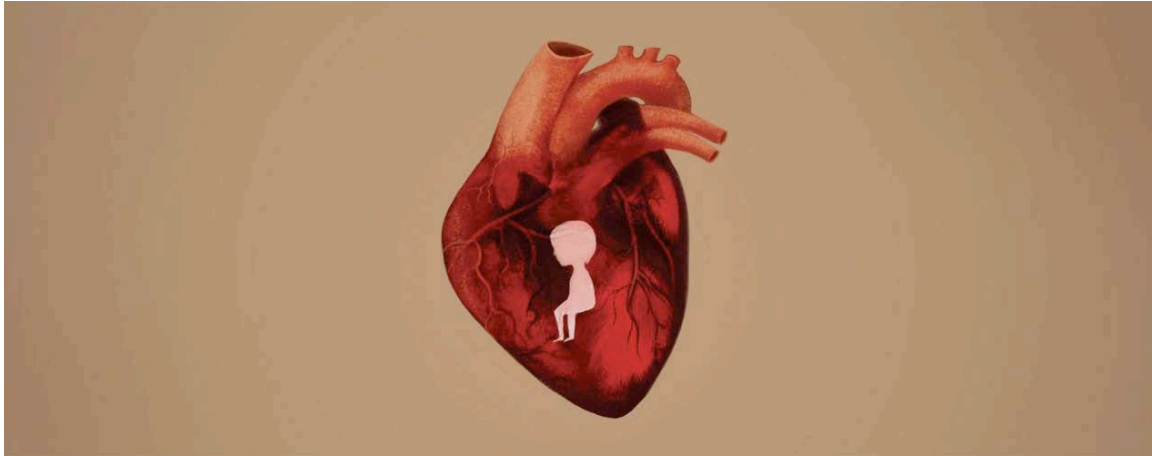




Inner Child & Parent



What is the inner child?

An aspect of the vulnerable and tender part of oneself, our inner child wants to play, is usually open and excited, and may have been hurt in childhood. These pains can stunt our emotional growth, lead to imbalances - and resolved or not - they ultimately determine our level of personal happiness, success, and well-being.

With most all adult issues we repeatedly find ourselves challenged with, we can typically trace the origin of that struggle back to our childhood where we may not have experienced the love we needed, been acknowledged or supported, or we may have experienced trauma. When this occurs, the child's emotional maturity may not fully develop and instead he learns to adapt to his circumstances. Adapting to get his needs met, by adopting compensating behaviors, often leads to becoming dependent on coping mechanisms

(food, sex, drugs, gambling, violence, manipulative behavior, etc.), instead of knowing his needs and clearly communicating them. These behaviors can play out in adulthood as addictions, difficulties with intimacy (having to do with safety, trust and self-protection), irrational behaviors, and dwelling in fears, insecurities, self-doubt, and a lack of confidence (i.e. self-worth).

Though the desire to heal, grow, and experience life probably still exists beneath the child's pain, the challenge – and opportunity - is to become aware of it, and take responsibility for it. This helps grow and cultivate our inner parent, so it naturally supports the child's maturing process. The child's emotional maturing allows her to be more lighthearted, contribute interdependently – and ultimately know her needs and clearly communicate them – instead of acting them out unconsciously.



What is the inner parent?

This is the wise and mature part of us that is evolved compassionately, lovingly, and caringly - and who has the capacity to hold an unconditional space of love and acceptance for the child within, judgment free. This is the part of us that understands, has patience, and a natural strength and desire to take care of the part that is emotionally maturing into the parent. Our inner parent feels the child's pain

and gently takes care of it, giving space for learning, growth, and new possibilities that come with being cared for.

Use the following worksheet to identify the strengths and weaknesses of your inner child and how you may parent this vulnerable, yet ever evolving part of yourself – when healthfully nourished and taken care of by you.

<p><i>Getting In Touch With Your Inner Child - Worksheet</i></p>
--

In a meditative space, sink down into your heart.
Feel into it, into yourself. Practice BOS, tool no. 1.

- Call forth the child inside of you. What do you experience? Write in detail.

- Ask the child what she/he needs? Write in detail.



- Ask the child if there's anything really preventing her/him from getting their needs met. Write in detail.

What are both the strengths and weaknesses of your inner child?

Strengths

(character building attributes)

Weaknesses

(opportunity for growth)



- With equanimity assess your inner child's strengths and weaknesses.
- Recap the needs of your child within.
- How can your strengths help support your weaknesses?
- What opportunities for growth are available to you?



Dr. Amy RachelleND

- What's your self-care/support plan of action for getting the child's needs met by parenting yourself?