

A.C.A.L.M.E.R.M.E

A IS FOR ACCEPTANCE

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For a long time, I misunderstood the meaning of acceptance when it came to recovery and healing. I believed that accepting a distressing experience meant I was condoning it. Surely if I accepted it, I was saying it was OK. My misunderstanding kept me trapped for years.

Despite all my efforts the absence of real change and healing in my life came down to one thing: I resisted accepting how I got 'here.' No matter how hard I tried I couldn't change the belief that there was something wrong with *me*. I was at fault. I was the villain.

The shame grew stronger. I kept blaming myself for my dysregulated behaviour and emotional pain, stuck in a cycle of reliving my traumatic childhood, raging against the abuse, but punishing *myself* for someone else's horrendous choices and terrible mistakes.

I was so conditioned to believe it was all my fault that I resisted seeing who was truly accountable for my loneliness, my anger, and my despair. Other people's neglectful, abusive behaviour shaped me into someone I should never have had to become. I was conditioned by them to blame myself. I plunged headfirst into darkness. Their abuse buried my light.

When you've been told repeatedly that you're a liar, can't be trusted, and have ruined people's lives, you believe you deserve bad things to happen to you. You don't believe or trust yourself to tell the truth, you question everything. My healing journey began

when, guided by a therapist, I wrote down every traumatic experience I'd ever had.

When our recollections *are* believed, when our experiences *are* validated, when we learn that it wasn't *our* fault, that we weren't to blame, we can give back the shame and guilt we've carried for so long and we can come out of the shadows. We can switch our light back on.

I have learned that:

Acceptance is not approval.

- It's not surrender.
- It's not saying what happened was okay.

Acceptance is freedom.

It's the moment you stop self-blaming, start holding the right people accountable, and finally tell *your* truth.

When you accept how you got here, the question stops being: "what's wrong with me?" and becomes "what's wrong with them?"

- You stop punishing yourself for their actions.
- You stop waiting for apologies that will never come.
- You stop living in self-rejection and start living in self-reclamation.

It's not easy. You may feel uncomfortable holding certain people emotionally accountable. That's okay. They don't need to know what you're doing. This is about you. This is your private revolution. Acceptance allows the truth to be told within you. It frees your Wounded Inner Child from believing they were ever at fault.

Instead of fighting or denying painful memories, you'll pull them closer and reclaim the version of yourself who was silenced, rejected, and abandoned. The pain lives in resistance. The power lives in acceptance.

When we accept the truth - no matter how devastating - we transform our relationship with ourselves. We no longer see ourselves as the villain. We no longer stay trapped in *their* lies. We step into the real story:

- We were the victim.
- But we are also the survivor.
- We are the warrior.
- We have the guts to face the past and defeat it.

Whatever is happening around you, whatever emotional chaos you may face when you meet it with acceptance, be determined to meet it with power and courage. Stop making it mean something terrible about you. Stop replaying old pain. Start to meet life with a logical, conscious mind and a heart that knows it deserves to heal. When your Wounded Inner Child begins the old unconscious dialogue of fear and blame, your Conscious Adult Self must step in - calm, kind, grounded, ready to accept, soothe, and protect.

Acceptance isn't giving up. It's waking up. **Acceptance sets you free.**

CHALLENGE IT TO CHANGE IT JOURNAL PROMPTS

A IS FOR ACCEPTANCE

- What are you or were you rejecting that is refusing to heal?
- What have you learned about Acceptance?
- How will Acceptance set you free from blame, shame, and guilt?
- What truth about your emotional history are you now ready to accept?

Acceptance is our third step.