these questions, and there's no single right answer. Your feelings are valid, and you deserve to process them without judgment. Whether you find peace through love, distance, or a combination of both, the path forward is uniquely yours.

Knowing if you love someone, especially a parent, can feel confusing particularly when the relationship is complicated. Love isn't always a simple or clear-cut feeling; it can be tangled with duty, guilt, gratitude, resentment, or hope.

Here are some ways to reflect and explore whether you love your mother:

1. How Do You Feel When You Think About Her?

Take a moment to sit with your feelings about her. What emotions come up? Do you feel warmth, care, or a sense of connection when you think about her? Or do you feel anger, resentment, indifference, or even fear? These feelings don't always mean you don't love her, but they might point to pain or unresolved emotions overshadowing your feelings.

2. Do You Want Her to Be Happy and Safe?

Love can sometimes show up as concern for someone's well-being, even if the relationship is strained. Do you care about what happens to her? Do you wish her happiness and safety, even if you feel distant or upset with her? Wanting good for her (even from afar) can be a sign of love. Your natural propensity for compassion, kindness, integrity and decency may also be why you care. It's a measure of you as a person. I've witnessed intense

resentment from an adult child to their mother, but their integrity prevented them from seeing their mother homeless.

3. Do You Feel Tied to Her Through Obligation?

It's important to separate love from societal or familial expectations. Do you feel you love her because you genuinely want to, or because you feel you should? If there were no pressures to feel a certain way, how would you define your feelings toward her?

4. Do You See Any Positive Qualities in Her?

Sometimes love is tied to seeing the good in someone. Are there moments where she's shown kindness, care, or love for you? Are there traits about her you admire or appreciate? Recognising positive traits doesn't mean ignoring harm, but it might help you identify lingering gratitude or appreciation for her.

5. Do You Miss or Desire Connection with Her?

Love can often manifest as a longing for closeness or connection. Do you wish the relationship could be better? Do you feel hurt or disappointed because you care about her and want things to be different? Desiring a stronger relationship can be a sign of love, even if you're not ready to express it openly.

6. What Does Love Mean to You?

Everyone defines love differently; consider what love means to you. Is it loyalty, affection, care, or forgiveness? Does your relationship with her align with any of these definitions? If your love is buried under hurt, understanding your definition might help you decide if it's still there.

7. Are You Mourning What You Wish You Had?

Sometimes, what feels like love can be a deep yearning for the mother-child bond you deserved but didn't fully receive. Are you grieving the loss of what could have been? Does your love feel tied to an ideal rather than the reality of your relationship?

8. How Do You Act Toward Her?

Love can sometimes be seen in actions, even if your feelings are conflicted. Do you show kindness, care, or concern toward her, even when it's difficult? Are you willing to set boundaries, which can also be an act of love for both you and her?

Reflection. Love doesn't have to be unconditional, constant, or free from negative emotions. It's okay to feel conflicted and unsure. Whether or not you love your mother, your feelings are valid, and your worth doesn't depend on the nature of this relationship. You deserve

clarity, peace, and healing – whatever that looks like for you.

Fiona: How would I know if I'm extremely self-protective when it comes to my mother?

Me: Self-protection is a natural response to feeling unsafe, emotionally hurt, or vulnerable, especially in complicated or strained relationships. Recognising if you're extremely self-protective around your mother often involves reflecting on your emotional reactions, boundaries, and patterns of behaviour.

Here are some signs that might indicate you're in a highly self-protective state with her:

- You feel on guard around her.
- You frequently anticipate criticism, judgment, or conflict when you're with her.
- You carefully monitor what you say or do to avoid triggering a negative reaction. This constant vigilance is a form of emotional self-protection.
- You avoid sharing your feelings or personal life.
- You hesitate to be open about your emotions, accomplishments, or struggles because you fear being judged, dismissed, or exploited.

- You may feel that being vulnerable around her isn't safe or worth the risk.
- You feel the need to maintain strict emotional or physical boundaries to protect your well-being.
- You might limit conversations, avoid certain topics, or spend less time with her to prevent feeling hurt or overwhelmed.
- You might suppress your emotions or distance yourself emotionally to avoid feeling vulnerable or exposed.
- When interacting with her, you may feel detached, as if you're protecting yourself by not engaging deeply.
- You may assume that her actions or words are driven by selfishness, manipulation, or a lack of care.

Even neutral or positive gestures might be met with suspicion, as you've learned to protect yourself by assuming negative intent. When she criticises or challenges you, it may trigger intense emotional reactions, such as anger, defensiveness, or shutting down.

These responses often come from past wounds and the need to shield yourself from more harm. You may struggle with guilt and shame for setting boundaries or pulling away, even if you know it's necessary for your emotional safety. This guilt can make it harder to recognise how self-

protective you've become. You might go out of your way to keep the peace, even if it means suppressing your own needs or opinions. This is a form of protection aimed at minimising potential emotional fallout. You often analyse past conversations or interactions, searching for signs of manipulation, unfairness, or judgment - this can be a way of preparing yourself for future encounters or protecting yourself from surprises. Time spent with her may leave you feeling drained, anxious, or emotionally overwhelmed and this could be a sign that your self-protective mechanisms are working overtime during those interactions.

Reflection: Why Are You Self-Protective?

Self-protection is often rooted in past experiences where you felt hurt, rejected, or unsafe. If you're extremely self-protective with your mother, it may be because she violated your trust by being overly critical, dismissive, or emotionally unavailable. You felt unheard or unseen in your relationship with her. Is there a pattern of emotional unpredictability in her behaviour?

If self-protection feels like a barrier to understanding your relationship, here's what you can consider:

- Acknowledge your need for safety. It's okay to prioritise your well-being.

- Reflect on specific triggers. Understanding what makes you feel most vulnerable can help you navigate the relationship.
- Explore forgiveness or acceptance on your terms. This doesn't mean excusing harm; it's about finding peace for yourself.

Self-protection is a sign that you're prioritising your emotional health and recognising it's the first step toward understanding and healing.

Fiona: Of all the things that have happened to me and the people who have exploited me it's my mother who I can't forgive for the dangerous and unsupported situations she placed me in.

Me: It's incredibly valid to feel this way. A mother is often someone society teaches us to rely on for safety, love, and guidance. When that trust is broken, especially in ways that result in harm, danger, or exploitation, the hurt runs deep.

Feeling unable to forgive her is not a failure on your part; it's a reflection of the profound impact her actions have had on you.

AND PLEASE REMEMBER:

It's Okay Not to Forgive Right Now

Forgiveness is often portrayed as a moral obligation, but it's not. If you're not ready or don't want to forgive your mother, that's okay. Forgiveness is a deeply personal process that should never be forced or rushed. Sometimes, focusing on healing and understanding your emotions is more important than forgiveness.

If you ever choose to explore forgiveness, remember it's not about condoning what she did or forgetting the harm. Forgiveness is about freeing yourself from the emotional weight her actions still hold over you. But even without forgiveness, you can still work toward reclaiming your emotional freedom.

Like I said, the flip side of forgiveness is punishment. You may feel you still need to punish her or seek justice for the suffering you endured. Just please make sure you're not punishing yourself for what she did.

The Pain is a Sign of How Much You Deserved Better

Your anger and pain highlight the fact that you were deserving of safety, love, and protection. Feeling betrayed or unsupported isn't a sign of weakness, it's a testament to your unmet needs and the harm caused by her neglect.

Explore the Root of Your Pain

It might help to pinpoint specific moments or patterns that caused the deepest wounds.

- What were the most dangerous or unsupported situations she placed you in?
- How did those experiences shape your beliefs about safety, trust, and relationships?

Acknowledging and naming the pain can be a powerful step towards healing.

Allow Yourself to Grieve

The betrayal you feel may bring up grief for the mother you needed but didn't have, for the love and safety you deserved, and for the impact on your life. Grieving these losses is a natural and important part of the healing process.

Focus on What You Can Control

You may not be able to change the past or her actions, but you can control how you move forward:

- Set boundaries to protect yourself emotionally.
- Choose how (or if) you want her in your life.
- Build relationships that nurture and support you offering the safety you didn't receive from her.

Find Compassion for Yourself, Not Necessarily for Her

Self-compassion is key. Instead of focusing on forgiving her, try to direct that energy towards understanding and validating your own feelings. You might think: “I didn’t deserve what happened, and it’s okay to feel hurt and angry about it.”

Seek Support for Your Healing

Working with a therapist or support group that specialises in the mother wound, childhood trauma, or family dynamics can help you process these emotions. They can also help you find clarity on whether forgiveness is something you want or need to pursue.

Forgiveness isn’t the goal. Healing is.

Healing doesn’t require forgiveness; it requires you to honour your emotions, set boundaries, and take back your power. You have the right to feel hurt, to grieve, and to protect yourself as you work toward finding peace in your own way.

Affirmations for Acknowledging the Pain

- ♥ I am allowed to grieve the mother I needed but never had.
- ♥ My pain is real. I do not have to justify it to anyone.
- ♥ It was never my job to fix, heal, or carry my mother's wounds.
- ♥ I do not need my mother's approval to know I am worthy.
- ♥ The way she treated me was about her, not about my worth.
- ♥ I am not selfish for needing love, safety, and kindness.
- ♥ I can hold two truths: I can love her and still be hurt by her.
- ♥ I no longer minimise what I went through; I stand in my truth.
- ♥ It is not ungrateful to name the ways I was hurt.
- ♥ I do not have to silence myself to make others comfortable.

Affirmations for Letting Go of Guilt & Shame

- ♥ I am not responsible for my mother's happiness or healing.
- ♥ I release the guilt that was never mine to carry.
- ♥ It is safe for me to stop apologising for who I am.
- ♥ I no longer shrink myself to avoid her judgment.
- ♥ I am not obligated to maintain relationships that hurt me.
- ♥ Distance is not disrespect; it is self-preservation.
- ♥ Walking away from dysfunction is an act of self-love.
- ♥ My healing does not require her participation.
- ♥ I do not have to keep explaining myself to people who refuse to listen.
- ♥ I deserve to set boundaries without guilt or fear.

Affirmations for Self-Mothering & Self-Compassion

- ♥ I am my own safe place now.
- ♥ I am learning to mother myself in the way I always needed.
- ♥ My inner child is safe with me; I will never abandon her.
- ♥ I give myself the love, kindness, and patience she could not.
- ♥ I validate my own emotions. I believe my own truth.
- ♥ I deserve tenderness, care, and warmth, starting with myself.
- ♥ I am gentle with the parts of me that are still healing.
- ♥ I do not need permission to take care of myself.
- ♥ I was never too much for her; she was not enough for me.
- ♥ I am worthy of love exactly as I am, without conditions.

Affirmations for Reclaiming Identity & Strength

- ♥ I am not who she said I was, I define myself now.
- ♥ I will not let my past dictate my future.
- ♥ I refuse to inherit her wounds as my own.
- ♥ I am breaking cycles, even when it feels hard.
- ♥ I choose to live fully, even if she never gave me permission to.
- ♥ I am not my mother's mistakes; I am my own person.
- ♥ I am stronger than the pain I have endured.
- ♥ I choose to build a life rooted in love, not fear.
- ♥ My worth is not measured by my mother's approval.
- ♥ I am no longer waiting for a mother who will never exist.

Affirmations for Becoming Whole

- ♥ I am enough. I have always been enough.
- ♥ I deserve to live in peace, not in constant survival mode.
- ♥ I give myself permission to be happy, even if she never was.
- ♥ I am allowed to take up space in this world.
- ♥ I will not let the past steal my joy any longer.
- ♥ I am free to create the family and love I have always deserved.
- ♥ I honour the version of me who survived, and I choose to thrive.
- ♥ Healing is not about forgetting, it's about reclaiming my power.
- ♥ I am the love I have been waiting for.
- ♥ The mother I needed may not have existed, but I am here now, and I will take care of me.

Your healing is not over, it's just beginning. Some days you'll feel light and free, other days the weight of the past may creep in. But now you have the tools to find your way back to yourself.

This book is not just a place to reflect; it's a map of your transformation. A reminder that you have done the hardest, most courageous work of all:

You chose yourself.

Final Affirmation:

"I am free to live, love, and be fully myself. My healing is mine, and I claim it with pride."

Meet the Author - Alison Rose

Alison Rose is passionate about helping people break free from emotional wounds, particularly those rooted in childhood and family dynamics. Through her books, journals, meditations, and courses, she empowers women to reclaim their emotional freedom and live authentically.