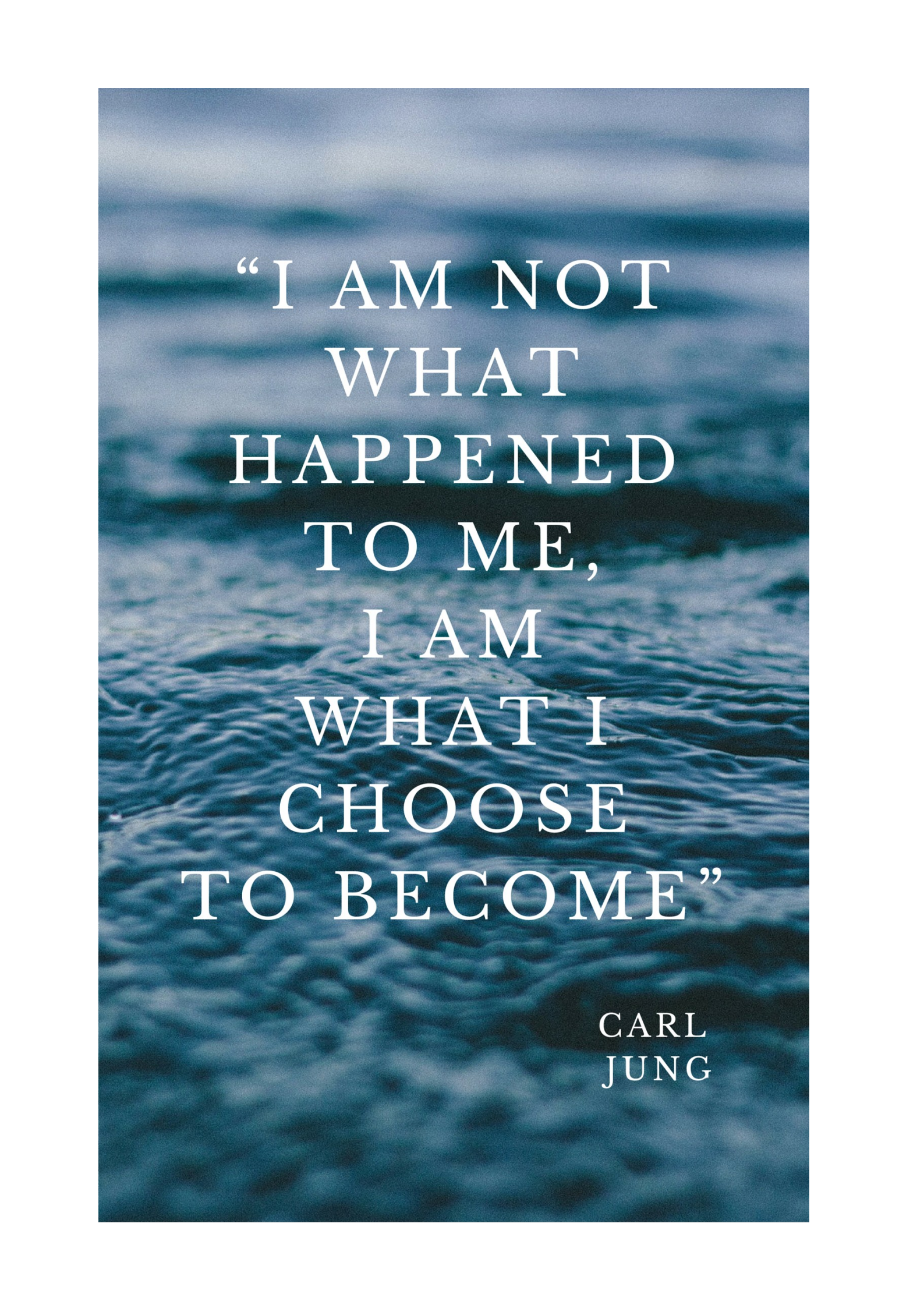
A person in a kayak is silhouetted against the ocean at sunset. The person is holding a red paddle and is positioned in the lower center of the frame. The water is dark with white foam from the waves. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with wispy clouds. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

# HEALING FROM TRAUMA

A PERSONAL REFLECTION  
ON A PATH OF DISCOVERY





“I AM NOT  
WHAT  
HAPPENED  
TO ME,  
I AM  
WHAT I  
CHOOSE  
TO BECOME”

CARL  
JUNG



## ***Hello and Welcome...***

*I have created this text as a way of reaching out to anyone who, like myself, may have experienced trauma or numerous traumas in life and have decided to face it all and start a journey of healing. Such traumas may include childhood abuse/molestation, childhood neglect, bullying, domestic violence, sudden loss of a loved one, experience of a serious accident, rape, assault, scapegoating, war and more.*

*Unfortunately I have gone through a few of these traumas. They hadn't been addressed properly, and so in trying to live a normal life after has proven to be very challenging. I have now accepted everything that has happened (I tried to run away from it all for a long time) and I am on a hopeful path of healing, learning and working on understanding it all. I have quite a way to go but feel that I have gained some insight and realisations thus far. I hope that I might inspire you to begin your journey of healing and know that it's okay to be different; there are so many others like us out there.*

*Please share any thoughts, opinions or any helpful information that you may have with the blog. In doing so; in expressing yourself, in telling your story and sharing your insights you may inspire others. And so the acceptance and healing revolution begins.*

*I would also recommend that you read this if not you, but someone close to you has experienced any kind of trauma. You may gain more of an awareness and understanding about what they, and others might be going through. It can be difficult for people that have gone through huge upheaval to reach out to others due to issues of trust and betrayal from being hurt so deeply. Perhaps after reading this, you might be able to reach out to them despite their issues and let them know that you are there, without trying to fix them or give them answers; it's their journey.*

*Even if you or any of your loved ones haven't experienced any immense trauma; go ahead and have a read. I believe that in hearing others' stories and experiences, we can all learn from each other. And in doing so our levels of awareness and empathy are raised so that we may feel safer in sharing our own experiences. The more we learn about mental health and the more it is normalised, the better we and our society will be for it.*

## ***My Journey***

*As I write this my self doubt and inner critic sneers at me "You're not qualified to write this... you're not a psychologist, psychotherapist or therapist of any kind." No I'm none of those things. Why I feel inclined to write this is because of my own personal life experience.*

*My earliest memories are those of being horribly abused by a young woman that was supposed to be caring for me while my parents worked, followed by a life with incidents of scapegoating, bullying and heartbreaking loss. I have spent most of my life running away from PTSD – Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and social anxiety - trying to escape the inescapable.*

*There came a time when I realised "Okay there is something seriously wrong here, I need to face it fully, for once and for all and get the help that I need." I was working in what I thought was my dream job in film and television, getting work on two big American tv productions in Dublin and Wicklow; something that I thought would make me happy. But I was miserable and terrified; I realised that inner work needed to be done as I most certainly was not going to obtain any kind of contentment from anything outside of myself.*

*And so I came back to my home place to begin a journey of healing, of facing my difficult past, accepting the truth, rather than constantly running away from it.*

*I certainly don't claim to know it all. I'm a flawed, complex human being simply looking for answers, like everyone else. I'm still working on my 'stuff'. But by giving myself the time and space to face my past and work on healing my wounds I've learned from incredible therapists, from researching and from listening to my inner guidance. I feel like I've only scratched the surface, but I want to share some of what I have learned with people who might be in the place where I was six months ago - of complete and utter misery, panic and all-consuming terror.*

## ***Recognising Post Traumatic Stress Disorder***

*Before we get in to labelling any problems I want to point out that although I have struggled with post traumatic stress disorder, and it might be something you think you or someone close to you might have; let's not box ourselves in to it. I see so many people around me being labelled and as a result being defined by that label. For example hearing people say "He has depression" or "She is bipolar," and so perhaps then that person relates to the label too much, surrendering to it, rather than working with it in uncovering deep issues that need to be understood and worked on; worked with.*

*Yes, PTSD and social anxiety have impeded my life in many ways, however, I acknowledge that these are a mere result or symptoms of the real deeper issues. Therefore as complex, unique beings, it would be and currently is, a terrible shame to define ourselves with any of these limited labels; we're so much more complicated than that. We are rich diverse tapestries that cannot simply be solved by mere diagnoses; we're just much too complex and colourful for that.*

*These diagnoses have been very helpful to me in exploring them as a result of what's deeper both subconsciously and unconsciously but they certainly do not define me. I have become very interested in Jungian psychology as a result and it is so inspiring and fascinating to discover the connections and correlations within the different levels of our consciousness. If we as a society knew more about this subject I think we'd live in a much more understanding, compassionate, peaceful world.*

*So, without too readily labelling ourselves and boxing ourselves in; what is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder?*

*PTSD, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is something that can manifest in someone after either experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event. Not all people that have gone through or have witnessed a trauma will experience PTSD. Most people will experience some symptoms after the event but will recover. It depends on varying factors with the individual and the experience.*

### ***What events can a person experience or witness to incur PTSD?***

*War, violence, rape, domestic abuse, childhood abuse/ molestation/ neglect, sudden loss of a loved one, bullying, scapegoating, kidnapping, mental/ emotional abuse, natural disaster, an accident, serious injury, diagnosis of a serious illness and more.*

### ***What symptoms can point to PTSD?***

*Symptoms must occur for a full month and onwards. Symptoms may show up soon after the traumatic event or might not show up until years later. It can be acute – short term, or chronic – long term... It can be with a person for a long time, varying in intensity during different times in ones life (this is the case for me.) **Triggers** such as certain words, names, movements, expressions, sounds may bring back feelings or memories related to the event. Triggers can effect an individual's reaction to certain environments, situations, people or events that bring up reminders of the event, either consciously or unconsciously. Symptoms may include:*

**Avoidance** – Trying to avoid any reminder or association with the trauma such as certain environments, events, objects or people. Memory loss. Emotional numbing. Refusal to talk about the event. Disinterest in enjoyable activities.

**Re-experiencing** – Flashbacks; flashes of disturbing thoughts, feelings, images, memories from event. Reliving the trauma over and over. Nightmares.

**Reactivity** – Feeling very anxious. Jumpy. Easily startled/ frightened. Overly alert; wary of any possible danger. Angry outbursts. Inability to sleep or settle.

**Mood** – Feelings of isolation. Alienation. Doom. Helplessness. Hopelessness. Suicidal.

***Please seek help if any of the above applies to you; don't let any self-doubt win over; get the help you need.***

## **Therapies**

*For those of us that have experienced trauma it is imperative that we seek professional help. I know from experience that it is difficult at first to open up to a stranger, but it's a process, and they usually start with baby steps. You're in charge and they are there to help and guide you.*

*I have been to a few counsellors since I was a child. I never really got that far with them and it was probably because I wasn't ready to open up, and other times I just wasn't comfortable with their technique, so I would look for someone else, or not at all. That led to not properly dealing with it, trying to ignore it, trying to run away from it time and time again. But it always popped up in different ways, at different times; crying out for my attention.*

*I was in denial that anything could be done; telling myself that the next new job, ambition or even guy would be the key to making me happy. Then when I was in my "dream job" getting more and more work, it hit me. It hit me so enormously. I just completely broke down, left all of my work, left Dublin, came back home and basically hibernated in utter all consuming terror and confusion. It was soul shaking. It was all a matter of my old wounds needing attention; needing to be recognised and healed.*

*I feel that I have finally struck gold with meeting the right therapist at the right time. I find her to be excellent; she is very understanding and helps me to make sense of and work through everything. Each individual is suited to different therapists and different types of therapy. I am receiving EFT - Emotional Freedom Techniques - It really digs down to the root of the problem and works on releasing it. It takes a lot of work and perseverance but having to do such work is a lot better than living in a state of total terror for the rest of my life.*

*In saying that, I am aware that some element of my experiences will always be with me. That I have to learn how to live with going through phases of depression and anxiety here and there. But to be in a place where I no longer allow what happened to me to take over my life and define who I am; this is the goal; so that I can accept it, know it inside and out, and know how to cope with it. To use it as a strength, not a weakness.*

*The following are some therapies that are recommended for people recovering from trauma along with what I have personally found helpful. Different therapies will suit different people and also certain therapies are best for certain symptoms. There is a world of information online that can help you to find a suitable therapy. Or speak with an open minded, mental health aware doctor that you trust and they might point you in the right direction. Go with what feels comfortable for you.*

*Talk Therapy – Going to a good psychotherapist or psychologist is a great way to talk about your most deep and private thoughts and issues. It is a space of total confidentiality and the person you are speaking to has either heard it all or read it all, therefore your feelings of embarrassment or shame can stay outside the door. This is a judge-free zone.*

*CBT - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is commonly used for PTSD, depression, anxiety and phobias. It is particularly good at challenging any old, damaging, limited thinking and guides you in looking at things from a healthier, more helpful perspective.*

*EMDR – Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing works with your reactions to your memories of your trauma. It uses senses such as eye movement while talking about your experience.*

*Exposure Therapy – This exposes you to your fears in a guided safe way.*

*Group Therapy – This is a safe confidential group setting in which people share their experiences with the help of a professional.*

*Therapy that I am finding helpful:*

*EFT – Emotional Freedom Techniques focuses on exploring your trauma or issues very deeply and releasing the energy through a tapping technique. This tapping technique is based on the Chinese meridian system.*

*Energy Healing – I go to an incredible energy healer. It's a very alternative type of therapy. But I am a strong believer in the unseen energies around us; that of which is felt and known but is difficult to pinpoint or explain.*

*Journalling – The more I write about my thoughts and feelings, the more introspective I become and the more I discover. Through journalling I have had such powerful moments of realisation. I highly recommend it.*

*My experience with medication – Everyone is so different. Medications for anxiety and depression suit some and not others.*

*I personally took anti-depressants and anti-anxiety medication on and off for 14 years. I understand that it does help some people, particularly for chemical imbalances in the brain etc. However, I have overall, not found medication to be the right avenue for me.*

*I equate it to a metaphor of a dog doing a poo in the corner; then we cover that poo with a rug, continuously spraying the area with an air freshener with the hope that it will sort it all out. Of course the stink will keep coming unless you face the problem and clean it away as best as you can. (Such a beautiful metaphor isn't it- dog poo.)*

*Also, the side effects of the medication I was taking were terrible; really not a good way to live.*

*I found that it was not a good choice for me. That I should have lifted that rug and done the work before trying to cover it up with meds.*

*For now, I am not on medication. Instead I am receiving therapy, eating healthily most of the time, exercising, meditating, writing, doing inner child work, taking vitamins and supplements (particularly vitamins and supplements for a healthy mind – go to your local health store for advice or check out health blogs or websites for information).*

*This has definitely had more of a positive affect than medication for me and I will continue with this approach going forward. I am always open to learning new techniques and coping mechanisms from others who have been on similar journeys.*

*Research – I have been reading books, researching online and learning from others about my particular life experiences and the psychological results. The more we educate ourselves, the more we will understand. Then the more compassionate we will be with ourselves. Through educating myself I have learned so much; the truth is setting me free!*

## ***Inner Child Work***

*One of the times that I am my most joyful self is when I am dancing, singing, skipping, playing and being totally silly and goofy with the children in my life. When I'm fully present in the fun, in the moment. I have learned that, as well as being utterly blissful, this is also good for healing my inner child. My 3 year old self went through such a nightmare (some of my flashbacks are horror movie worthy) so I feel that I am giving my inner child the love and fun and joy that she deserves when I am playing and being a child myself.*

*Sometimes when I am minding children, issues from my childhood experiences are naturally going to arise; I can be over protective and overly concerned about the smallest of issues that they may be experiencing. Therefore while caring for them, I am watching and learning about my own issues and am discovering how to look at them from a different perspective and deal with them.*

*What is the Inner Child? It is an unconscious element of ourselves that each and every one of us contains. It is you as a child; it will always be a part of you; even in adulthood. Many problems that we experience now are derived from childhood.*

*For example, problems with family, friends or romantic relationships or any other kind of relationships; if these problems arise continuously it is a good idea to look at our childhood wounds, where the root of the problem more than likely lies.*

*Embrace that part of you that is and will always be your child self; we have been forced, pushed and molded as children and teenagers to become a certain way; to grow up and neglect our true selves. Therefore most of us have forgotten about the child within that needs healing, love, encouragement - we can parent our own inner child; nurture them and in doing so, our inner child flourishes and so do we as a result.*

*As I work with and heal my inner child I am slowly growing in self assurance; something that was practically non-existent for me for most of my life. I do still have times of relapse but that's natural. Here's how I do inner child work to heal old, deep wounds:*

- \* I sit in a quiet place in meditation or retreat into nature for a peaceful walk.*
- \* In my mind I speak to my child self.*
- \* I send her deep, profound, unconditional love and acceptance.*
- \* I ask a higher power to envelope her and I in the most pure loving beautiful light, to help us both heal and love ourselves.*
- \* I send her positive thoughts and reassurance, such as "You are now safe", "I am protecting you now", "You are brave and strong and beautiful."*
- \* I also encourage my inner child to share any upset or anything that is bothering her; anything that she wants me to know that needs to be worked on. Whatever she reveals to me is experienced by me as a feeling, a thought or a vision. I take note of it and bring it with me to my therapist who then helps me to make sense of it and work through it.*

*Go with whatever suits yourself and your situation; let go of all self judgement and go with whatever feels right for you. The more you practice, the more natural and easy it will feel. It feels a bit strange at first... when I first communicated with my inner child I felt so silly, I thought "This is a bit ridiculous", but I assure you, it works. In listening to and healing our inner child, we heal ourselves.*



## ***Others and I***

*I found that there were some people in my life who really hindered my healing; people who haven't the capacity to understand or don't want to know about trauma that I have experienced and how it impacts my life.*

*I have taken a step back from people, situations and environments that I find harmful, while I grow a bit stronger.*

*I don't intend on doing so forever - just while I work through my stuff, heal and work on becoming more aligned. I step away from them with sadness and empathy; because we are all conditioned to be a certain way, and what I see in others that I do not like is often a mirror that triggers something within me. Our behaviours are learned from our environments and experiences.*

*So in seeing that, I still send them love and light, but from a distance, while I work on improving myself and as a result eventually, hopefully more often act from a place of more compassion, acceptance and empathy. First I must learn to have more compassion, acceptance and empathy for myself; it's a cycle, a mirror. In writing this I realise that it is something I really struggle with; trying to be compassionate with myself and with others. But hey, we're each a work in progress.*

*This quote sums up how I want to be in relation to others; I'm not there yet, but I'm working on it -*

*“If you knew your potential to feel good, you would ask no one to be different so that you can feel good. You would free yourself of all of that cumbersome impossibility of needing to control the world, or control your mate, or control your child. You are the only one who creates your reality. For no one else can think for you, no one else can do it. It is only you, every bit of it you.” Esther Hicks*

*The more we honour & respect our own needs the more we will attract people that honour & respect us also - Our outer world is a reflection of our inner world. When I am in a place of more strength and self assurance, I will slowly and gently test the waters. This may not be ideal or work for you, but it's what I have found beneficial so far.*

*Trauma can do a serious number on us, and create within us a whole lot of mistrust towards others or the world, fear, feelings of betrayal or abandonment, insecurity, feelings of inferiority, shame, guilt, hate, anger. And so when we feel all of these things and project them out to the world; the world mirrors it back to us. Let's take back our power; grow in love with ourselves and in doing so, grow more in love with others and the world. But let's be forgiving and patient with ourselves; it takes time and a great deal of effort to re-programme the belief systems that have been programmed in to us. We'll get there.*

*In the meantime I surround myself with loving people, safe people; that may be a very small number, but that's okay. I have to continuously remind myself that nobody is perfect - I may feel let down or hurt by these loving people at times because of whatever trust, betrayal, abandonment issues I have or lack of awareness they may have. But then I remember that my loved ones are human. I hurt them too. I'm human. I try to forgive myself and forgive them. This can be easier said than done, as people that have been through abuse/trauma can be highly sensitive and the smallest betrayal by another can have a big impact and can be hard to forget and let go of. But we must have patience with ourselves and give it time.*

*If I now find myself in a situation where I'm with a person or people that say or do things that make me feel particularly uncomfortable, I ask myself what bothered me and why; why do I feel uncomfortable? This usually leads to connecting the dots to further discoveries. These discoveries then lead to opportunities for further growth. I find my therapist, Neasa, very helpful with this; she guides me*

*through introspection and highlights psychological links and triggers that I may have been unable to figure out by myself.*

*From Abuse to Shame to Fear of People to Bullying to Re-enforcement of Fear to More Shame to Social Phobia ... and it goes on in a cycle*

*I learned to be a victim from a very young age, at a time in life that is enormously impactful and crucial to a person's development in learning who they are and how to be in relation to the world around them. I learned to be afraid of people and to live in fear of whatever or whoever's around the corner, waiting to harm me.*

*I have lived on high alert for as long as I can remember; ready to run as soon as I sense trouble. Incidents of bullying only further embedded my fears; it's as if these people can sense those of whom are weak, to take out their own crap on. And so it becomes a vicious cycle of pain and terror, with no one around me who seemed to understand, besides my father who was very understanding and empathetic, but died suddenly when I was a teenager.*

*People that intentionally harm others either physically, emotionally or psychologically need serious help in facing their own internal struggles. These abusers or bullies or narcissistic egomaniacs, or whoever might be hurting or attacking are acting from a place of their own fears, insecurities and issues. This view helps me to understand why they do what they do. That they actually need help. However, it still does not give them permission to hurt others intentionally; that behaviour is just not acceptable.*

*I think that the more I love and accept myself, flaws and all, the more assertive I become, and so find it easier to deal with people I find to be behaving like, well, assholes basically. I see them acting or speaking from a place of their own fear and I say "whatever." Although triggers still do come up for me, especially if I'm tired or in a particularly vulnerable place emotionally and so I then spend time alone or talk it all through with my therapist. The struggle of trying to overcome this fear that is so ingrained in me is certainly challenging. But I'll never give up. And if I can help or inspire anyone else along the way, then all the better.*

## ***Self Care, Self Love***

*Let's start loving ourselves! Unequivocally, unapologetically, unconditionally love and accept ourselves - flaws and all. How can we truly love others; confidently, unconditionally love others truthfully and effortlessly, if we do not love ourselves first and foremost?*

*If we do not have a strong sense of self worth and self value, due to varying factors, it is something that we can begin to work on. You deserve all the love in the world! But the love that we need must come from ourselves first. It can be quite a challenge to start putting ourselves first, especially if we are so used of people pleasing and helping others from a place of yearning for love and approval.*

*Self care and self love is something that has been so foreign to me for most of my life; self berating and self hate comes so much more naturally to me. But I'm changing that and here's how I am doing this so far:*

*Learning to say 'No'... If I'm feeling very vulnerable and am uncomfortable about doing something I say 'no' to it. This takes practice, because before I would almost always say yes in service to others; even if it meant sacrificing my own comfort and happiness. Get rid of that guilt! We don't need it; it doesn't serve us or others, so get rid of it. Yes, it is good to nudge ourselves a little out of our comfort zones, but only if it serves ourselves in building self esteem and self confidence, rather than sacrificing ourselves completely at the cost of our own wellbeing. The next time you say 'no' to someone or something, out of love and respect for yourself, and your old 'friend' *Guilt* pops up - try to vanquish it by replacing it with loving thoughts or affirmations. Taking care of our own needs is necessary for healthy survival. Check out renowned author Louise L. Hay for inspiring meditations and positive affirmations. (Repeat often!)*

*Rest ... We can often deprive ourselves of one of the most important ingredients for a healthy mind and body - sleep and rest. If we keep on running around on little to no sleep it is inevitable that we will crash and burn; so obvious, yet we still deprive ourselves. When taking time to heal old wounds we can be emotionally and physically drained; I have often had sleepless nights due to anxiety/depression. Healing our traumatic pasts takes a lot of effort; it's WORK. Therefore it is imperative that we catch up on rest somehow; if we don't take time to recharge, how are we supposed to heal? Let's start by releasing any feelings of unworthiness or guilt that we might attach to needing extra rest -it's not laziness - our minds and bodies NEED it. (Repeat often!)*

*Social media detox ... Social media can be great for connecting with others and for discovering and learning about varying interests. However, it can also be quite unhealthy at times - in seeing only the impressive moments in our acquaintances lives on social media, we can fall victim to unhealthy comparisons, and end up feeling crap about our own lives in that moment.*



*The social media profile of a person is a polished, 'perfected' look for the public, and to me, to be honest can come across as quite false or vacuous at times. We all fall in to this trap. Let's not compare ourselves to the facade of someone else's seemingly wonderful life that they portray on social media. Let's take a few days away from all of it regularly. (Sigh of relief)*

*Recharge in nature ... "Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time." John Lubbock... it's so easy to forget about the simple but powerful joy that is immersing ourselves in nature. We get consumed in the daily grind, caught up in one ambition to the next, wearing ourselves down, ignoring one of the most beautiful gifts in life - nature. I make it a daily habit to connect with nature in some way, whether it's going for a walk in the countryside or the beach or a park. I feel such peace and contentment as a result. (Repeat often!)*

*Love your body ... I know this one is easier said than done, but we can make efforts towards loving our bodies. Damn mainstream media with the pressure of stick thin models and ridiculous amounts of airbrushing that has us thinking we're awful looking creatures. It's improving slowly, diversifying with some larger models making their way in to the arena and more awareness around the unrealistic images that are thrown at us from all angles... Take long relaxing baths... Moisturise your entire body lovingly from head to toe, all the while appreciating every inch of yourself... Look in the mirror and affirm that you love yourself... In writing this I feel like the biggest hypocrite as I have a lot of body shame, like most people, but I will persevere in working on it. (Repeat often!)*

*Eat healthy and exercise ... (No shit Sherlock!) I know, this one is a no brainer, it's so obvious, it goes without saying. As long as we eat healthy, wholesome, unprocessed foods, lots of fruit and veg, drink lots of water and get regular exercise; we're flying. I find that when I'm eating a healthy diet and exercising it truly has a positive impact on my mental health. I'm certainly no strict vegan, or extreme athlete, but I eat healthy most of the time and go for a good walk most days. However, I am human, and coffee, chocolate, bread, cheese and wine are most certainly my weaknesses. I hear so many people around me talking about 'naughty days' or 'cheat days' when they cave in to being completely human and indulging here and there. Let's take the negative connotations away; take the language of 'naughty' or 'cheat' away and reduce the shame; after all, there's no shame in being HUMAN. (Get real... get rid of shame)*

*Meditation and mindfulness ... I have found meditation and mindfulness so helpful in taking my attention away from ruminating on negativity, past hurts or fears of the future. I have a lot more to learn in these areas; having merely scratched the surface, but I am so glad that I have*

*started. If you're like me and get completely lost in endless thoughts, creating a lot of anxiety, you might find guided meditation to be helpful. YouTube has a huge array of options; simply type in 'guided meditations', try a few variations and go with what suits you best. Louise L. Hay is one of my favourites. You can look up mindfulness tips on the web or buy some books; I find Thich Nhat Hanh particularly inspiring. In saying that, it takes discipline in continuing this habit; something I struggle to do but persevere with, because it is so totally and utterly beneficial in the long run. (Namaste)*

*Buteyko breathing... this is a breathing technique that has proven to be successful in overcoming a number of ailments, including panic attacks. It increases the oxygen supply and flow in the body and teaches us to tackle bad breathing habits. I find it very good for my anxiety; it's calming and soothing and I feel more centred when I practice it. Check it out online or visit a practitioner. (And breath...)*

## ***That's All Folks...***

*Thank you for reading this. I hope that you can take something from it as either interesting or helpful.*

*Please know that you are not alone; so many people go through suffering at some stage and if we could all be more honest and open and accepting it would make such a difference. Unfortunately the reality is that there are people out there that can be judgemental, harsh and unaccepting and this has created fear and shame around verbalising our weaknesses or struggles.*

*Things are changing though... There are brave people in the public eye speaking the truth and inspiring others; this is to be admired, honoured and celebrated as it must be no easy feat.*

*I yearn for the day when taking a sick day or week for a mental illness will be as normal as it would be for a physical illness.*

*I yearn for the day when people can feel free and comfortable to talk publicly to acquaintances about their bout of depression that they went through during the winter months as normally as they would talk about breaking a hand or leg.*

*I so yearn for the day when the shame and fear are taken away from going through tough times and struggling mentally and emotionally as a consequence; when we feel no shame or any embarrassment at all for being HUMAN.*

*Things are changing but we have a lot to do to raise awareness and to spread love and acceptance. I would like to think that through our collective action it will all improve gradually and that the next generation and the generations after that will be able to speak out effortlessly and normally about their mental health issues, their traumas or struggles without any judgement or shame attached.*

*In writing this text I don't know how many times I have cried; it has been an emotional upheaval, which is necessary in the expression of truth and the reality of life... but in the best possible way.*

*Thank you to Neasa de Baroid (EFT therapist, BA Psych. Cork City) and Breda Murphy (Healer, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick and Ballyvourney, Co. Cork)... you are my fairy godmothers, helping me along my path to recovery and self empowerment.*



## *Helpful Resources for Healing*

### *Books*

*These are just some of the books that I have found helpful. There are so many heart warming and inspiring books out there...*

*The Four Agreements, by Don Miguel Ruiz*

*The Power of Now, by Eckhart Tolle*

*Conquering Shame and Codependency, by Darlene Lancer*

*The Highly Sensitive Person, by Elaine N. Aron*

*It's Not Yet Dark, by Simon Fitzmaurice*

*Me and My Mate Jeffrey, by Niall Breslin*

*The Power of Intention, by Dr. Wayne Dyer*

*The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying by Sogyal Rinpoche*

*Sane New World, by Ruby Wax*

*You Can Heal Your Heart, by Louise L. Hay and David Kessler*

*The Alchemist, by Paulo Coelho*

*The Pilgrimage, by Paulo Coelho*

*I am Malala, by Malala Yousafzai*

### *Websites, Blogs and Social Media*

*These are just a few that I follow online and receive guidance and inspiration from regularly...*

*Louise Hay – [louisehay.com](http://louisehay.com)*

*Brene Brown – [brenebrown.com](http://brenebrown.com)*

*Danielle la Porte – [daniellelaporte.com](http://daniellelaporte.com)*

*Anita Moorjani – [anitamoorejani.com](http://anitamoorejani.com)*

*Collective Evolution – [collective-evolution.com](http://collective-evolution.com)*

*Eckhart Tolle – [eckharttolle.com](http://eckharttolle.com)*

*Thich Nhat Hanh – [plumvillage.org](http://plumvillage.org)*

*Doreen Virtue – [angeltherapy.com](http://angeltherapy.com)*

*A Lust for Life – [alustforlife.com](http://alustforlife.com)*

*Mind Body Green – [mindbodygreen.com](http://mindbodygreen.com)*



## THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

by Robert Frost