

TRAUMA WHISPERS BEFORE IT ROARS

Companion Workbook

Chapter 10: The Space After the Hurt

Pre-publication Draft

This is a living document.

Changes will be implemented as suggestions arrive.

Changes made since last update:

- Early and advance reader copies printed before the August 12, 2026, launch may not match the page numbers noted in this workbook. Readers may need to look for the referenced content on neighboring pages.

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How to Give Feedback

Complete this chapter packet, then visit <https://oneemprima.com/traumawhispers/> or use the QR code on page 21 of your book to access the online feedback forms to share your thoughts on the book and workbook.

Let us know what helped in the book or workbook, what felt unclear, where you needed more room, and what you want to see included in the future editions of the book or companion workbook.

The Bench and the Doorway

There may come a time when you return to these pages and notice something you could not see the first time. That is the nature of awareness. We meet the same words differently when we bring a different version of ourselves to them. That might be a month, a year, or a decade from now. Maybe it will be a life-changing event or a natural milestone that changes what you are able to see.

I don't reread many books. But every once in a while, I encounter one that I know I'm not finished with when I reach the last page. Something in it has changed me, or I can feel there are layers within the pages I have not lived deeply enough to fully understand yet. Years later, I'll feel drawn back to it, almost as if the book has been waiting for me to catch up to what it already said.

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho is one of those books.

It is the fictional story of Santiago, a young Andalusian shepherd who sells his sheep and leaves the life he knows after a recurring dream points him toward treasure near the Egyptian pyramids. He begins his pursuit with confidence, but almost immediately, he is robbed in Tangier and left with nothing. He spends nearly a year working for a crystal merchant to rebuild what he lost, then crosses the Sahara with a caravan, where he meets an Englishman searching for the secrets of alchemy. At an oasis, Santiago meets Fatima and falls in love. Later, he encounters the Alchemist, who challenges him to continue toward the pyramids rather than abandon his Personal Legend for the life he has found along the way.

By the time Santiago reaches what he thought was his destination, the journey has changed what he is capable of seeing. The meaning of the treasure is not what it appeared to be when he first set out.

I have read *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho and listened to the audiobook a combined seven times. It is the same story every time, but I am not the same reader. On each return, I have found something I could not see before because I had not yet walked that part of my own life. Sometimes I wasn't ready for the lesson. Sometimes I wasn't ready to pursue my own Personal Legend. And sometimes a sentence I barely noticed before suddenly had somewhere to land in my archive of experiences.

Sometimes a book waits for us to catch up to what it has already said. I suspect this book may work that way too.

If you return to these pages someday and recognize something you could not see on this first pass, it does not mean you missed it. You simply may not have lived your way to it yet.

[DESIGNER NOTE: INSERT SAME BENCH AS BOOK]

You've made it halfway through the book. Sections 1 and 2 are behind you for this iteration of your reading journey, and before we move any farther, I want to acknowledge what I have asked of you to get here.

The chapters behind you asked you to look inward at your history, your adaptations, your relationships, the homes and people who shaped you, and what your nervous system learned along the way. Some of what you read may have confirmed things you have known for years. Other pages may have given language to experiences you never knew how to name. You may have recognized patterns in yourself, your parents, your partners, or the generations that came before you. You may have felt grief for what happened, anger about what should have happened differently, compassion for a younger version of yourself, or relief in finally understanding why something has followed you for so long. And there may have been pages where you felt absolutely nothing at all.

All of that belongs here.

You do not need to know what every realization means yet. You do not need to decide what to forgive, confront, change, release, or carry forward. Awareness does not require an immediate action plan. Sometimes something becomes visible long before we know what to do with it, and sometimes the most useful thing we can do is give it enough room to exist without immediately asking it to become something else.

That is part of why Chapter 10 exists.

You are entering Section 3 now, and the view is about to get wider. Until now, much of our attention has been directed inward. What comes next begins turning the lens outward toward the larger systems, cultures, communities, institutions, and environments we live inside. But you do not have to move from one into the other without stopping.

Chapter 10 is the bench before the doorway.

The Intentional Nothing

In the last chapter, we explored neglect and the trauma of nothing: the comfort that did not come, the questions no one asked, the protection that was not offered, the repair that never happened. In those experiences, nothing was not neutral. Something was needed, and nothing arrived.

I want to introduce you to a different kind of nothing here.

The intentional nothing.

There is a difference between having nothing offered when you need something and having nothing asked of you when you need space. One is absence where care should have been. The other is room intentionally left open. That distinction can be difficult to recognize when you have spent much of your life believing that an open space needs to be filled, a problem needs to be solved, a feeling needs to be understood, or stillness means you should already be doing the next thing.

In this chapter, I am not asking you to uncover another pattern or excavate another memory. There is no journal prompt waiting to see what you learned from the last nine chapters. You do not need to

turn what you have just experienced into insight before you are allowed to continue. The space itself is intentional.

Resting With Intention

Resting with intention does not mean you have to meditate, regulate perfectly, or sit quietly while consciously processing everything you have just learned. Rest does not need to become another thing you are expected to do well. The intention can simply be an awareness that you have stopped moving and a willingness not to immediately fill the space that stopping creates.

Rest without intention can look different. Sometimes our bodies stop while our attention keeps running. We scroll, replay conversations, plan tomorrow, reach for another task, or move directly into the next piece of information. Sometimes we turn on mindless television and stare at it for three hours, and sometimes that is exactly what we want to do. There is nothing inherently wrong with any of those things. The distinction I want you to notice is not between good rest and bad rest. It is between stopping because the day happened to stop you and recognizing, *I am choosing not to move forward right now.*

You are not using the pause to run from what came before, nor do you have to use it to prepare yourself for what comes next. You are simply allowing yourself to occupy the space between the two.

The Difference Between Rest and Escape

That space can feel unfamiliar because intentional rest and avoidance can look remarkably similar from the outside. In both cases, you may close the book, walk away, take a nap, go outside, or decide that you have had enough for today. The difference is not necessarily what you do. It is your relationship to what you are leaving.

Avoidance says, *I cannot go there.*

Intentional rest says, *I do not need to go there right now.*

You can stand in the doorway knowing there is a room behind you without walking back into it. You can look through the open door and know there is another environment ahead without feeling obligated to enter simply because the door is open. You have not abandoned the journey. You have not failed to finish the work. You are standing in a place that belongs to the journey too.

The space after the hurt.

[DESIGNER NOTE: INSERT OPEN DOOR TO CITY IMAGE]