

TRAUMA WHISPERS BEFORE IT ROARS

Companion Workbook

Chapter 7: Roots of Trauma

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 prior to 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.



Check in before you begin. Where are you on the Roar Scale?

If you're at a 5 or above, turn to your Stand-Down Kit before continuing.

Awareness & Alignment Prompts

Complete the mapping exercises first, then return to these questions.

1. Who is/was the “strongest” member of your family? What did / does “strong” mean to you?
2. Who is/was the “weakest” member of your family? What did / does “weak” mean to you?
3. Which emotional rule in your family felt so normal that you did not recognize it as a rule until much later in life?
4. What did that pattern help someone in your lineage survive, protect, preserve, avoid, or belong to?

Additional Journal Prompts

1. What family sayings, warnings, jokes, prayers, or repeated stories taught you what was safe, shameful, expected, or possible?
2. What happened in your family when someone needed comfort, money, rest, medical care, protection, or help? Were there special foods, actions, behaviors or rituals around different types of help?
3. Which emotions were welcomed? Which were punished, mocked, ignored, spiritualized, or treated as weakness?

4. What do you know about war, migration, poverty, racism, religion, illness, disability, addiction, loss, caregiving, or displacement in your family? What remains unknown?
5. Who interrupted a harmful pattern before it reached you? What did their choice make possible?
6. Choose one ancestor or family figure who surfaced for you. What did they carry, how might it have shaped the family, what strength did they pass down, and what part of the burden are you ready to release?

EXERCISE 1

Family Pattern Map

Inherited trauma mapping is about recognizing the emotional codes, strengths, environments, and survival strategies that entered the biological family story before you.

It's not unusual to have great family members and not-so-great family members. Some ancestors you met. Others left or passed before you were born. Maybe you knew your biological parents. Maybe you didn't. Do the best you can with what you know.

Do the best you can with what you know.

This exercise isn't about picking out the worst in each person, no matter how cruel, neglectful, mentally ill, or difficult they may have been to you. It's easy to see the worst in humanity. It's harder to understand how they came to be.

- What did their childhood look like?
- What types of traumas did they hold?
- What may have happened in their life that shaped the direction they took?

You can create a symbol key to identify:

- ☐ Close or supportive relationship
- ☐ Conflict, cutoff, or estrangement
- ☐ Loss, separation, migration, or displacement
- ☐ Illness or health concern
- ☐ Military service, war, or public danger
- ☐ Unknown or unconfirmed information
- ☐ Fact backed by evidence*

**What is fact and what is meaning? A lineage map may include documents, remembered events, repeated family stories, body responses, dreams, symbols, or intuitive impressions. They do not all carry the same kind of certainty. Separating them protects the truth of your experience without asking uncertainty to become evidence.*

Family member	Stress response or survival role	Environmental factors	What lives in me now?
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Mother

Father

Sibling(s)

Maternal
grandmother



EXERCISE 2

Virtues in Your Life

Healing is not only releasing who or what hurt you, biological or otherwise. It is also reclaiming what strengthened you. For every deep dig into a wound, we need to counterbalance it with something that strengthened or healed. Otherwise, we can train our brain to look for only the worst in humanity. That does not mean you force yourself to extract a virtue from someone that caused you a great deal of pain but it does mean that you find people who strengthen you.

If you find yourself struggling to extract virtues from people in your biological lineage, extend the exercise to non-biological family members. If that is also challenging, list people living or dead, fictional or real, that you can emulate.

Think about these questions as you complete the exercise:

1. What virtue, capacity, wisdom, or strength have you already carried forward? What else would you like to carry forward from the people who shaped you, whether through biology, marriage, caregiving, friendship, mentorship, or proximity?
2. What do I want the people who come after me to experience more of?
3. When I fall back into the old pattern, whose virtues can I draw from to help strengthen who I am?

Family member	Virtue, strength, or wisdom	How they demonstrated it	What lives in me now?
Mother/mother-like figure			
Father/father-like figure			
Sibling(s), Friends, Peers			

Family member	Virtue, strength, or wisdom	How they demonstrated it	What lives in me now?
Maternal grandparents grandparent- like mentors or caregivers			
Paternal grandparents, grandparent- like mentors or caregivers			
Great- grandparents or earlier lineage			
Teachers, friends' parents, coaches, other influential people in your past or present			
Other – celebrities, actors, authors, fictional characters			

EXERCISE 3

Family Rules and Repeated Themes

Check only what genuinely fits. Add context beside each one so the label does not replace the story.

Theme	Present in my life	How it was expressed or enforced (phrases/actions)
Scarcity or fear of not having enough	☐	
Silence or secrecy	☐	
Hypervigilance or expecting danger	☐	
Perfection or achievement	☐	
Emotional caretaking	☐	
Obedience or self-erasure	☐	
Conflict avoidance	☐	



Theme	Present in my life	How it was expressed or enforced (phrases/actions)
Anger, control, or intimidation	☐	
Addiction or numbing	☐	
Leaving, cutoff, or abandonment	☐	
Overwork or rest as unsafe	☐	
Faith, ritual, or spiritual meaning	☐	
Humor, creativity, or resourcefulness	☐	
Mutual aid, hospitality, or community	☐	