

Chapter 1

Welcome to My Roadmap of Healing

Welcome! If you are a *Seeker* looking for a guide to using the valuable, healing tool of inner family work, this can be the workbook to help you understand the necessary foundation elements, acquire the tools needed to create that foundation, and offer you a step-by-step visualization guide to create a connection to your inner family. By doing the exercises and actions outlined, I believe you, too, can have an inner family healing.

As a miraculous bonus, this path can offer so much more than just accessing a healing for your history and your younger ages. It provides a doorway to utilizing a system of spiritual wisdom and strengths and it includes a creative process that can be incorporated into a foundation for ongoing healthy living. This was an unexpected benefit that both surprised and amazed me!

In addition to guiding you on how to access *future* selves (detailed in later chapters), I share a creative visualization that allowed me to talk with my various *bodies*. By identifying as my Mental Self, I learned to invite in a representation of my Emotional Self, my Physical Self, and my Spiritual Self. The information, bonding, and guidance I received from that style of inner family meeting was beyond all my expectations! I call them my Board of Directors.

Most amazing of all, I created a visualization where I could actually *feel* the protective energy of a loving Universe, the God of my understanding, and also tap into the wisdom and guidance of my

guardian angels/spirit guides. I feel like I hit the lottery of sane living as well as healing my history. So welcome aboard to the *Finding* path!

I designed this workbook to be an instructional manual that begins by helping you create a solid foundation to support your steps toward healing your past and your younger selves, and to acquaint you with all the other amazing aspects I described. **I use the phrase “younger selves” to mean any self that is younger than your current age. So, if you are fifty years old, you have younger selves in their forties, thirties, and twenties, as well as adolescent and child selves!**

We will begin by making sure we have a trusting relationship with the Universe—with the God of our understanding. Yes, we will be dealing with spiritual subjects, but not religious dogma. I believe that spiritual truths can map onto any major religion, and, thankfully, even the agnostic mindset.

Continuing with our Foundation work, we will make sure we have built a solid trust in our self. We can't expect our much younger selves—especially ones who are wounded—to open up to us if we are not working on our trustworthiness and commitment to them. If they can't trust us to be the wise, comforting, protecting parents they yearn for, the healing simply doesn't move forward.

One of the ways to exhibit this trust is by deliberately uncovering old, immature beliefs that we unconsciously made during our formative years about how the world works and how we can feel safe—or at least survive—in it. Like peeling back layers from an onion, at each uncovering, we must demonstrate that we can formulate a new replacement belief by drawing wise, spiritually-sound conclusions about sane and successful living.

I call this process Topic Inventories, where we find liability beliefs, or *old ideas* (e.g., “Everyone will let us down or hurt us”) and then we articulate and communicate new, asset beliefs, or *new ideas* (e.g., “Yes, some people might disappoint us, but *I* am committed to working toward not letting you down and finding safe people to be around, and I will alert us when we have unreasonable expectations). Completing this exercise can bring hope and trust to our younger selves.

Transitioning from old beliefs, immature attitudes, and dysfunctional patterns of living to new patterns and beliefs that build a lifestyle of self-respecting daily living is definitely not an easy task. Still, little by little, day by day, it can be achieved. Our new path can and will include some of the beginning elements of self-trust, and eventually, joy and gratitude for our life.

Once trust is established between us and our younger selves, I provide suggestions for ongoing connection and dialogue with all aspects of our wonderfully discovered inner family, including meditations and visualizations so we can find healing, creativity, and peace. Please be willing to dive into the preparation work with willingness and openness; it is critical to the success of your healing.

In the short run, the road to fully healing can be difficult and painful; it requires time, energy, and commitment. It was not always easy to find my way to spiritual beliefs and sane behaviors, but the miracle of changing my interpretations and reactions to my history and of accessing previously untapped strengths and wisdom was worth all the hard work I put in as I trudged along my path of healing in those early years.

In the long run, inner family healing has made my daily living richly creative and Divinely supported.

It's important to mention that I have deliberately not read any other inner family systems theories. Back in 1976, when I started down this path, I came at it from a layman's position—a self-directed position. Other inner family systems that came later were therapist-dependent. Therefore, my individual path is the one I'll be outlining and guiding you through. Deciding if you are someone who has the mindset of a self-directed person **and** a commitment to becoming the parent your inner family deserves is crucial.

Gladly, over my years of guiding others toward inner family healing, most people have discovered their own creative, healing elements within the framework, and I believe you can, too!

I feel blessed to have made peace with my history in an extraordinary way and have benefited from my inner family's support, insights, and guidance through the years. My hope is that you will also find your inner family healing by attempting to walk this path to wholeness and freedom.

This is not a *once through the book* healing tool. This is an ongoing system to keep us emotionally, mentally, and spiritually healthy; to be used as we age, as life gives us challenges and heartbreaks, and for taking life on life's terms. So, please read through the whole book at least once before tackling this deep work.

I hope you stay open . . .