# Repairing My Inner Child After Survival & Struggle

**A Reflection & Healing Guide for Young Adults with Complex Trauma**

## How to Use This Worksheet (Homework Guidance)

This worksheet is for you to slow down and reflect on the messages, patterns, and survival strategies you were taught — especially the ones that no longer serve you.

It’s not about rehashing pain, but about noticing what you’ve carried with you and how you can start showing up for yourself differently now.

You can:
- Complete this in one sitting if you're feeling grounded,
- Or break it up — there’s no rush.
- Bring anything that feels important or confusing to your next session so we can process it together.

If strong emotions come up, pause. Take a breath, move around, or use a grounding tool we’ve discussed.

This is a practice in self-respect — not perfection.

## 1. What Was Modeled to Me — And What I’m Unlearning

**Love & Respect** looked like:
(Example: Conditional love, needing to earn respect, being quiet to feel cared for)

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How to handle **Anger & Emotions**:
(Example: Stay silent, explode, hide feelings, get shamed for expressing them)

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What **Boundaries** were (or weren’t):
(Example: Ignored, punished for saying no, expected to tolerate disrespect)

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How **Conflict** was handled:
(Example: Yelling, avoidance, blame, physical harm, guilt-tripping)

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What **Trust & Safety** in relationships meant:
(Example: Walking on eggshells, keeping secrets, not trusting anyone)

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What it meant to **Be Myself**:
(Example: “Too much,” “Not enough,” having to shrink or perform to be accepted)

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Because of what I learned, **I felt I had to be or do this to feel loved or safe**: (Example: Always agreeable, never complain, stay small, act “perfect”)

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**What felt missing** in my upbringing — but I know I deserved:
(Example: Consistency, being listened to, affection without conditions, safety to express emotions)

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Now, I’m starting to recognize these **beliefs or labels about myself** aren’t true (even if they still feel real sometimes):

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## 2. What I’m Still Carrying

What’s **one fear, belief, or survival habit** I notice showing up in my life today? (Think about relationships, school, work, or how you treat yourself)

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Where do I feel this in my **body** when it comes up?

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What was this **fear or habit** trying to protect me from in the past? (Even if it’s holding me back now, how did it once keep me safe?)

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What part of my story **still feels raw or tender — and could use care** instead of judgment?

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## 3. How I Can Show Up for Myself Now

Two things I need more of to **feel safe, respected, and seen**:

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2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

One small way I can **offer that to myself** this week: (Keep it realistic — small steps count)

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A **boundary, reminder, or affirmation** I want to practice when I:

- Feel disrespected
- Avoid conflict out of fear
- Doubt my worth or silence myself

(Examples: “I don’t have to accept disrespect to keep the peace,” “My voice matters,” “It’s safe to have feelings”)

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## 4. A Promise to Myself

**Read this slowly, or rewrite it in a way that feels true to you:**
"To the version of me that had to survive what others couldn’t see — I see you.
You weren’t too much. You weren’t wrong for feeling what you felt.
You didn’t deserve the pain, silence, or blame.
I’m learning to protect you now — with boundaries, care, and respect.
You don’t have to shrink to stay safe anymore. I’ve got you."

Remember:
This isn’t about “getting over” your past — it’s about creating a future where you treat yourself like you matter.