

A REPARATIVE WRITING PRACTICE

A Letter to My Younger Self

Attachment research has long shown that secure relationships heal — and that this includes the relationship we cultivate with the parts of us that grew up needing more than they received (Bowlby, 1988; Fosha, 2000). This practice offers your younger self the steady, attuned presence they may not have had.

NAME _____ DATE _____

Before you begin: Please choose a younger version of yourself who is workable for you to be with right now. If a tender memory begins to feel overwhelming, pause, breathe, and consider doing this practice with a therapist's support.

1 Bring to mind a younger version of yourself.

Imagine a moment when they were quietly hurting, scared, or alone. What age are they? Where are they? What do you notice about them?

2 What were they carrying? What did they not yet have words for?

Stay curious and gentle. You are not analyzing — you are attending.

3 What did they most need to hear that they did not hear?

Often it is something simple. "You are loved." "It wasn't your fault." "You are allowed to take up space."

4 What strength do you now know they had that they could not yet see?

A SMALL INVITATION
On the next page, write your letter as if your younger self is sitting across from you. Let your tone be the tone you wish someone had used with them. Speak slowly. There is no need to fix anything — only to be present.

