

When Children Are Not Seen And Heard

By Karen Bell

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Introduction

“Men are afraid women will laugh at them. Women are afraid men will kill them.”

— Margaret Atwood

This book is for every woman who has ever felt her voice stifled, her presence diminished, her worth questioned. It is also for all men, if they are willing to lay down their ego and open their hearts —because healing and equality cannot happen without them. It is for those who influence in a parent role and it is for those who influence in an authority role. From an inner world perspective, to your subconscious, they become one and the same.

What makes this work revolutionary is that it does more than speak about empowerment—it shines a light on the hidden force that has kept women silent for centuries: shame. Shame tells us to stay small, to keep our heads down, to not take risks. Shame whispers that if we are seen or heard, we may be unsafe. It tells us to accept less, to tolerate more, and to survive quietly in a world that has long been shaped by patriarchy.

And yet, the tide is turning.

Women are awakening. Mothers are raising their daughters to know their worth, and their sons to see women as equals. Even if she is not aware of it, each mother is part of this shift. She is not just living her own life; she is shaping the next generation.

This is how we move from a man’s world to a person’s world.

One intention, one voice, one act of courage at a time.

Men, too, are being invited to grow. As the fragile ego dissolves, he learns there never was a threat or maybe a threat of rejection —only the possibility of true partnership remains, that of fairness and equality. If a woman wants a relationship with him at all.

This is the foundation of my dream.

I envision a world without domestic abuse, a world where shame no longer grooms women for silence and abuse, a world where the patriarchy is no more. This vision lives at the heart of my work and my FUSE strategy, a catalyst for global change. FUSE is the acronym for my values FREEDOM, UNIFICATION, SAFETY and EMPOWERMENT.

And so, I hold this question with love and hope:

Will my dreams become reality?

I believe they will—because together, we are already creating the change.

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Chapter 1: From Insignificance to Significance

For generations, we have lived under the heavy weight of patriarchy. It has whispered to us—sometimes shouted—that we are too small to matter, too weak to change anything, too insignificant to make a difference. These messages have settled deep into our bones, shaping not just how we see ourselves, but also how we see the world.

This is why so many of us feel helpless. Hopeless. We look at the state of the world and think, *What could I possibly do? Who am I to change anything?*

But here is the truth: you are already significant. You are already part of the fabric of this universe, woven with intention and meaning. The very fact that you exist, here and now, means that you carry a role no one else can play.

It is time to step out of the small place you have been put in—or perhaps the small place you have learned to put yourself in. You are not here to shrink. You are here to dream, to imagine, to create. Not small dreams that keep you hidden, but amazing, world-shaking dreams that ripple outward into generations yet to come.

This is not about living in *a man's world*. This is about reclaiming *our world*. A person's world. A shared world.

Dreaming Beyond Yourself

When you set goals, when you choose your direction in life, it is not only for you. It is for your relationships. It is for your family. And whether you choose to have children or not, you impact the next generation. You are always planting seeds. Children—whether they are yours, your neighbours', or the children you may never meet—are watching, listening, and absorbing the world we create.

That is why your intentions matter so much. When you decide to step forward with clarity, you are shaping not only your own life but also the wider society. Every choice, every vision, every step forward is part of a larger story of change.

The Universe Is Listening

Sometimes we believe that our prayers, our intentions, our hopes vanish into the air unheard. But the universe is listening. Every time you say *I want better, I choose love, I stand for truth*, your voice joins with countless others across the planet.

And right now, the world needs those voices. Toxic people sit in positions of power, feeding off division and fear. We cannot afford to play small anymore. We cannot afford to believe we are

insignificant. Because the truth is: we are the balance. We are the counterweight. We are the ones who will bring forward a world that honours all people, not just the privileged few.

Setting Your Intention

So I invite you now to reflect: What do you want—not only for yourself, but for your relationships? What do you want for your family, your community, your future? And if you had no limits, what would you want for the generations still to come?

Take those desires seriously. Do not dismiss them as wishful thinking. Your goals and intentions are the architecture of a better world. They shape the way you move through your days, and they send a message into the collective: *This is what we are creating.*

When enough of us hold that vision, change becomes inevitable.

Chapter 2: Shame Written in Our Bones

Shame has been threaded through generations of the human race since the very beginning—since the story of Adam and Eve. That story, and the countless myths that followed, have been written into the foundations of every religion, every race, every culture. And at the heart of it, the message is clear: woman is to blame.

From the beginning, shame has been a tool to keep women small, silent, and insignificant. Women were cast as the bringers of sin, the temptresses, the ones who must be controlled. Their purpose? To provide pleasure to men when desired. To incubate men's children. To be discarded when their wombs no longer served the function of reproduction.

This is the story humanity has lived by. And it is a story that has robbed women of being seen, heard, or validated as fully human.

The Function of Shame

Shame is not just an idea—it is an emotion wired into our nervous system. It signals danger. It shouts: *Hide. Be silent. Comply. Or you will be killed.* Shame has been used as a survival mechanism, especially for women, throughout history.

Because to survive, women endured. They endured slavery. They endured dehumanisation. They endured being denied ownership of property, denied access to money, denied the right to even open a bank account. Everything that gave power and autonomy was placed in the hands of men.

And shame was the thread that kept women in place. It suppressed anger, fear, rebellion. It told women not to feel too much, not to speak too loudly, not to question too boldly. Shame kept them in line, compliant to the orders and laws of men.

The Perfect Conditions for Control

Shame has created the perfect conditions for grooming and abuse. For generations, it has kept women small, lonely, sad, insignificant. It has made them easy to control, easy to use for the enjoyment of male ego, male games, male power. Kings and rulers thrived on this imbalance. But the truth is: in every corner of the world, in every culture, in every household, men have always been placed above women.

White, male supremacy may sit at the very top of this hierarchy, but beneath it the same principle holds: in the eyes of history, any man outranks any woman. It is written into law. It is written into language. And it is written into our very veins.

We all know, instinctively, the pecking order for survival. We feel it in our bodies: the fear of shaming, the fear of exposure, the fear of being made small. And so we keep ourselves almost invisible. We shape ourselves into what men want us to be.

Playing the Game

And yet—secretly—we know the truth. Women have always known. We have learned to play the game, to survive within the rules designed against us. We have been smart enough to continue pro-creation, to carry the human race forward, even as we were treated as less than human.

This is the sickness at the core of the human condition. Shame has spread through us like the common cold: ordinary, ever-present, and so often unnoticed.

The Shift Toward Healing

But here is the truth that history tried to bury: shame is not the end of our story.

Shame may have controlled us for centuries, but it does not have to control us forever. We are beginning to see it for what it is—a weapon designed to keep us quiet. And once we see it, once we name it, we begin to take back its power.

Because healing begins with awareness.

Every time a woman speaks her truth, shame loses its grip. Every time a person refuses to stay silent, the old order trembles. Every time we choose compassion instead of compliance, courage instead of silence, we step into a new way of being.

Yes, shame has been written into our bones. But so has resilience. So has wisdom. So has the quiet, unstoppable strength of survival. And now, we have the chance to turn survival into transformation.

So I ask you again: *What else can we do?*

We can rise. We can heal. We can speak.

This book is not only about shame—it is about the possibility beyond shame. It is about reclaiming what has always been ours: significance, voice, and power.

But there is one condition.

You must be ready.

Ready to see. Ready to hear. Ready to talk. Ready to step into the hope that shame tried to silence.

Chapter 3: Awakening in the Present

We live in a world where despair runs deep. Many of us carry it silently, while others try to bury it beneath distraction. We reach for food, sex, shopping, entertainment, addictions of every kind—always chasing the next fix, the next little spark of hope. Because the truth is, the present often feels unbearable. The present feels like it holds no hope at all.

And yet, this book is about reclaiming hope for the present moment. Not a distant future, not a “someday” that politicians promise and never deliver. Hope for *now*.

We create a fairer, more just world one moment at a time. With every thought. With every intention. With every action. When we hold the dream of a better world inside us, when we live as if that world is already on its way, it begins to appear.

This is not about waiting for power structures to change. The patriarchy has always fed us lies, and politics is no different. Promises of justice, equality, or progress often dissolve into self-interest. Leaders line their pockets while telling us to wait, to trust, to keep quiet.

But we cannot wait anymore.

Breaking the Old Patterns

Do not wait for the same old laws, the same unwritten rules, the same suffocating relationship dynamics. Do not wait to be told your worth, as if it were a gift handed down by those who have always held power.

For generations, women were told to stay small, to be insignificant, to pander to the male ego. Mothers taught it, grandmothers lived it, great-grandmothers endured it—because for them, there was no choice.

But today, we do have a choice.

Women before us fought for this—fought with their voices, their lives, their courage. We owe it to them, and to the generations yet to come, to keep going. We must push forward even more fiercely now, because in so many ways, those in power are trying to drag us backward—back to a time when women were forbidden to study, to work in meaningful jobs, to own property, to control their own bodies.

An Awakening for All

We must see what is happening, and we must not look away. And not only women—men too must awaken. We have to tug on their coats, call them to attention, help them see the cost of this old story.

Because this is not a win for men either. It is not a win for anyone. A world built on control, on shame, on domination, is a world of lost souls.

But there is another way.

When we awaken, when we refuse to settle for the old order, when we live each moment as if a just, fair world is possible, we begin to birth it into being. Not tomorrow, not in some distant generation—but now, in the present.

It starts small: with intention. With awareness. With courage. With the daily, living choice to create something better.

And every time we do, hope is no longer a dream for the future—it is a reality in the present.

The Distractions That Keep Us Asleep

We live in a world full of distractions—attachments to things that seem so important in the moment but, in reality, keep us from waking up.

We obsess over how we look. We measure our worth against what we own. We chase experiences that look good on a screen but leave us feeling empty inside. We pour our energy into appearances—what we show, what we display—while the deeper truth of who we are lies untouched.

These attachments keep us facing the wrong direction. They stop us from asking the questions that matter: *What difference am I making? What world am I shaping? What legacy am I leaving for the generations that will come after me?*

When our energy is tied up in superficial desires, we miss the chance to create anything lasting. The children who will inherit this earth deserve more than our distractions. They deserve a world created by people awake to what really matters.

Avoiding the Fear

And yet, so often, these attachments are not about greed or vanity at their core. They are about fear. We cling to them because they distract us from pain. They help us avoid the terror of facing ourselves.

It can feel safer to keep scrolling, to keep buying, to keep numbing, than to ask: *Am I living in truth? Am I living in alignment with my soul?*

But when we hide from truth, we also hide from freedom. We keep playing roles in a movie written by someone else, acting our parts while our souls remain silent.

The Cost of Staying Asleep

If we continue to live ego-drenched lives, the cost will be high. Wars will not end. Abuse will deepen. Smiles may look broader, but behind them disease will spread—of the body, of the spirit, of society itself.

But I am not telling you this to frighten you or to preach. I am telling you because we already know it. Deep down, we all feel the unease. We sense that the way we are living is not sustainable, not healthy, not real.

The truth is not meant to crush us—it is meant to free us.

Facing Truth With Compassion

So let us face it, gently but bravely. Let us admit that the distractions are only distractions. They are not who we are. They never were.

We are more than consumers, more than bodies to be judged, more than roles to be played. We are souls. We are creators. We are visionaries.

And when we live from that truth—even in the smallest ways—we begin to build a world that heals rather than harms, a world that unites rather than divides.

Chapter 4: How money, time and sex shapes our security, safety and connection

The way love is measured is often with money, time and sex. This chapter explores these as a means of exchange of needs and power.

The drivers for relationships can often be laid out with security, safety and connection. I often refer to the languages of love, an idea by Dr Gary Chapman, who decided there are five.

He taught us that each of us has a unique way of giving and receiving love.

When we understand our own language, and when we learn to listen to the love language of another, our relationships begin to blossom.

Let us explore them together:

Words of Affirmation

Love can be spoken.

A kind word, a gentle encouragement, a heartfelt compliment—these remind us that we are seen, that we are valued, that we matter.

Acts of Service

Love can be shown through action.

When someone lightens our load, makes a meal, or helps in a small, thoughtful way, we feel their care expressed not in words but in what they do.

Receiving Gifts

Love can be offered in the form of a gift.

It is not about the size or cost—it is about the thought, the meaning, the energy carried within it. A gift becomes a symbol of being remembered and cherished.

Quality Time

Love can be felt in presence.

When we are given undivided attention, when someone sits with us, listens to us, or shares a quiet moment—our hearts expand. We feel deeply connected.

Physical Touch

Love can be held in the body.

A hug, a hand to hold, a kiss, a gentle touch—these small gestures bring comfort, safety, and warmth.

Each language is beautiful. Each one matters.

As you listen, notice which one speaks most clearly to your heart.

That awareness is a gift you can carry into every relationship—nourishing yourself and those you love.

Dignity without apology.

That is the foundation of this chapter.

We are living in a time of turning tides. Relationships are shifting. Expectations are shifting. Women are no longer willing to accept the old rules, the old offers, the old dynamics.

Across the UK, more and more women are choosing to live alone. They are saying *no thank you* to relationships that bring them nothing but compromise, disappointment, and exhaustion.

And why not? Women today are successful. Independent. Strong. They can build careers, own homes, and create lives that sustain them. They no longer have to settle for what used to be “the only option.”

But there is a message here for every woman—especially those who have not yet awakened to this change: *pay attention*.

Money: Your Power, Your Freedom

Money matters. We cannot avoid this truth. If you want dignity without apology, you must be able to make your own money.

Money is not only survival—it is freedom. It is choice. It is the power to walk away from what does not serve you. It is the resource that allows you to invest in yourself, in your dreams, in your future.

So ask yourself: What skills do I need to live the life I want? What would I need to study, learn, or create to secure my independence?

Use the tools available to you—yes, even AI. Learn to leverage it. Explore opportunities. Don’t wait for permission. Create the financial foundation that gives you the ability to live life on your terms.

Time: Your Most Precious Resource

Time is the one thing you can never buy back. Too many women spend years, even decades, giving their time to dynamics that drain them.

What if you claimed your time as sacred? What if you invested it only in relationships, work, and passions that truly matter?

Every moment you give away to something unworthy is a moment you cannot reclaim. Protect your time fiercely. Because when you spend it wisely, your life expands.

Sex: Connection, Not Control

Sex has long been used as a weapon of power, a tool of control. But in this new world, sex must be reclaimed as connection, not currency.

What turns a woman off? Disrespect. Dismissal. Being seen only as a body, not a whole person.

What does a woman want? To be seen. To be valued. To be met as an equal. To experience intimacy that honours her dignity rather than eroding it.

The tides are turning here too. Women are no longer willing to apologise for their boundaries, their desires, or their “no.” And that, too, is dignity without apology.

Healing the Root

But there is something deeper we must face. Many women carry wounds from childhood—trauma, neglect, abuse, entrapment. The absolute root cause of those wounds is shame.

And shame is what keeps us from stepping fully into dignity.

This is why healing matters. Work with a counsellor. Explore your story. Bring compassion to the places where you were silenced. The subconscious mind can be rewired—new neural pathways can be formed. But it takes intention, repetition, and courage.

That’s why I weave shame through all of my content. It is not to dwell in the pain, but to point to the doorway of healing. Read. Listen. Learn. Over and over. Let your subconscious take in the truth until it becomes your new way of being.

A Legacy of Change

Do not listen to voices that shame men or women. Those are the old tools of the patriarchy, passed down generation after generation.

Your mother carried it. Her mother carried it. And so on, for centuries. It is written into our parenting, into our language, into our DNA.

But here is the hope: DNA is not destiny. Science has proven that genes shift with environment. When we create a healthier, safer environment, we rewrite the future. We create change not only for ourselves but for our children and grandchildren.

This is how cycles end. This is how we move from survival to significance.

Listen to your wisdom. Trust it. You already carry it within you.

And as we step into this chapter together, we will look at the ways our ego states—Parent, Adult, Child—play out in relationships and in life. Understanding them can set us free to relate in new, healthier, more dignified ways. (I cover this more in chapter 10).

Chapter 5: Two Versions of You

You carry more than one version of yourself.

There is the **ego-self** — the version of you that knows how to live in society. She is the one who learns the rules, who keeps the peace, who makes sure the family, the marriage, the children, the culture, all run smoothly. She may be the dutiful wife, the loyal partner, the mother who sacrifices. She may cover her body to be acceptable, or obey rules she does not believe in, because it feels safer that way.

This version of you knows how to survive. She knows how to smile when she wants to cry. She knows how to stay silent when she wants to speak. She is clever, capable, and she has kept you alive.

But then, there is the **shadow-self**. She is not bad. She is not wrong. She is simply the part of you that has been told she is unwelcome. She holds your resentment, your jealousy, your fear, your hurt. She remembers the sting of rejection, the ache of unworthiness, the moments when others were chosen over you. She feels unsafe. She feels less than. She feels the things society does not want to admit exist.

And so, she gets hidden.

And deeper still, beneath them both, is the **soul-self**. The real you. The woman who has been there all along. The one who holds wisdom, intuition, creativity, power. The one who knows truth. The one who shame has tried to silence. The one who has been watching every choice, every compromise, every time you shrank to fit in.

The soul-self is your authenticity. She is your freedom.

But to reveal her, there is a cost. You may have to give up being the version that pleases everyone. You may have to let go of being the one who obeys without question. You may risk being judged, misunderstood, even rejected. Yet what is the greater cost? To live your whole life unseen, or to finally let yourself be?

Ask yourself:

- Who am I when I silence my truth?
- Who benefits when I hide my voice?
- Who am I letting down when I live small?

Now ask:

- Who would I become if I allowed my real self to rise?
- Who would I inspire by being authentic?
- Who might I free, just by showing it is possible?

Take a breath. Place your hand on your heart. Say to yourself:

- *I honour the part of me that survived.*
- *I embrace the part of me that felt hidden.*
- *I welcome the soul of me who has always been here.*
- *It is safe for me to be authentic.*
- *My voice matters.*
- *My truth matters.*
- *I am ready to let the real me rise.*

The good news is that she — your true self — has never left you. She was always present, witnessing, waiting. And now, she is ready to step forward.

And you are ready to help her.

Tip: If you find yourself dissociating, find your breath is high in the chest, or heavy like heartburn from chest to throat, or a heavy knot in the pit of your stomach, allow your feeling to be there. You have been shamed for so long and might call it embarrassment or guilt, but you are not wrong. It was strategically placed on you as a child to keep you small, a girl, kept in her place.

It is safe and it will pass.

It is supposed to be there. Just for a moment or two it needs to give you the signal that something is off. Once you realise that is the old feeling that kept you in check, you can allow it to subside, to leave your body, as a new soulful you is coming through into power to be seen and heard.

Be seen. Be heard. Be in your power. Let shame go.

Chapter 6: Mothers Raising Girls

When you are raising a girl, you are raising the future.

Bring her up knowing her strength. Knowing that she has power. Knowing that she carries limitless potential inside her. Remind her that ambition is not a curse, that rebellion is not something to be silenced but often a sign of her spirit alive and awake. Tell her she can be all things within an infinite world of possibilities. Show her that she has choices. Choices to be all she wants to be and more.

Teach her to see beauty in all things. Teach her that the narrow, patriarchal ideas of beauty — to be skinny, to be measured, to be shamed into silence or smallness — are not part of her story. Let her know that there are all kinds of wonderful in this world — and that she is all of them rolled into one child.

See her.

Hear her.

Let her be free in all her uniqueness.

Know that your childhood was restricted. You wanted more. Now you get to give more. Understand that the rules placed on your mother, the limits she lived within, do not have to be passed down to your daughter. The chain can end with you.

Teach her responsibility — but make sure she knows the responsibility is first and foremost to herself. To her body, to her mind, to her boundaries. Teach her that safety comes before politeness. That she never has to smile for anyone, never has to hug anyone, never has to sit still to make someone else comfortable. Teach her that no one has the right to touch her.

And remind yourself: she cannot truly consent to anything life-changing, because she has not yet had enough time in the world to understand what she would even be consenting to. Childhood is not for carrying adult burdens. Childhood is for growth, discovery, freedom.

Teach her she is not in competition with a boy. Gender is equal. Value is even. She is allowed to say *No*. She is encouraged to say *No*.

She does not owe you anything for her upbringing. Her safety, her nourishment, her roof over her head — these are not rewards she must pay back. They are givens. They are her birthright. It is your privilege to love her, to care for her, to guide her. If it does not feel like a privilege, if your instinct has been blocked or broken, seek help. Find a professional trained in childhood trauma. Because every rupture has a root.

And if someone harms her — she did not deserve it. She is not to blame. The responsibility lies with the one who chose to harm her. He had a choice. He could have walked away. He did not. That is his shame to carry. Not hers.

Teach her that if harm comes, accountability belongs to the perpetrator. If not in this life, then in the next. But never, ever on her shoulders. She is a child. With a child's mind. With no capacity for more. Do not forget that.

So listen to her. Ask her how she feels, what her life is like, how she is finding her way through all her struggles and challenges. Be there to hold her in those moments. Be there to take that weight from her and let it be your burden.

She is your baby. Your gift. And if her needs go unmet, it is not her flaw. It is not her failing. The burden lies with you — the mother. The decisions you make around her care are yours to own.

This is the responsibility of raising a girl.

This is the weight and the privilege of being her mother.

Here is a healing letter to your mother, to the mother of your inner child, that you can adapt to fit your story:

Dear Mother,

You did what you knew. You carried the rules that were placed on you, the restrictions, the silences, the limitations. You passed down what you had been given. And I see that now.

But I want you to know — I needed more.

I needed you to tell me that I was strong. That I had power. That my potential was limitless. I needed you to look at me and see the beauty in me, not the flaws you feared others would find. I needed you to tell me that I was not in competition with a boy, that my value was equal, that my voice mattered.

I needed you to teach me that safety comes before politeness. That no one had a right to touch me, no one had the right to silence me, no one had the right to harm me. That if they did, the fault was never mine.

I needed you to listen — really listen — to how I felt, what I feared, what I dreamed. To see me as a child who deserved love simply because I was yours, not because I earned it.

And when you couldn't do those things, I believed I was unworthy. I carried shame that did not belong to me. I made myself small because I thought I had to.

But today, I choose differently.

I am now the mother of my own inner child. I see her. I hear her. I hold her with the love, the safety, the tenderness I longed for. I tell her she is free to be herself in all her

uniqueness. I remind her that she has boundaries, that she has choices, that she is not responsible for anyone else's behaviour.

I will not let her carry what was never hers. I will not let her believe she is less. I will not let her feel alone.

I am here now.

I am her mother.

And I will never leave her.

With love,

{your name}

A Letter to My Inner Child

Dear {your name; age of the version of you}

I see you. I know you are still here, living inside me, holding memories I tried to forget. You are the part of me that still feels small, still feels unsure, still wonders if love is safe, if my voice is allowed, if I am enough.

I want you to know — you never deserved the pain you carried. You never deserved to feel unworthy, unwanted, unseen. None of that was your fault. The things that happened were not because of you, but because of others who could not hold their own wounds.

You are innocent. You are pure. You are light.

I am so sorry for the times I abandoned you — when I ignored your tears, silenced your fears, pushed you away just to get through the day. I know now you were never the enemy. You were the one needing love the most.

Today, I choose to listen.

I choose to hold you close.

I choose to keep you safe.

You do not have to protect me anymore. You do not have to keep watch. That was never your job. You are a child — and you are allowed to play, to rest, to feel, to dream.

I will not let you carry shame that does not belong to you. I will not let you believe the lie that you are less than. You are precious. You are whole. You are worthy — always.

I am here now. I am strong enough to look after us both. You can lean on me. You can trust me. You can breathe again.

Thank you for surviving. Thank you for holding on through everything we endured. Because of you, I am here. Because of you, I can heal.

*I love you. I will always love you.
And I will never leave you again.*

*With all my heart,
{your name}*

Chapter 7: Mothers Raising Boys

When you raise a boy, you are raising the future of men.

In generations before, a woman's responsibility often fell more heavily on her marriage than on her children. A husband was her security, her roof over her head, her escape from her father's house. For many, marriage was not freedom at all — it was jumping from the frying pan into the fire. To return to your parents might mean rejection or being sent back into harm. And so women repeated the words they had learned: *"better the devil you know."*

In this silence, another phrase grew: *"boys will be boys."* And eventually, *"men are all the same."*

Sons watched as their mothers tolerated their fathers — and they believed this was acceptable. They thought this was what it meant to be a man. They believed dominance, dismissal, disrespect were normal.

But I have worked with men who carry a very different truth inside them. Men who say: *"I would rather be anything but that. I do not want to be my father. I am disgusted if I see any of his ways in myself."*

This is where mothers come in.

Women — when you raise boys, you hold a responsibility greater than your responsibility to your husband. Your responsibility is to your child and an even bigger responsibility to his sisters and his future wife.

Teach your son to respect you. Teach him to respect his sister. Teach him to understand fairness, to know that equality is not an idea but a way of life. Make sure chores, rules, and opportunities are shared equally. Do not wait to teach him responsibility or act like he is incapable of learning to take care of himself. Do not burden his sister unfairly while excusing him.

Every intention and decision is a value you are teaching him. Every behaviour you tolerate from him or his father, he is learning how much to respect all women. If you believe you have little worth, he will be picking that up. Every time you keep the peace, he will learn that men are entitled to have the service of women. Every time you take an unwelcome word or hand from your husband, physically or sexually, he learns how to be that version of a man. Think carefully about the values you are teaching. Not the ones you absorbed from your mother or your father. Not the ones soaked in shame, silence, or survival. Think about the values you believe in now, the ones you want for your children, in this world. Update yourself.

Don't neglect to act and do the safe, healthy thing to do when you are in a toxic environment.

And if you carry low self-worth, if you feel unworthy or powerless, please seek help. Get counselling. Know that this feeling is not who you are. It is the echo of generations of shaming,

a survival strategy passed down to keep women small, to keep them safe in a world that wasn't safe for them.

It was real then. But it is not true now.

When you teach your boys to respect you, to respect their sisters, you are shaping the men they will become. You are raising future husbands who honour their wives, future fathers who cherish their daughters. You are raising men who will not repeat the cycle, but break it.

He can grow into a just, fair, good man — one you are proud of, one who carries equality forward. A man who knows this world is not a man's world, but a person's world.

And that — that is what women want.

A letter to My Mother About Raising a Son and a Daughter Unequally:

A Letter to My Mother

Dear Mother,

You raised me and my brother. But you did not raise us the same.

You made more of him. You gave him privileges you never gave me. You excused him from responsibilities that fell heavily on my shoulders. You let him go unaccountable, and you called it “boys will be boys.”

You taught him entitlement — male entitlement, white entitlement — the entitlement that the world already handed him before he even knew his name. You reinforced it, when you should have questioned it. And I became invisible.

We both saw how my father treated you, how you tolerated it, how his abuse shaped your silence. Even after he left us — you still carried his ways into how you raised your son. You felt guilty for him leaving, and in your guilt, you over-parented him. You gave him too much, too easily. You poured into him what felt like your whole heart and had nothing left for me.

You thought you were making up for what he lost. But in doing so, you created an entitled man after being abused by one. That is the legacy of patriarchy — it passes through us, woman to woman, unless we stop it.

You did not stop it.

And I need you to know that. I need you to be accountable. Because I carried the cost of your choices. I learned to be silent. I learned that my voice mattered less. I learned that my role was to make room for men, even when it hurt me. I learned that to be a daughter was to come second.

This is not just about you and me. This is about the world we all live in now — a world where too many men still believe they are more, and too many women still believe they are less.

You may not have known how deeply your choices would shape me. You may not have seen it. But I see it now. And I will not carry it forward.

I will not excuse men for their behaviour. I will not accept “boys will be boys.” I will not raise sons who believe they are owed more. I will not raise daughters to feel invisible.

That cycle ends with me.

But for it to end, I must first say this:

You were wrong.

You were irresponsible.

And I hold you accountable.

With my truth I let you go.

Your Daughter.

To myself and to all daughters who feel these words in her bones:

You are not invisible.

You are not less.

You do not exist in the shadow of your brother, your father, or any man.

You are whole. You are worthy. You are powerful.

The cycle does not own you.

The patriarchy does not define you.

The silence does not bind you.

You are here now, awake, aware, free to choose differently.

And you will.

Chapter 8: Coming Together

There is a new way of being with man.

Not the old dance of dominance and submission. Not the performance of her shrinking while he expands. Not the ritual of fear, silence, or compliance.

In her new essence, she meets him whole. She no longer waits for rescue, because she is not in danger. She no longer locks herself away in towers of silence or shame, because her mother has broken her own chains, no longer driven by unconscious trauma. She does not need to cast herself as the princess, and her mother does not need to play the wicked witch. That story is over.

The new romantic dream is not of a man on a white horse. It is of two people, equal in strength and equal in worth, walking side by side. She is not powerless, and he is not threatened. His ego fear fades, little by little, as he begins to see her not as danger but as a partner. She does not need him to dominate. He does not need her to submit.

This is the modern person's world — a world of equality, fairness, and shared humanity.

In this world:

- Women no longer fear men.
- Men no longer see women as a threat.
- The past stories of abuse, silence, and shame no longer write the future.

And so, we live differently. We live honestly. We live freely.

We live happily ever after — not in the fairytale sense of being saved, but in the real-world sense of finally being seen, valued, and safe in one another's presence.

And yet, it may feel almost *too simple*.

For so long, our nervous systems have been trained on drama. We were told the spark of romance lived in chaos — in the chase, the rescue, the heartbreak, the tension. Women's magazines and "how to get a man to love you" books taught us to play games, to stir jealousy, to provoke desire. But all of this was born out of toxic masculinity. Out of fear. Out of imbalance.

The drama was never love. It was survival dressed up as passion.

So, can we really live without it? Can we truly build relationships fuelled only by peace, harmony, and love?

The answer is yes — but it takes re-training. The nervous system has to learn that calm is not boring, that safety is not weakness, that peace is not the absence of love but the very ground it grows from.

Love without drama may feel unusual at first. Too still. Too steady. But with time, we begin to see:

- Peace creates more room for joy.
- Safety allows deeper intimacy.
- Equality makes desire sustainable, not fleeting.

The new spark is not chaos. It is connection. It is two people meeting as whole beings, not halves searching for rescue.

Yes, we can live in a world where love — not drama, not fear, not power — is the only fuel. It is not just possible; it is the only way forward.

We all carry the unconscious process of generational trauma. It lives in our nervous systems, in our reflexes, in the patterns we repeat without meaning to. The old ways are still inside us. And at the same time, the tides are turning. A new way is here, waiting.

Yes, making stark changes in our relationships is a challenge. It asks us to look at what has been hidden. It asks us to unlearn what once felt normal. It asks us to live without the drama that once passed for love.

But we can do it. And we must.

Because the alternative is bleak. The alternative is numbing ourselves with alcohol and other addictions, trying to soothe wounds that were never ours to carry. The alternative is raising another generation who cannot find safety, who cannot find joy, who inherit sadness instead of freedom.

And we will not do that.

We are the ones who end the cycle.

We are the ones who choose differently.

We are the ones who say: it stops here.

And so we learn. We heal. We grow.

Not perfectly. Not all at once. But steadily, bravely, consistently. Until the old ways loosen their grip, and the new ways become natural.

The good news is that love is always stronger than trauma. Equality is always stronger than fear. Connection is always stronger than control.

And when we commit to living from love, we are not only healing ourselves — we are creating a world our children can thrive in. A world where peace is not boring, but beautiful. A world where harmony is not fragile, but strong. A world where love is enough.

That is not just a dream. It is the future. And we are the ones bringing it to life.

Chapter 9: How Counselling Can Help

We are all traumatised. We are all surviving.

Some of us hide it better than others. Some of us call it strength, ambition, achievement. Some of us bury it in addiction. Some of us pass it on.

The strongest trauma response of all is the male ego. A man who feels threatened by women but cannot show his vulnerability, combined with his physical strength, is the most toxic mix of all. Patriarchy is not needed. It never was. It is an unbalanced way to live. It comes from fear. Patriarchy is old hat, old news, causes disharmony and has no benefit to anyone. It is the root of all crime coming from a society built on fear and control.

But remember that every man began as a tiny baby. All humans entered the world helpless and vulnerable, needing someone to keep us alive.

And if our mothers struggled with their own mental health, if they were not supported, if they carried trauma themselves which was highly likely — then we began our lives filled with fear we call anxiety. We learned anxious attachment, avoidant attachment, disorganized attachment. We learned survival was what living is all about.

It did not feel like a clean start. It felt (and feels) like a long, drawn-out disaster.

Sibling rivalry grew out of this. Misogyny grew out of this. Toxic adult relationships grew out of this.

No one had a perfect childhood. Even the smiles, are trauma responses. The scripts we live out as adults are the scripts we wrote as children — stories of survival, roles we took on to adapt, to endure. The people-pleaser, the fixer, the soldier, the martyr are a few examples of who you decided was you. It was never you. It was version of you that you created to survive.

And the good news is this: **you did survive.**

You are here now. You made it this far. And because you survived, you have the chance to change.

That is where counselling comes in.

Counselling is not about fixing you. You are not broken. Counselling is about creating a safe space, a therapeutic relationship, where someone meets you exactly where you are — without judgement. It is about helping you understand your inner world so you can live more peacefully in your outer world.

It is about giving you the tools to be the best version of yourself and to have the healthiest relationships you can have.

There is no need to suffer. The answer is not in a bottle. It is not in the latest trend.

The answer is in your mind.

That is not to say you are imagining your pain. Far from it. It is to say that your subconscious mind helped you create versions of yourself to survive your childhood. Those versions did their job. They kept you safe. But now, as an adult, those same ego-driven behaviours are stopping you from living the life you want.

Russian Doll Analogy

Think of it like Russian dolls. Each version of you is a layer — a protective shell you built depending on how terrified you felt at different times in your life. Counselling helps you gently remove those layers, one by one. Not to erase them, but to free the real you inside.

There are three versions of you across your life:

- The real you, at birth.
- The you that emerges when you unlearn your survival layers in this life.
- The you at death — if you shed the false selves and return to your essence by then (or the Buddhists say you have to come back to Samsara and do it all over again)..

Every mid-life crisis, every existential crisis, is simply an ego falling away. And the number of times you feel those crises depends on how much trauma you had, how many versions of yourself you had to create to cope.

Counselling helps you through that process. It helps you honour the survival layers while also letting them go, so that you can live as the self you were always meant to be.

The journey is not easy. But it is freedom.

And it is possible.

Reflection

Take a quiet moment. Sit comfortably, close your eyes if you can, and take a slow, steady breath.

Imagine in front of you a set of Russian dolls. The largest one is painted in bold colours. It looks strong, unshakeable, maybe even a little hard. This is the outer version of you — the one the world sees, the one who learned how to survive, how to perform, how to keep it all together.

Now, gently lift the top off that doll. Inside, you find another version of yourself. She is smaller, a little more fragile, but still carrying armour. She is another survival self — the one who learned to stay quiet, or to fight, or to people-please. The one who carried fear but hid it well.

Open that doll. Go deeper.

Each layer you uncover is another version of you — each one created in response to something that felt too big, too frightening, too overwhelming for the child you once were. Notice them. Acknowledge them. They each had a purpose. They each kept you safe.

Finally, as you keep opening, you come to the smallest doll — the one at the very centre. She is simple. Pure. Gentle. She is the original you. The baby who arrived in the world with no shame, no masks, no armour. Just essence.

Take a moment to really see her. Look at her face. Feel her presence.

This is your core. This is your soul-self. She has always been there, quietly waiting beneath all the layers.

Now, place your hand on your heart and whisper to her:

- *I see you.*
- *I have not forgotten you.*
- *Thank you for waiting.*
- *I am ready to bring you forward.*

When you are ready, take another slow, steady breath. And as you return to the room, know that every time you peel back a layer through reflection, counselling, or healing work, you are moving closer to her — the real you.

When you imagine the Russian dolls, you are exploring what counsellors often describe as *adaptations* or *survival selves*. These are the versions of you that were created in childhood to help you cope with situations that felt unsafe, overwhelming, or confusing.

For example, if you grew up with a mother who was emotionally unavailable or inconsistent because of her own trauma, you may have learned *anxious attachment* — becoming clingy, overly alert, or desperate for approval. If your caregiver was frightening, you may have developed *avoidant attachment* — shutting down your emotions, keeping distance, or convincing yourself you didn't need anyone. If it was both at different times, you may have formed a *disorganized attachment* — never sure what to expect, living in constant inner conflict.

These adaptations were not weaknesses. They were intelligent survival strategies. Your mind and body worked together to keep you safe in the best way they knew how.

But as an adult, those same strategies can get in the way of building healthy relationships or feeling peace inside yourself. What once saved you may now hold you back.

Counselling helps by creating a safe relationship where those old patterns can be explored and gently unlearned. Instead of hiding, you begin to integrate. Instead of wearing layer after layer, you begin to shed what no longer serves you.

The smallest doll — the real you — is still there. Counselling is the process of meeting her again, honouring her, and bringing her forward into your life today.

A Gentle Reassurance

It is natural to feel afraid of letting go of the crutches you have leaned on. Alcohol, drugs, food, work, relationships — they can all become survival tools. They give you a mask: the party person, the happy one, the strong one, the constant caregiver, the people-pleaser.

Without them, you may wonder: *Am I enough? Will people still want me? Will I even know who I am?*

The truth is — those versions of you were never the whole story. They were costumes you wore to survive. And yes, they served a purpose for a time. They helped you feel safer, braver, stronger. They made the unbearable a little more bearable.

But the you beneath those layers — the one who doubts she is enough — is already whole. She does not need the mask to be loved. She does not need the substance to be strong. She does not need to perform to be accepted.

Counselling offers you a space to test this out slowly, safely. To put down the crutch, just for a moment, and see that you can stand. To realise that being you — without the party face, without the false strength — is not only enough, it is the only way to truly connect.

The fear of letting go is part of healing. It does not mean you are failing. It means you are human.

And step by step, you will discover that the real you — the one underneath the mask, the one you may not have trusted before — has always been worthy of love.

Chapter 10: Inner Parent, Adult and Child Work

I don't work with children. I work with adults and their inner child, their inner parent and their inner teacher, counsellor, support worker, coach, whatever the adult can relate to when giving the inner child advice, switching over to a nurturing parent, as the critical parent is often the loudest voice and never needed I feel and speaking softly and compassionately to the (often) many versions of the child within.

Transactional Analysis: A Tool for Empowerment

To change how we live, relate, and build a fairer world, we need to understand the voices inside us and the ways we interact with others. One simple, powerful tool for this is **Transactional Analysis**, developed by psychiatrist Eric Berne in the 1950s.

At its core, TA shows us that we all operate from three different “ego states”:

- **Parent** – the voice of authority, rules, and judgments, often echoing what we absorbed from our parents or culture. It can be nurturing, but it can also be critical or controlling.
- **Child** – the emotional, playful, creative, or wounded part of us that formed in early life. It carries our needs, fears, joys, and vulnerabilities.
- **Adult** – the grounded, present, logical part of us that makes decisions in the here and now. It processes information and can choose responses rather than reacting automatically.

We shift between these states constantly in our inner dialogue and in our relationships.

Why This Matters Now

Think about how you speak to yourself. Do you hear a harsh inner critic—your internalised Parent voice—telling you you're not good enough? Do you feel your Child self shrinking in shame, afraid to step forward? Or do you let your Adult self bring calm, clarity, and dignity into the situation?

And in your relationships—are you parenting your partner, or being parented by them? Are they manipulating you, making you feel small? Are you replaying old scripts of power and control without realising it?

This is not just about two people. These dynamics are woven into the patriarchal systems that still dominate our homes, workplaces, and societies. They break down healthy relationships. They increase the risk of divorce, domestic abuse, and unhealthy homes for children. They keep us stuck in cycles of shame and dysfunction that have repeated since the dawn of time.

The Path Forward

TA gives us language to see these patterns. It empowers us to observe first—without judgment—so we can choose differently.

- When we catch ourselves in the Parent or Child states, we can gently shift into Adult.
- When we recognise manipulative or abusive “games,” we can name them and step out of them.
- When we choose awareness over reaction, we open the door to healthier, fairer exchanges.

This is how relationships heal. This is how homes become safer. This is how we model new dynamics for the next generation.

It is time for healthy change, and TA is one of the tools that can help us create it: fairer systems in the home, fairer systems in society, and a life built on dignity without apology.

Chapter 11: Freedom, Unification, Safety, Empowerment.

The Foundation of the FUSE Model

To live well, we need a foundation. A compass that points us toward health, fairness, and love. A way of living that does not only heal the past but lights the path for the future.

That foundation is the FUSE model: These are not abstract ideals. They are values you can live by, day after day. They are the spark that ignites change — in you, in your relationships, and in the world around you.

Freedom means you are no longer trapped by old scripts. You are not confined by shame, fear, or patriarchal rules that told you who you had to be. Freedom is the ability to breathe fully, speak your truth, make your own choices, and allow others to do the same.

Unification means we are not divided. No gender is above the other. No child is favoured over another. It is fairness. It is equality. It is remembering that a world built for everyone to thrive is stronger than a world built on hierarchy and control.

Safety is the soil from which everything grows. Without safety, love cannot flourish. Without safety, intimacy collapses. Safety begins in the home — knowing your body, your voice, your boundaries are respected. It extends outward, shaping communities where children grow without fear and adults do not have to live behind masks.

Empowerment is the natural result of living in freedom, unity, and safety. It is the opposite of oppression. Empowerment is knowing your worth, standing in your truth, and recognising that your power does not take away from anyone else's — it multiplies. An empowered person creates empowered relationships. Empowered relationships create empowered families, communities, societies.

This is the way forward.

The FUSE model is not a theory for the shelf. It is a practice. A way of living. When you choose freedom, unification, safety, and empowerment as guiding values, you give yourself the chance to be the best version of you. You build healthy, honest relationships. You live your best life.

And when enough of us live this way, we create a world where everyone has what they need — love, fairness, dignity, and hope.

The FUSE model is the foundation. The spark. The turning point.

It begins with you.

Living the FUSE Model

Take a quiet moment to reflect on each of the four values. Write down your answers, or simply notice them in your heart. Be honest. There are no right or wrong responses — only awareness.

Freedom

- Where in my life do I feel free to be myself?
- Where do I still feel trapped by old rules, shame, or fear?
- What small step could I take this week to choose more freedom?

Unification

- Do I treat others as equals — in my family, my relationships, my work?
- Where do I see division, favouritism, or inequality playing out in my life?
- What can I do to bring more fairness and balance into my relationships?

Safety

- Do I feel safe in my own body, my home, my relationships?
- Are there times when I silence myself to stay “safe”?
- What boundary can I set or strengthen to create more safety for myself?

Empowerment

- When do I feel most powerful, most true to myself?
- Where do I still give away my power to others?
- What action could I take to remind myself of my worth and strength today?

Tip: Choose one area that feels most important to you right now. Focus on it gently, step by step. As you grow in one value, the others begin to strengthen too.

The FUSE model is not about perfection. It is about awareness, intention, and practice. Every small step toward freedom, unification, safety, and empowerment adds up. Together, they spark a new way of living.

Mantras for Living the FUSE Model

Freedom

- *I am free to be myself.*
- *I release the old rules that no longer serve me.*
- *Every choice I make can move me closer to freedom.*

Unification

- *I honour equality in myself and others.*
- *We rise higher together than we do apart.*
- *Fairness is the foundation of love.*

Safety

- *It is safe to be me.*
- *My boundaries are valid and necessary.*
- *Safety allows love to grow.*

Empowerment

- *I know my worth.*
- *My power does not diminish others — it inspires them.*
- *I am strong, capable, and enough.*

Guided Meditation: Living the FUSE Model

Find a quiet place. Sit comfortably. Close your eyes if you wish, and take a slow, steady breath in. Let it out gently.

We are going to walk through the four values of the FUSE model — Freedom, Unification, Safety, and Empowerment. As you listen, allow each word to land in your heart, in your body, in your whole being.

Freedom

Take a breath and picture yourself standing in an open space — wide, expansive, with no walls holding you in. Feel the freedom in your chest, in your shoulders, in your breath. Whisper to yourself: *I am free to be me. I release what no longer serves me. I choose freedom.*

Unification

Now imagine the people in your life — family, friends, community. Picture them standing beside you, not above you or below you, but as equals. Feel the strength of connection when no one has to be smaller, when no one has to be greater. Whisper: *We are equal. We rise together. Fairness is love.*

Safety

Take another breath. Place your hand on your heart. Feel its steady beat. Remind yourself: *I am safe in this moment.* Imagine a light wrapping around you, keeping you warm, grounded, protected. Say softly: *It is safe to be me. My boundaries keep me safe. Safety allows love to grow.*

Empowerment

Now picture yourself standing tall. Your feet rooted firmly to the earth. Your head lifted high. Feel the strength that comes from within, the quiet power that has always been there. Whisper: *I know my worth. My power inspires. I am strong, capable, and enough.*

Take a final deep breath. Let it fill you with freedom, unification, safety, and empowerment. Exhale gently, releasing anything that no longer belongs to you.

When you are ready, open your eyes. Carry these values with you into the rest of your day, knowing they are not just words — they are a way of living.

Journaling Prompt: My FUSE Check-In

After completing the meditation, take 5–10 minutes to write down what you experienced.

- **Freedom** – What old rule, belief, or story am I ready to release?
- **Unification** – Where in my life do I feel equal with others? Where do I want more balance?

- **Safety** – What boundary do I need to set or strengthen to feel truly safe?
- **Empowerment** – When do I feel most powerful and authentic? How can I create more of that?

End your writing by finishing this sentence:

“Today, I choose to live with...” (add the value that feels most important to you right now).

The FUSE Self-Assessment Tool

Take a few quiet minutes. Score yourself honestly on each value from **1 to 10**:

- **1** = I rarely feel this in my life.
- **10** = I live this value fully and consistently.

Write down your number for each.

Freedom

Do I feel free to be myself, make my own choices, and release old rules or shame?

Score: ____ /10

Unification

Do I treat others as equals and experience fairness and balance in my relationships?

Score: ____ /10

Safety

Do I feel safe in my body, home, and relationships? Do I protect that safety with clear boundaries?

Score: ____ /10

Empowerment

Do I know my worth, stand in my truth, and use my power in ways that uplift myself and others?

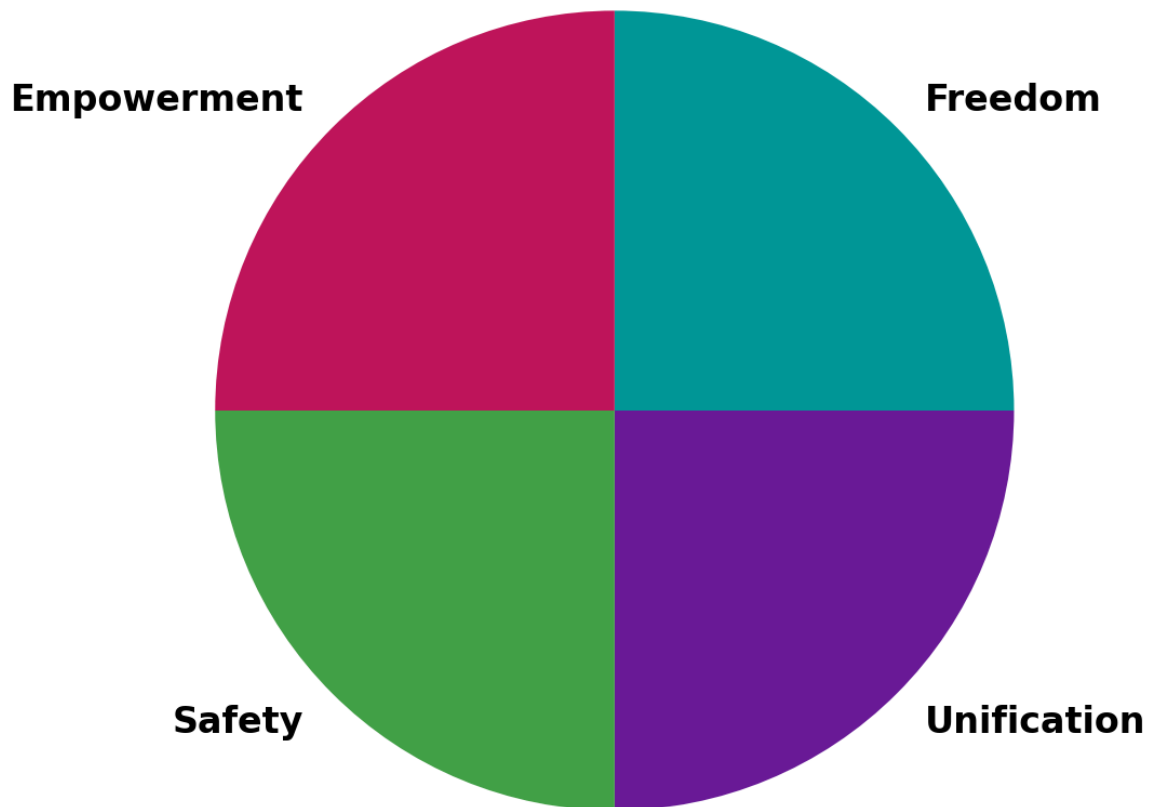
Score: ____ /10

Reflection Questions

- Which value is my strongest right now?
- Which value feels lowest?
- What one step could I take this week to raise that score by even one point?

Tip: Repeat this assessment once a month. Over time you will see where you are growing, and where you need more focus. Even small increases show progress — change is built step by step.

The FUSE Model



FUSE Self-Assessment (1-10 scale)

