

# Children Of Pain Self-Acceptance Workshop - January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022 - 1pm to 4pm - ChildrenOfPain.com

## AGENDA

1:00 pm to 1:10pm - Opening

1:10 pm to 1:40 pm - Exercise 1 - The Contentment Intention, Part 1

1:40 pm to 1:45 pm - break

1:45 pm to 2:15pm - What is a child of pain?

2:15 pm to 2:20 pm - break

2:20 pm to 2:50 pm - Exercise 2 - The Contentment Intention, Part 2

2:50 pm to 2:55 pm - break

2:55 pm to 3:25 pm - Why admit it?

3:25 pm to 3:30 pm - break

3:30 pm to 4:00 pm - Exercise 3 - The Contentment Intention, Part 3

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## OPENING

Let's start today's meeting by saying *The Healing Intention: There are no perfect processes or perfect people, so we come together to listen, to share, to learn, and to heal.*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Audio/voice only meeting - please keep cameras off - no recording - it's okay to take notes  
Talking is optional in this meetings, and it is okay to just listen  
Please help monitor the meeting for "zoom bombing"  
Next week, February 6th, Step Study of Step 3: Remember The Abuse You Endured

## SAFE SHARING GUIDELINES:

**1 - SHARE:** We are here to talk about the abuse we survived, how it impacted our lives, and how we can live as survivors in the present. It's okay to cry, express anger, fear or any other feelings, so express freely, but respectfully.

**2 - LISTEN:** We listen to others and try to offer constructive feedback, thoughts, and experiences. It's okay to discuss what other's say, but we are all on different and unique recovery paths, so embrace what you like and let the rest go.

**3 - RESPECT:** We are discussing some of the most painful and vulnerable aspects of our lives. If another person's words or tone triggers or upsets us, we step away from the meeting and take time to comfort ourselves.

**4 - ANONYMITY:** We are an anonymous group and only use our first name, or a first name of our choice, when we share. We are an audio-only meeting with cameras off the entire time, and we keep our devices muted when not sharing.

**Exercise 1 - The Contentment Intention, Part 1**

*Self, grant me the contentment:      **to accept the things I cannot change,**  
the strength to change the things I can,  
and the understanding to know the difference.*

- We cannot change the past.
- Our survival experience was, is, and will always be part of us.
- If we do not accept who we are and what we have lived through, we will always be in conflict with ourselves.
- The first step in any recovery process is acknowledging ourselves completely: the good and the bad.
- Acceptance is not a one-time event, it's a daily, life-long process.

**EXERCISE 1:      - write down 3 things you find the hardest to accept about your past**

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### What is a child of pain?

1. Child abuse is illegal, but it is also an invisible crime that leaves no paper trail. This makes it a nearly impossible transgression to prove, leaving the victim only open to more abuse if they ever do decide to complain. So, most of us stay silent and never talk about it, thereby becoming speechless. (Children Of Pain, 2021, page 3)
2. Children have an innate ability to persevere. But unlike the perseverance of adulthood which is aimed primarily at independence, for the child, this is the innocent perseverance to find love, caring and support from others. That is why from birth they reach, they cling, and they latch onto whatever and whomever provides them sustenance. And when this drive to thrive is rewarded and cherished, a beautiful thing happens: a happy, healthy child. But when that hope and trust is betrayed by giants with evil in their hearts, a darker, more sinister version of childhood emerges: children of pain. (Children Of Pain, 2021, pages 29-30)
3. We have to keep in mind that all of these victims are children, including newborns, toddlers, preschoolers, kindergartners, elementary schoolers, middle schoolers and high schoolers. By definition, they were not fully formed, mature adults, and, because of the abuse they had to endure, until they have the opportunity to heal, they never will be. These are people who were preyed upon by those much larger and stronger than they were. These were little people in the land of malicious giants, and those giants held all the cards and control. (Children Of Pain, 2021, page 39)
4. Of course, having rules for defining abuse also begs the question of what kind of abuse is worse: verbal, emotional, physical, sexual or neglect? The answer is simple: all of them. It is not a competition, and it is not a question of who suffered more. It is simply yes or no, did you survive childhood abuse, and, if so, how has that impacted your life? The focus here is not on comparing yourself to others, but in understanding yourself so that you can heal from your unwanted past. (Children Of Pain, 2021, page 40)



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### Why admit it?

1. Is it surprising then that someone might have trouble remembering the details about the abuse they survived? Is it unwarranted to assume that some would have repressed these nightmares out of concern for their own safety and that of others? And is it so unimaginable to consider that after years of trying to forget, of trying to deny a past they never wanted, that some might have difficulty in admitting their own truth? No, no it is not, not at all. In fact, it is quite expected. (Children Of Pain, 2021, page 41)
2. Keep in mind that there is no one answer to the problems faced by survivors of childhood abuse, because it is something you have to learn to live with, not something you remove and leave behind once and for all. There is no magic pill you can take, or magic wand that can be waved, which will suddenly make all the painful memories go away. Short of death, they will remain with us, and be part of us, for the remainder of our lives. Thus, the goal is not to destroy them, but to keep them from destroying us. And so we must come to understand, the best we can, what happened and why. That way, when the pain returns, and it will, it will not overwhelm us, it will not take control of us, and it will no longer be a primal destructive force in our lives. (Children Of Pain, 2021, pages 36-37)
3. There is little wonder, then, that admitting the truth about what happened to us seems so daunting, even impossible. Yet, it is our goal to unlock the past, to remember the violence, so we can bring it out into the open where it can be seen, heard, and understood. For left hidden, buried, it will simply fester and seep into our lives in unimaginably destructive ways that are confusing, contradictory, and uncontrollable. But once you see the evil, once you draw back the curtain hiding the ghost in your machine, you will know it for what it truly is: a cry for help that was never heard, a beg for mercy that was always denied, and tears of pain that were never wiped dry. (Children Of Pain, 2021, pages 43-44)
4. It is worth reminding ourselves that recovery is not a one-time event in our lives. Instead, it is a life-long process of continually refining and reinforcing our belief in ourselves and our right to be heard. As such, there will be cycles of certainty which will be followed by those of questioning and then certainty, once again. So, we cannot expect to ever have all the answers, for some of our parts were rendered into microscopic dust that no shovel can ever retrieve. Yet, our goal is to keep digging so that we may restore as much of ourselves as possible, in order to reach our final goal of reclaiming control of our lives. This means that accepting uncertainty is part of the bargain when one embarks on this journey toward self-renewal and healing. (Children Of Pain, 2021, page 45)

**Exercise 3 - The Contentment Intention, Part 3**

*Self, grant me the contentment:            to accept the things I cannot change,  
the strength to change the things I can,  
**and the understanding to know the difference.***

- Contentment comes through understanding.
- Our survival experience was, is, and will always be part of us.
- To heal ourselves, we must first accept ourselves: the parts we like and the parts we don't.
- In the past others defined our limits, but in our future we define our own limits.
- Acceptance is not a one-time event, it's a daily, life-long process.

**EXERCISE 3:        - create your own self-acceptance manta**

**\* \* \* I AM NOT OKAY, AND THAT'S OKAY \* \* \***