

TRAUMA WHISPERS BEFORE IT ROARS

Companion Workbook

Chapter 9: Neglect

The Trauma of Nothing

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.

Last updated: September 17, 2026

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

1. What was missing from your childhood? Check all that apply
 - ☐ Comfort when you were afraid, hurt, or overwhelmed
 - ☐ Curiosity from caregivers about your inner world
 - ☐ Protection or advocacy
 - ☐ Affection and safe touch
 - ☐ Help identifying and expressing emotions
 - ☐ Appropriate supervision
 - ☐ Stability and predictability
 - ☐ Help with school or developmental changes
 - ☐ Validation when something hurt or felt wrong
 - ☐ Guidance, teaching, or preparation for life
 - ☐ Consistent food, clothing, hygiene, shelter, or medical care
 - ☐ Reliable attention and follow-through
 - ☐ Privacy and respect for your boundaries
 - ☐ Play, delight, and shared enjoyment
 - ☐ Encouragement when you struggled or made mistakes
 - ☐ Celebration of who you were
 - ☐ Permission to rest, play, and be a child
 - ☐ Someone who noticed when you became quiet, withdrawn, or overly self-sufficient
 - ☐ Love that did not have to be earned through performance or obedience
 - ☐ Repair, accountability, or apology after conflict
 - ☐ Permission to need and depend on other people
 - ☐ Other:
2. When someone notices or anticipates one of your needs now, what happens first in your body: relief, suspicion, discomfort, gratitude, obligation, or something else?
3. What kind of care do you automatically provide because you remember, consciously or not, what it felt like to go without it?

Additional Journal Prompts

1. What did being 'easy,' 'mature,' 'independent,' or 'low-maintenance' mean in your childhood home? Who benefited when you needed less?
2. What practical or emotional responsibilities did you learn to handle before you were ready? What capacity did that build, and what did it cost?
3. Where have you mistaken being needed, useful, or relied upon for being known and cared for?
4. What conditions help care feel believable rather than temporary, transactional, or followed by a cost? What does safe support look like for you?

EXERCISE 1

The Landscape of Care

Neglect can be difficult to recognize because different forms of care may have existed side by side. You may have had food, clothing, and shelter while receiving little emotional attention, guidance, protection, curiosity, or repair.

Map what was consistently present, what was unpredictable, and what rarely or never arrived. Include care from grandparents, siblings, teachers, neighbors, community members, animals, or anyone else who mattered. This is not a score. It is a more complete picture of the environment that shaped you.

Area of Care	What was consistently present	What was inconsistent or missing	Who or what provided care
	Food, clothing, shelter, and medical care		
	Physical protection and supervision		
	Emotional attention and comfort		
	Guidance, teaching, and preparation for life		
	Interest in your thoughts, interests,		
	Affection and appropriate physical		
	Play, delight, and shared enjoyment		
	Celebration and recognition		
	Repair, accountability, and apology		



Area of Care	What was consistently present	What was inconsistent or missing	Who or what provided care
--------------	-------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------------

Advocacy when I
needed an adult to

Privacy, boundaries,
and respect

Another form of care



EXERCISE 2

When Silence Echoes

Children do not always stop needing. Sometimes they stop signaling the need because experience taught them that asking would not change the outcome. The need may then reappear indirectly through overfunctioning, withdrawal, resentment, perfectionism, testing, or waiting to be noticed without asking.

Use this map to distinguish the original need from the strategy you developed when it was not met.

What I stopped asking for	How I once signaled the need	What I learned to do instead	How the strategy appeared
---------------------------	------------------------------	------------------------------	---------------------------

Comfort

Help

Protection

Attention or interest

Guidance

Affection

Celebration



What I stopped asking for	How I once signaled the need	What I learned to do instead	How the strategy appeared
---------------------------	------------------------------	------------------------------	---------------------------

Privacy or boundaries

Advocacy

Another need



EXERCISE 3

Receiving Without Earning

Receiving can feel unfamiliar when care was inconsistent, conditional, or absent. You may minimize what is offered, repay it immediately, question the motive, become overly grateful, or refuse before you have time to notice what you want.

This exercise is not asking you to trust everyone or accept care that comes with hidden conditions. It asks you to notice the difference between discernment and an automatic refusal to receive.

Care or support offered now	My first body response	The meaning or cost I anticipate	What receiving more might look like
A sincere compliment			
Practical help			
Someone checking on me			
Affection or emotional warmth			
Rest without proving I earned it			
Someone remembering what matters to me			
Another form of care			

