

# **SAFE SPACE FOR HEAVIER THINGS**

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Having a safe space to imagine and dream and (re)invent yourself is the first step to being happy and successful, whatever road you choose to pursue.

*Ashley Bryan*

# CONTENTS

## PART I: NAVIGATING THROUGH LIFE **1**

**CHAPTER 1 ADULTING**

**CHAPTER 2 LITTLE HEARTACHES HERE & THERE**

**CHAPTER 3 CHOICES**

**CHAPTER 4 NOT YET**

## PART II: DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS **37**

**CHAPTER 1 HEAVIER THINGS**

**CHAPTER 2 BOTTLED UP EMOTIONS**

**CHAPTER 3 SAD THAT DOESN'T WANT TO BE SAD**

**CHAPTER 4 SOMETHING'S MISSING**

## PART III: FINDING CLARITY **63**

**CHAPTER 1 CUP OF TEA**

**CHAPTER 2 RADICAL ACCEPTANCE**

**CHAPTER 3 RANDOM Q & A**

**ACTIVITY SHEETS**

“May your choices reflect your hopes not your fears.”

*Nelson Mandela*

*“Safe Space- may we find it, may we be it, may  
we create it.”*

1

NAVIGATING THROUGH LIFE



# CHAPTER I: ADULTING

“So scared of getting older, I’m only good at being young.”

--Lyrics from ‘Stop this train’ by John Mayer

Narinig mo na ba ang salitang ‘adulting’? Isa yan sa pinaka used na term in the last 5 years bukod sa ‘can you hear me?’, ‘quarantine’ and ‘wfh’. Habang tumatagal, nagkaka edad at tumatanda ang tao. Just like aging, hindi natin napipigilan maging adult in this lifetime kaya naman kaakibat nito, may mga expectations ang society sa ating behavior, responsibilities at choices.

Para malinaw, gumawa ako ng checklist na nagpapatunay na you are adulting at wala ka nang magagawa kung ‘di aminin ito.

- ✓ You start learning/doing chores like cooking, cleaning
- ✓ You pay your own bills, minsan pati bills ng iba
- ✓ Suki ka ng grocery stores near you
- ✓ Membership card collector ka para sa discounts
- ✓ Nagco-collect ka din ng vouchers sa lazada & shopee
- ✓ May planner ka para lahat naka schedule
- ✓ Alam mo na ang difference ng needs sa wants
- ✓ Nagiging matipid ka na
- ✓ Wala ka ng masyadong pake sa sasabihin ng iba
- ✓ Na-budol ka na ng kaibigan mong nagtitinda ng insurance (‘kala mo kape lang talaga at catching up)

Of course, I'm not saying na yan lang ang mga signs na adult ka na, actually marami pang iba. In other words, ang ibig sabihin talaga ng adulting ay pagiging responsible, independent, making the right choices and wise decisions in life. Kung minsan, wala sa edad, pero madalas, expected that as you age, ay meron ka naman kinatandaan.

Kung minsan, it can be tiring and stressful to become a responsible adult in a broken world. Why? Because we are all broken. Yung pamilya o mga tao na nagpalaki sayo ay hindi perfect, maaaring may pagkukulang, kaya may mga unmet needs ka. Then, as you grow older, may mga pag-iisip, pananaw, o sugat na maaaring nabitbit mo hanggang sa ngayon.

When you're wounded at hindi ka naghilom, nadadala mo ito sa relationships, trabaho at ibang aspeto pa ng buhay mo bilang adult. Ito ang dahilan kung bakit may mga desisyon o choices ka kung minsan na mali o malabo. Minsan kahit alam mo na ikapapahamak mo, parang 'di mo mapigil yung self-sabotage behavior. Ikaw mismo ang nagpapahamak sa sarili mo.

Siguro iniisip mo yung kaibigan, classmate o kakilala mo 'no? Yan din ang isang sign ng adulting, nagiging mapanghusga tayo. Char! Kung sa tingin mo hindi mo 'to naranasan, at least you can have a better understanding of others who had to go through it.

Now, let's talk about what makes adulting scary or difficult and what you can do to somehow lessen your anxiety about it.

## WHY IS ADULTING DIFFICULT?

1. **Nobody is fully prepared for it.** Kahit feeling mo well-raised ka ng iyong mga magulang at binigay nila sayo lahat ng kailangan mong kahandaan sa pagiging adult, hindi ka pa rin perfectly equipped sa buhay. Kaya nga binabasa mo ang book na ito 'di ba? Kasi nga wala namang one hundred percent prepared sa buhay. Maaaring 98% or 99.9% (safe guard yarn?) handa ka, pero meron paring porsyento na hindi mo alam o hindi ka sigurado.

Ganun lang talaga ang buhay, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls. Dahil wala namang nabuhay-namatay-nabuhay at bumalik sa earth. It is your first time through life. Unang beses mo pa lang nabuhay sa mundong ito, just like everyone else. So lahat ng tao- trying to figure it out. How to be a decent human being and drink, I mean, live responsibly.

2. **No one else can prepare you for it.** Dahil nga nanggaling tayo sa premise na nobody is fully prepared for it, wala ring tao na makakapag prepare sayo sa buhay or sa adulting. Your parents, mentors, friends, teachers, gym instructor can lead, guide, influence you on how to live a good life but they cannot change you or do things for you- always and forever. It is “you” who will navigate through life, set your own goals and stick to values that you find meaningful.

Normal lang na matakot o kabahan tayo kapag dumating ang isang bagay na pakiramdam natin hindi tayo handa at walang naghanda sa atin. Kagaya ng COD delivery na bigla na lang dadating, shopee surprise pala! Hindi man lang nagsabi na ura-urada pala ipapadala, hindi rin nakakatuwa minsan eh!

Kidding aside, isa sa dahilan na natatakot tayo ay dahil kahit paghandaan natin, may mga bagay pa rin sa buhay na hindi mo inaasahang mangyari. May mga twists and turns na hindi mo inakala. So, it's not a question of your readiness but life's uncertainty and unpredictability that scare you.

3. **Fear of change.** Marami tayong gustong baguhin sa mundo, sa kapwa, sa paligid, sa mukha natin, pero ang totoo, takot tayo sa pagbabago. Ironic no? Gusto mo na ayaw mo ang change. Nangyayari talaga 'yon. Parang gusto mo mag online shopping pero ayaw mong magbayad. Gusto mo ng financial freedom or stability, pero ayaw mong mag-save or takot kang sumubok mag-negosyo or mag-invest. In other words, gusto natin ang positive changes, pero hindi tayo willing gawin kung ano yung dapat na gawin to achieve it. Kasi most of the time, it requires changing our habits, routines and behavior.

Kapag hindi ka willing baguhin ang mga nakasanayan mo na hindi naman helpful sa growth mo, nagiging mahirap ang responsible adulting.

4. **Comfort zone.** People like familiarity and comfortability. Sa sobrang komportable mo sa buhay, maaaring nagiging hadlang ito para maintindihan mo ang concept ng adulting. Sometimes, comfort doesn't only console or spoil us, it can also damage us in the long run. Minsan kasi ito yung root ng entitlement ng isang tao. *“Bakit niya ko pagsasabihan? Sa bahay nga hindi ako ginaganyan ng magulang ko. Sino ba s'ya?! Siya ba nagpapakain sa 'kin?”*- litanya ng mga empleyadong magaling pa sa boss nila. Pinagsabihan ka lang, hindi ka verbally abused or embarrassed, correction lang. Normal yan sa kahit na saang company. If your ego is bigger than the company dahil lumaki ka sa comfort zone, mahirap talaga maging adult.

Part kasi ng adulting yung difficulties sa lahat ng bagay. You need to endure a lot of things as an adult. Hindi ko sinasabi na pumayag at h'wag kumibo kung inaabuso ha, pero yung normal na conversation o correction, hindi mo ikamamatay yan sis, tanggapin mo lang and learn from it.

5. **Avoiding responsibilities.** Hindi ko sinasabing ikaw 'to ha. Pwede 'tong mangyare kahit kanino. Akala mo ghost at ghosting lang ang nakakatakot at dapat mong iwasan, pero

hindi natin masyadong na-re-realize na marami sa atin ay ayaw o umiiwas sa mga responsibilidad. Becoming an adult means taking responsibility. We need to be responsible for our choices and the consequences of our choices whether good or bad.

Napansin niyo ba sa office, for example, may mga tao or bosses na ayaw mag decide on something? Kasi ayaw masisi, ayaw mag-take responsibility. May mga tao na palaging neutral or play safe, kasi ayaw magkamali o ma-criticize for their choices. May mga tao na takot na takot mag bitaw ng salita kasi ayaw ma-quote. In other words, avoiding responsibility doesn't only make you irresponsible or coward, it also reflects your values and what kind of things you stand for.

Kailangang kailangan as an adult to be clear with what you support, advocate and value. You need to face and deal with responsibilities. Sa totoong buhay, wala namang buhay kagaya ng kay Peter Pan. Hindi tumatanda, walang responsibility. Palipad-lipad lang at occasional adventures with Wendy. The moment you were given life, yung sarili mong buhay ay responsibilidad mo, kung mag-co-contribute ka positively sa society o magiging source ka ng problema, it's up to you. It depends on how you take responsibility as an adult.

## **ADULTING: AM I DOING IT RIGHT?**

How do we know if we're doing it right? Magandang tanong at reflection point yan. I listed down some guiding points that may help you evaluate your adulting.

### **LOVE FOR WISDOM**

You try to seek counsel from the right people. You become conscious and intentional in making wise decisions and choices. As you journey through adulthood, one of the things you'd notice is that you like to gain wisdom and understanding. Gusto mong matutuhan ang mga bagay na hindi mo alam, gusto mong maunawaan ang maraming bagay sa buhay. Gusto mo rin na guided ka with wisdom kapag gumagawa ka ng decision.

### **YOU CHOOSE YOUR FRIENDS.**

Kung dati ay kaladkarin ka – meaning, kahit sinong friend o kakilala mo ay sinasamahan mo kahit saan (*I used to do this a lot nung wala akong plano araw araw sa buhay ko*) mapa-cr, mall, magbabayad ng bills, maghihintay sa jowa ng kaibigan, ngayon, iba na, you choose your friends wisely at talaga namang kinikilatis mo ang isang tao bago mo siya papasukin sa iyong buhay.

May mga standards dapat tayo kung ang isang kaibigan ay naapektuhan ka positively. Are you surrounded by people who

contribute to your growth as a person? Meron ba silang right values? Do they inspire you to do and be better? Do they correct you when needed? Do they celebrate with you when you accomplished something?

Or mga John Michael? Nan-*John* lang pag *Michael*-angan? Do they take advantage of you? Mislead or influence you negatively? Adulthood means you stay away from people whose presence brings out the worst in you. You start attracting people who are for growth and inspire you to be better than yesterday.

### **YOU ARE MORE ACCEPTING OF CRITICISM AND CORRECTIONS**

Usually, kapag talaga bata ka pa, maybe in your 20's-30's, masyadong inflated ang ating ego. Although marami ding older people na ma-ego ha. Hindi lang age ang factor ng ego. Ito yung we feel like we're the center of the universe, kaya mahirap tayo pakisamahan or i-correct. We feel like alam na natin lahat at masyado tayong magaling. Ganon! Kapag hindi ka na ganyan, ibig sabihin mas open na ang mind mo sa pagtanggap ng criticism or corrections. It's good to keep an open mind and room for improvement. Kasi kung hindi ka bukas dyan, wala ng way para matuto ka ng bago or ma-improve mo yung perspective mo.

You are adulthood gracefully if you remain humble, teachable and eager to learn. We don't stop learning. It is a lifetime duty to learn, unlearn, re-learn. Ganern.

## **YOU PURSUE GROWTH**

Madalas ka na mag evaluate ng mga bagay o sitwasyon mo sa buhay. You ask yourself, am I still growing in this workplace, relationship, friendship, fans club? Am I still learning something new? Are my needs being met? Mahalaga na sayo yung sense of growth may it be personal or professional. Hindi ka na after lang sa fun or temporary highs, ang gusto mo na yung may patutunguhan at mas meaningful. You don't like to be stagnant. You want to make use of your time and energy to grow and contribute to other people's growth as well.

## **YOU PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT TRULY MATTERS**

Ilan sa mga precious na bagay na pwede mong ibigay sa isang tao ay ang iyong attention and time. Dyan kasi masusukat ang importance and value ng isang tao sayo. Kaya habang tumatanda ka, mas nagiging mapili ka ng paglalaanan mo ng attention at oras. Kung dati ay lahat na lang ng balita ay pinapakinggan mo, lahat ng posts sa social media ay may opinion ka, at updated ka sa buhay ng lahat ng dati mong classmates at mga kaibigan, ngayon ay hindi na ganon. Natututuhan mo nang maging mapili, mapanuri at nagbibigay ka na lang ng atensyon sa mga tao at bagay na talagang mahalaga sayo. In other words, *Marites* no more!

## **YOU SPEND TIME WISELY**

You realize that your time here on earth is very limited. Parang limited edition collectibles, we value its rarity. We treasure it and we become wise in spending our time. Ang pera mo hindi basta basta nauubos (gusto mo yon?) pero ang oras mo, it's slipping away. Before you know it, you've raised a teenager or celebrated your twenty years in your company or have been running a business for six years. You've probably been single for almost ten years or for as long as you can remember. Talagang time flies!

You know that you're adulting wisely if you know how to manage your time well. You're aware of its value and you use it accordingly.

## **YOU ARE MORE GENEROUS**

Biruin mo yun, isa sa mga signs that you are adulting greatly and gracefully is becoming generous. Hindi lang 'to sa mga inaanak tuwing pasko ha. Ito yung generosity na para sa lahat. You are willing to share what you know; may it be helpful information or skills or even talents. Lumang kaisipan na yung huwag mong ituro lahat ng alam mo sa iba kasi yun ang edge or advantage mo sa kanila. Hindi na dapat ganyan ang isip natin. Dapat you share it away dahil hindi ka naman forever sa earth. Dapat naituro o naipasa mo man lang ang skills o talent o kung anuman ang gift na meron ka. Para naman kapag wala ka na, may maiiwan kang piece of yourself sa mga tao sa paligid mo. Hindi yung puro utang ang

iiwanan mo or puro problema. Marami na silang kakaharapin na problem kaya 'wag mo nang dagdagan.

Be generous in giving your time, treasure or talent. Kung may maliit na maitutulong ka, kahit gaano ka-simple, kapag napagaan mo ang buhay ng iba, napakalaking bagay na no'n. Hindi ko sinasabing magpa-budol ha. Maging discerning ka rin kung sino ang dapat na tulungan syempre. Hindi yung paulit ulit ka nang niloko, inabuso, at ginamit eh go ka pa rin ng go! Hindi ganon mars!

### **YOU VALUE YOUR PEACE OF MIND**

Naalala ko nung nag voice lesson ako ng sapilitan nung maliit pa ko, ang kinanta ko yung lyrics na *“Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me”*. Hindi ko naiintindihan yun ng bata pa ko, pero bilang adult 'di ba naririnig natin yung sana may world peace ganyan pero is starts pala with you and me. Yung peace na hinahanap natin sa mundo ay magsisimula pala sa atin. When you're adulting, peace becomes more and more important as time goes by.

Dati mahalaga sayo to please other people kaya kahit hindi mo gustong tumambay sa coffee shop o bar, eh napapatambay ka. Kahit hindi nakakatawa yung joke, tatawa ka, hahampasin mo pa yung katabi mo. Para lang matuwa ang ibang tao sayo. Para lang makisama. Pero ngayon, mas mahalaga na sayo yung kapayapaan ng isip mo. Kung saan ka panatag at payapa, yun na ang pinipili mo.

That is a good sign of adulting. Realizing that life is not about pleasing others or running after things that don't give you peace.

### **YOU ARE MORE FORGIVING**

Hindi madaling magpatawad at makalimot. In fact, yung mga negative events o characteristics ng tao ang mas naaalala natin kaysa mabuting nagawa nila. Mas naaalala mo yung mga panahon na nakalimutan niya ang birthday mo or anniversary niyo kaysa noong pinasalubungan ka niya ng paborito mong pizza.

Mas naaalala mo yung mga Valentine's na wala siyang pa-bulaklak kaysa sa panlilibre niya sayo ng paborito mong kape araw araw bago ka pumasok sa office. O kaya naman yung kaibigan mo na sobrang loyal sayo at hindi ka iniwan kapag may humabol sa inyong taong grasa, mas naalala mo pa ang utang niya sayong fifty pesos kaysa sa mga thoughtful little things na ginagawa niya para sayo.

When you're adulting, you pay more attention to appreciating others and forgiving their shortcomings. Lalo na kung maliit na bagay lang naman, nakakaya mo nang palagpasin. You also become more understanding at hindi ka na masyadong sensitive at laging naghahanap ng dahilan para magtampo o magalit.

You choose to forgive knowing that you are imperfect, too. May panahon din na kahit hindi mo gustuhin o hindi mo sinasadya, nakakasakit ka rin ng iba. Kaya yung mga tricycle driver na kulang ng piso o dos ang sukli sayo, patawarin mo na din sila. Yung iba nga

bilyon bilyon ang ninanakaw sa gobyerno, pinapatawad na binoboto pa ulit sa susunod na eleksyon. Ay, na-share?!

### **STRONG DISCERNMENT**

Habang tumatagal, natututo tayong kumilatis ng mga tao at sitwasyon. Before you decide, you reflect and weigh your options. You try to identify the advantages and disadvantages before picking the best choice. This is important because we tend to receive and sometimes even share fake news and misinformation. As an adult na may kinatandaan, tandaan mo na bukod sa information, facts or opinion that you will be sharing, the source is equally important.

Naalala ko yung professor ko sa graduate school, palagi niyang sinasabi sa amin when we were writing our thesis: ‘please do not get information from websites that even my cats can edit!’. Huwag nga naman tayong paniwalain sa mga bagay bagay na umiikot online, kailangan verified, credible and reliable ang source. May it be writing your research or simply sharing information on social media. Adulting should mean being wise and discerning.

## CHAPTER II: LITTLE HEARTACHES HERE AND THERE

“You don’t get to choose if you get hurt in this world...”

- quote from *The Fault In Our Stars*

Isa sa mga movies na nagpahaguhol sa akin ay ang “*The Fault in our Stars*”. Yung isang linggo na ang nakalipas, umiiyak pa rin ang tita niyo. Ang story na iyon ay relatable dahil it talks about life, death, love and everything in between. Totoo nga naman na hindi tayo pwedeng umiwas sa pain, heartbreaks here and there habang tayo ay nabubuhay. You have no choice, in this world, you will get hurt. Masasaktan ka, mababalewala ka, hindi araw araw ay ikaw ang pipiliin.

Why do we have to go through pain? Because it’s part of being human. It is part of life. In an imperfect world, we all get hurt. We undergo injustices, unfairness, abuse and many other forms of hurting or suffering. We also get our hearts broken because we love. In this lifetime, it is almost impossible not to love. Kahit dogs and cats na alaga mo lang ang mahal mo sa mundong ito, nagmamahal ka pa rin. At kapag nagmahal ka, tiyak ‘yon, masasaktan ka. Because the cause of your happiness is also the source of your pain.

Ang trabaho na mahal mo, na-e-enjoy mo is the same thing that causes you stress. Ang relationships or friendships that you truly

value will at some point cause you pain or heartache. Yung anak mo na very proud ka, one day will hurt or disappoint you with his or her choices in life. It is not necessarily anyone's fault, that's just how life is. That's just how love is. It can be messy.

In this chapter, we will talk about the little heartaches we all experience in life and hopefully gain insights on how we can deal with it more effectively

- **FRIENDSHIP OVER**

Nasa kultura nating mga Pilipino ang pagiging groupist at friendly. Isang tribo kayo pag sumundo sa airport ng OFW member ng pamilya o kaya mga apat kayo sa pagpunta sa toilet or isang barkada kayo na mag-a-apply ng trabaho. We like having company. We prefer having someone beside us than going by ourselves.

Needless to say na marami talaga tayong kaibigan na tinuturing nating parang kapatid. One of the possible heartaches that we can experience is losing a friend. Losing someone who has been part of your life or journey for a certain period of time. Bakit ito masakit? Kasi we also lose part of who we are. The person you were nung magkaibigan pa kayo.

Yung mga pinagdaanan ninyo together, pinagsamahan, precious memories ng travel, life celebrations, milestones

etc. But sometimes, we need to accept the fact that some people are not meant to stay in our lives for countless reasons. It's not necessarily someone's fault or pwede rin, but sometimes it just happens. You outgrow each other, magkaiba na kayo ng trip sa buhay, iba na ang priorities o kaya naman nagiging toxic na kayo sa isa't isa at marami pang iba.

I had a friend I met in college, we understood each other, we loved and supported each other and then somewhere along the way, it became harder and harder to compromise and understand each other, we couldn't see eye to eye. The person I knew was no longer the same and slowly, we had to end more than a decade of friendship. It happens and that's okay.

- **CANCEL CULTURE**

In this day and age of the internet, people are more vulnerable to bullying, rejection, aggression, and what we call 'cancel culture'. Ito yung kapag meron kang sinabi or ginawa na tingin ng ibang tao ay mali or unacceptable, they will cancel you right away. You might think it only happens to famous people, but no, it can certainly happen to ordinary people like you and me.

It's easy to say rude comments or spread fake news and misinformation which lead to cancel culture. It's okay to

call out unacceptable behavior, we need to speak up and fight abuse and all other stuff na mali. But, we need to do it responsibly. What makes cancel culture wrong is that it sometimes promotes a ‘guilty-until-proven-innocent’ scenario. It could be based on speculations and hearsays. It also promotes hate and dislike toward the person, not the behavior.

You may have been a victim of cancel culture without realizing it. Some of the people you know may have said negative, demeaning, rude and disrespectful comments about your life directly or indirectly. They may have expressed cutting ties from you, isolating you or even putting you in a hot seat. It is certainly a heartbreaking situation.

- **PAASA MOMENTS**

Ito na nga ba sinasabi ko, kasi naman masyadong maraming paasa. Isa na dyan ang mga kumpanya na laging sinasabing tatawagan ka nila but they never called you back! Hirap na hirap kang mag compose ng cover letter at mag edit ng resume tapos paghihintayin ka lang sa wala. Porke’t sanay kang maghintay, gaganyanin ka nila. Mali eh.

Ito rin minsan yung crush mo na sobrang bait at lagi kang nililibre, yun pala, magpapalakad lang sa kakilala mong varsity player. Ganoon! Aray ko beh! These little things

are sometimes funny yet painful. May mga tao at sitwasyon na misleading talaga. Minsan hindi sinasadya pero minsan sinasadya din-aminin mo na! Hindi mo alam kung totoo na ba or joke lang. Kung tatawa ka ba o iiyak. Kung mahal ka ba or pinapaasa ka lang!

People, generally, do not like uncertainty. We want to know where we stand in someone's life. Mahalaga sayo na malaman kung sino o ano ka ba sa kanya. Kaya kapag unclear ang isang bagay, or naging hopeful ka or namislead ka, it's really painful. Kaya do not read between the lines. Clarify, communicate, at dapat yung sinasabi at ginagawa niya ay consistent at hindi magkaiba para hindi nakakalito, bes!

- **LIGWAK FEELS**

At one point sa buhay natin, maaaring naranasan na natin ma-reject. Out of 300 applicants, hindi ka nakasama sa 50 na shortlisted. May mga taong minahal mo pero hindi ikaw ang pinili. May promotion kang hinihintay tapos biglang sa iba ibinigay. Yung mga ganyang eksena really break our hearts.

I had an experience of applying for a job abroad and this company is quite unforgettable because they wrote me a letter, as in my name was on it as they rejected my application. Most companies will not even bother doing

that, they will just send you a general template or you won't hear from them ever again. But this company, feel na feel ko ang pagiging ligwak ko.

We start doubting our worth or abilities when we experience rejection. That's normal to feel. We sometimes experience not being chosen or not making the cut. But it doesn't necessarily mean that you are not good enough or you're not talented.

Kung minsan ibang tao lang talaga ang kailangan or right fit sa isang trabaho o sitwasyon. Nevertheless, masakit parin maligwak.

Feel what you feel but I hope you remember that you are not everyone's cup of tea and that's okay. You will be found by the right people, opportunities and timing. Your season will eventually come.

- **TAKEN FOR GRANTED**

Another heartache can come from feeling insignificant, unloved or unappreciated. In other words, when people take you and what you do for granted. Familiarity breeds complacency (I've read that quote somewhere)- meaning, kapag lagi nang ginagawa ng isang tao ang isang bagay para sayo, minsan hindi mo na na-a-appreciate.

Hindi lang masakit, nakakapagod din kapag taken for granted ka ng mga mahal mo sa buhay. Dahil bilang tao, naghahanap pa rin tayo ng recognition o acknowledgement kahit papaano. It can come from saying 'thank you' 'I appreciate you' or probably giving you drinks when they see you tired or asking you if you need help. But sometimes, we don't get any of it and that hurts.

- **UNEXPECTED TWISTS & TURNS**

In life, we plan a lot. May mga daily, weekly, monthly or even yearly plans. We like making plans and hoping to execute them as we wish but more often than not, life happens and there are things that will not go according to plans.

I have seen couples being together for over 10 years but ended up marrying someone else. I have seen friends who got engaged and the wedding never happened. During the pandemic, we have lost so many people who we feel like were taken too soon.

May mga kaibigan tayong hindi natin inakalang kaya tayong saktan o iwan. May mga relasyon na hindi natin naisip na masisira pa dahil pinagtibay na ng panahon, pero nasira. May mga mahal tayo sa buhay na mahal na mahal din naman tayo kaso biglang binawian ng buhay o kaya kinailangang umalis ng bansa.

Too many things that we cannot control nor understand. These uncertainty and instability break our hearts into pieces.

- **TRUST ISSUES**

Sa dami siguro ng karanasan mo sa buhay o sa dami ng tao na nang iwan o nag-betrayed sayo, nahihirapan ka ng mag tiwala at maniwala sa pagtitiwala. Kahit yung COD na binili mo feeling mo hindi dadating kaya ang dami mo tuloy in-add to cart. Nagkataon, mapagkakatiwalaan yung sellers, sabay sabay mo tuloy na-received.

There may have been people you least expect to hurt you or ruin your trust, but they did anyway. People who are supposed to love and protect you. It could be your parents, family members, partner, friends, or even your boss.

It may have caused you to be cynical, pessimistic and doubtful about everything and everyone. While what you feel is valid, I hope you also give other people a chance even after getting hurt.

Give life a chance. It is not always great but it sure gives you many reasons to smile, move forward and try again.

Hindi lahat ng tao is out there to hurt you. I hope you don't stop hoping and believing that there are brighter days ahead. Life could be great again. You can trust and love again. And that you will see the love you give come back to you in ways you've never imagined.

- **NEVER ENOUGH**

Alam mo yung masakit? Bukod sa likod mo, yung feeling na kahit anong gawin at ibigay mo, kahit ubos na ubos ka na pati yung bank account mo, it's still not enough sa mga taong nasa paligid mo. At ang nakakainis pa, kung minsan kapamilya o kaibigan pa natin ang mga taong ganito.

Alam mo yung nagbigay ka ng libreng kape tapos naghanap pa ng tinapay? Nag uwi ka ng meryenda, hahanapan ka pa ng panulak? Ang sarap itulak sa ilog ng mga ganyang tao 'di ba? Pati panulak problema mo pa. Pinahiram mo na ng pera pang enroll ng anak, hihingian ka pa ng pa-sobra para sa baon. Eh kanino ba talagang anak yan? Baka ikaw talaga ang magulang niyan dahil ikaw na ang sumagot ng lahat.

This is painful because sadly, in our culture, masyadong maraming ineexpect ang magulang sa anak o anak sa magulang, pati mga malalayong kamaganak may expectations lagi na kapag nakaluluwag ang isa o iilan, ay dapat buhatin lahat ang nasa laylayan. Huwag mong

buhatin ang mundo. Masyadong mabigat. Hindi mo kakayanin.

Limited ang time or money mo, limited din ang tulong na pwede mong ibigay. Don't feel bad kung hindi mo mapasaya lahat at hindi mo maibigay lahat. You're not supposed to make these people your responsibility. It is not your responsibility to give endlessly. Kung ano lang ang kaya, yun lang ang ibigay. Hindi mo na problema ang reaksiyon o opinyon ng iba.

## WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM HEARTACHES & PAIN?

- 1. Be human about it.** It is basic for you to feel bad when unpleasant events happen. In fact, it is more unusual and bothersome if you do not react accordingly. Kung nawalan ka ng mahal sa buhay at hindi ka dumaan sa grieving, kapag nakaranas ka ng abuse in any form at hindi mo ito na-proseso sa iyong sarili including all the emotions that you should have felt, mas nakakatakot yun.

Kung may nangyari na nakakagalit at nagalit ka, kung may nakakalungkot na sitwasyon at nalungkot ka, normal yun. That's what we can learn from the heartaches and pain that we go through in life. It's normal to get hurt. It's okay to feel what you feel. You can be vulnerable and be human about it.

We shouldn't deny or dismiss pain and suffering. It is what it is. We experience it as it is. That's what humans do. We make sense of what happens to us. We feel, we think and we should be allowed to process it in our own terms and timeline.

- 2. Pain is universal.** We can also agree that pain is something that is common to all. Hindi ka nag iisa in that category. Lahat ng tao nakakaranas ng pain and heartache. Iba iba tayo ng pinagdadaan pero pare-pareho tayong maaaring masaktan.

No pain is the same but everyone goes through it. It is a language that everyone speaks. Pain is something we have felt and will feel again. It is part of life. It is unpleasant but can be useful in the long run.

It allows you to be more cautious, more mindful and slow down if you need to. Kung minsan talaga kailangan mo munang masaktan bago ka matuto. Pain is necessary because it teaches you things you don't realize in its absence. It is also unavoidable so we need to be more accepting and get good at making sense of it.

**3. Having a growth mindset.** We can make use of our life experiences as an opportunity to grow. Kahit unpleasant or painful ang isang sitwasyon, pwede mo yan magamit to your advantage. How can we do that? When faced with difficulties or struggles, ask yourself these questions:

*(1) What can I learn from this?*

*(2) What skills can I get or develop out of it?*

*(3) What existing skills/abilities can be enhanced through this?*

Many times we hear the words *'it's not about what happens to you, it's what you do with what happens'*. If you're able to develop new skills and abilities in handling your pain, it will surely help you cope effectively and grow as you go through life.

## CHAPTER III: CHOICES

One of the powerful tools we all have but don't really realize is the ability to choose. We have been gifted with the capability to make choices. That's what makes us special because unlike other species, tayo lang mga tao ang may ganyang gift. We can make logical and rational decisions.

You can choose according to your preferences, values, beliefs, priorities, resources. Pwede kang pumili kung anong food ang kakainin mo, anong damit isusuot mo, sinong artist ang susuportahan mo, saan ka titira, anong trabaho o career ang tatahakin mo, saan ka mag-iinvest, sinong magiging lifetime partner mo at marami pang iba.

Every day, you are faced with choices or decisions. From small petty details to the most important things. If you are doing it mindfully, chances are, you will make the best or right choices for you, but if you feel like you're not in charge of these choices, at dinadala ka lang ng hangin kung saan saan, I hope you'll become more aware that you have the power to choose and the ability to change your situation.

We will not really talk about the tips on making wise decisions as you can easily google that but we're going to think, re-think, unlearn, re-consider, reflect a lot in this chapter.

**WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A CHOICE?** Are you really convinced that you don't have a choice? Depends on the context and life situation but more often than not, we do have a choice, though sometimes we do not like our options or we are too scared to choose. No judgment here. I know there are circumstances that we cannot control and unpleasant situations where even the options seem hopeless.

What I'm trying to say is that, we should not have mistaken not liking the options as a 'no-choice' situation. We probably have options but we just don't like them or what we want is not part of the choices. The thing is, even when we do not like the options available to us, we still need to make a choice.

We need to get good at choosing among the options that we do not like because it will happen. If we have the ability to choose something else, well and good, pero kung sakali na wala kang ibang options, kailangan marunong ka mag-assess ng iyong sitwasyon at ano ang best choice sa panahon at oras na 'yon.

Hangga't maaari, subukan mong mabuhay na lagi kang may choice. As much as possible, choose the best options that will work for you in the long run. Do not reach the point na 'wala na akong choice'. Paghandaan mo ang rainy days. Katulad ng mga ants, they work really hard during the summer so they are prepared for the rainy days. This is not just financially; it's also about making decisions mindfully.

Kung alam mo na hindi tama ang isang bagay pero paulit ulit mong pinipili yun, dadating ang time na wala ka ng choice kung

hindi bayaran ang kapalit ng bagay na yun. It could be vices, any sort of addiction or unhealthy relationships choices. It comes with a price.

Kung pinili mong i-enhance ang skills mo sa trabaho, you will become marketable. Kapag dumating ang time na wala ng growth sa current company mo at gusto mo nang umalis for whatever reason, handa ka to spread your wings and fly. Hindi mo sasabihin na wala kang choice but to stay kasi you have to pay your bills and it's the only thing you know how to make a living. See the power of choosing mindfully and intentionally?

**CAN I LIVE WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF MY CHOICE?** I always get the question *how to make wise choices in life* and I usually answer with this question, *can you live with the consequences of your choice?* You may be wondering why this question. Because when we make a decision, we should consider how this option can affect our life. We can ask the following:

*How can it affect you positively and negatively?*

*Who else will get affected by this choice?*

*What are the responsibilities/changes/adjustments I need to make along with this choice?*

For example, you are choosing to be with this guy who has shown several red flags (like addiction, cheating etc.) despite the warning from the people who care about you. Can you live with the possible consequences like losing some important relationships, having problems with his addictions/personality difficulty, possible abuse and other personal problems? Are you ready to

deal with all these dramas? Kung ready ka at nauunawaan mo ang kapalit ng choices mo, eh di go. Kasi hindi ka naman mapipigilan eh. Ikaw ang mag de-desisyon nyan, ikaw ang pipili. Hindi ako galit, nagpapaliwanag lang!

On a serious note, you need to remember that you are the one making a choice so you should be responsible enough to know how this will affect your life and if you are ready to face the circumstances you're signing up for, along with that choice.

Kung minsan sasabihin ng iba, "I did not sign up for this!", "I did not know this will happen". Diba uso naman mag isip ng advance? Diyan mo gamitin yun, kapatid. Advance dapat mag-isip. Malawak dapat ang nakikita mo, imulat ang mata. Hindi lahat ng choice na available ngayon sayo ay dapat mong i-grab. Lalo na kung based on feelings, kasi it comes and goes.

**AM I GENUINELY HAPPY WITH MY CHOICES?** Isang napakaganda at makahulugang tanong kapag ikaw ay gagawa ng isang desisyon. *Could you look me in the eye and tell me that you're happy now?* Ika nga ni Michelle Branch. Masaya ka ba sa choices mo? Naiintindihan mo ba ang mga effects ng choice mo sa life? Genuine happiness means nakikita mo na may growth at improvement ang buhay mo. Healthy ang effect sayo holistically.

Hindi yung sasabihin mong happy ka pero deep inside you're hurting or dying. O hindi mo alam paano i-ja-justify ang pananakit sayo ng taong pinili mo. This is not not to poke fun sa victims of abusive relationships, okay? This is just an example of making the right choice for yourself. If you are in a bad situation/relationship,

I pray you'd find the courage to love yourself and get out of that rabbit hole because you deserve better. I understand that you may have reasons and no one should be judging you. It's just a gentle reminder that you have the power to choose.

I hope you make choices that will genuinely make your life meaningful and happier.

**IS IT TOO LATE TO CHANGE MY MIND?** While we cannot do anything with our previous choices and decisions. The good thing about it is that there are still many choices to make dahil habang buhay ay may pagkakataon tayong pumili. It's never too late to change your mind about many things.

Kasama na rin dito ang pag-amin na hindi naman lahat ng choices natin sa buhay ay tama, best, wise- all the time. Okay lang din 'yon. What matters is that we learn, re-learn or unlearn if we must when it comes to making the right choices.

When you know that you have the power to choose, you become wiser and responsible in making choices.

## CHAPTER IV: NOT YET

Have you experienced waiting for something special to happen? It's probably a prayer that hasn't been answered or a plan that you needed to put on the shelf for some time, or it could be landing your dream job or a promotion that you've been working hard for?

Whatever it may be, you're praying and hoping that it will happen as soon as possible, right?

Most of us don't enjoy waiting, do you? We feel like we're wasting time when we wait. Kahit sabihin mo pa na sanay kang maghintay, hindi mo pa rin gustong pinaghihintay ka. Tama? So, I thought of sharing with you the beauty of 'not yet' or that season of waiting.

***“Don't try to rush things that need time to grow”***

One of the beauties of the waiting season is that it allows you to grow and when the time is right, things will eventually fall into place. Sometimes we're not ready for the things we're asking for. Wanting something doesn't mean you're ready for it.

As you wait, you allow yourself to grow in all areas of your life including your character, purpose, meaning, passion and a better understanding of your pursuits. Imagine a budding rose that needs time to fully bloom, there's nothing we can do to force it to

become a fully grown flower. It needs time. It has a process. Same thing with you. If you feel like you're still in the season of waiting, why don't you try to learn more skills, enhance what you already know and enjoy the journey.

Instead of wishing to be somewhere else, why don't you bloom where you're planted? Bloom while waiting. Make use of your time and opportunity wisely and maximize your time there so that when you reach that dream and your season has come, you have optimized your potential and you're a better version of yourself.

***“Make the most of what you have.”***

They say the grass is always greener on the other side. Meaning, we tend to compare our life or situation with that of others. We feel like nothing is enough, it's an endless pursuit. Bakit siya 25 lang may sarili ng bahay, bakit ako palamunin pa rin ng magulang ko? Eh mabuti nga may magulang kang pinapakain ka at hindi ka tinatapon sa garbage bag. Isn't that great? I'm not trying to trivialize your issue, it's just an attempt to make you laugh at the same time appreciate what you have.

Kung sa tingin mo, it's greener on the other side, baka kailangan mo lang diligan ang grass sa area mo. Hindi naman ibig sabihin agad agad kang lumipat sa kabilang side. How much in your life were you able to recognize, acknowledge, and appreciate? What are the things in your life that give you comfort or convenience? Mabait ba mga officemates mo sayo? Magaling na leader ba yung

boss mo? May teacher or mentor ka ba who inspires you? Do you have friends like family? Are you surrounded by good people?

Kung wala lahat yan sa buhay mo, hanapin mo kung anong meron ka. Siguro sasabihin mo, ayaw mo ng location ng bahay niyo kasi malapit sa LRT at naiingayan ka sa train. That's valid, pero bes, aminin mo convenient din yan kasi lalakaran mo lang, LRT na. Malapit ka sa transportation facility at easier for you to travel. At kung may nawala kang document, sa ilalim lang ng LRT may gagawa na ng affidavit of loss mo. Oh, diba? Bongga.

Kung minsan nagrereklamo tayo, ang init init naman sa Pilipinas! Pero we can make use of that weather. Ang sarap maglaba at magsampay kasi tuyo agad ang mga damit, how convenient! Hindi mo na kailangan magpa-laundry, hindi pa nasira o nawala ang mga damit mo. Chance mo rin uminom ng maraming tubig kapag mainit, nakapag laba ka na, hydrated ka pa.

What is your current situation? How can you make use of your skills, time, and talent right now? Who are the people around you? What opportunities were you given? Know that you can still contribute and grow wherever you may be. You will not stay where you are, mararating mo rin ang pangarap mo. Pero habang wala ka pa doon, sikapin mong gamitin ang panahon at lahat ng mayroon ka to be the best that you can be not just for yourself but the people around you.

## ***“Enjoying the in-betweens”***

Sometimes we see life as black or white, we forget the gray area. It's not black but it's not white either. Alam mo yung song ni Britney Spears na 'not a girl, not yet a woman'? Sorry na, hindi masyadong updated sa pop these days. Mas gusto ko na kasi yung mga indie, indie sikat, ganurn. May ganung phase ng life diba, yung wala ka na sa point A pero wala ka pa rin sa point B. You're not exactly the same person you were but you're not yet the person you'd like to become. Alam mo yun?

Nasa gitna, nasa process, nasa journey, somewhere along the way pero wala pa sa destination. It could mean you're almost there or pwede rin na malayo ka pa. Sabi nga nila, it's not the destination, but the journey that truly matters. Bakit? Kasi, you become better and grow in the process. You experience the process fully when you pay attention to the seasons of waiting in your life.

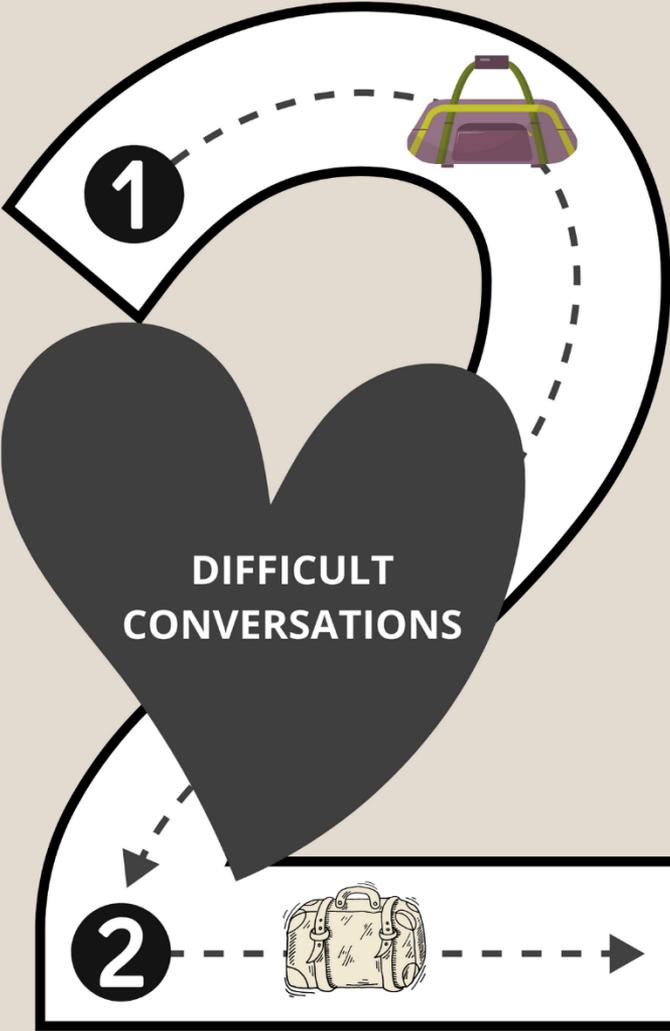
It allows you to see your progress no matter how small. I remember when we went to Sagada, umakyat kami sa bundok, before the hike, I was so excited and feeling ko kayang kaya ko tsaka akala ko enjoyable. Nung nasa gitna na kami ng pag akyat, parang gusto ko nang bumalik at napupuno ako ng takot, I started doubting if I can really make it dahil bukod sa obese 1 na yata ako noon, sobrang nakakatakot yung daan. Parang pag nahulog ako, hindi ako mabubuhay kasi ang lala ng view, puro bangin bes! Yung totoo! Expectations vs Reality ang eksena!

Tapos naiinip na ko kasi ang tagal makarating sa paroroonan. But since I was there with my friends, I decided to enjoy the journey. Kung mamatay man kami, sama sama naman kaming ilililing eh so i-enjoy ko na to! When I decided to focus on every step that I took, one at a time, hindi ko namalayan na nakarating din kami sa top. I realized a lot about myself when we were in the process of hiking. For one, sabi ko kailangan ko ng mag diet kasi mas malakas yung hingal ko kaysa sa hangin sa bundok.

Another thing, I enjoyed spending time with my friends, I was very mindful and present, my mind wasn't somewhere else, sobrang focused ko bes kasi baka mahulog ako. Our time together, laughing, chatting, bonding, while exploring Sagada- ito yung in between. Ito yung mga moments that I will cherish and treasure during the trip. It's not just about going to that mountain na hindi ko na nga maalala ang pangalan, it's not about the destination, it's the journey or process or in between that you remember and learn from.

Something is happening in you and to you while you are in that season of 'in between' or 'not yet'. It kind of prepares you for what's about to come and at the same time reminds you that you're no longer where you used to be. You carry with you what you learned in the past as you anticipate the future.

So look at your child or career or relationships- whatever it is that inspires you. Cherish and seize the in between. Things will change sooner or later, for both good and bad. Don't rush. Learn to slow down and appreciate the moment.



**DIFFICULT  
CONVERSATIONS**

## CHAPTER I: HEAVIER THINGS

This book is different from the first one because here, I want to journey with you in places that you might not want to visit. It could be some painful events in the past, a deep wound that you're trying to ignore, a mistake that keeps haunting you and other heavier things you've been carrying for so long.

I don't mean to lead you to something that you're not ready but the goal is to gain a more helpful perspective on things that may be affecting your mental health. Ang layunin ng chapter na ito ay tulungan kang magkaroon ng paghilom, pag-asa, at paglaya. At para gawin yun, kailangan muna natin malaman at maunawaan ang sugat.

If you have experienced neglect, abandonment, trauma, abuse and other emotional and psychological forms of pain- these things trigger strong emotions and discomfort in you. Pwedeng hindi mo alam kung bakit palagi kang galit o mainit ang ulo, nahihirapan ka to control your anger or irritability or mood. Maaari din na madalas kang malungkot or lost sa thoughts mo, you probably oversleep or cannot sleep or may tendency to overthink a lot. Ilan lang ito sa mga symptoms na may psychological or emotional wounds ang isang tao.

I will not be too technical about it dahil mas okay kung i-discuss mo personally ang issues sa isang mental health professional tulad

ng psychiatrist, psychologist or counselor. It will differ from one person to another but we'll discuss the common issues here.

Tulad ng physical wound, ang emotional or psychological wound can be treated only when you become aware of it. You must begin by realizing that you have a wound. Palagi kong sinasabi, may paglaya sa pag amin, but this time around, dagdagan natin. May paghilom at paglaya sa pag amin.

**Realizing you are wounded.** Ang sugat na ganito ay hindi mo agad agad mapapansin kasi hindi naman dudugo literal ang puso mo or magagagasan after a break up or any similar unpleasant situation. Kung minsan, may mga issues nung bata ka pa lang na maaaring hindi ka aware na nasugatan ka pala. Halimbawa, hindi ka paborito or lagi kang kino-compare sa iba mong mga kapatid. It led you to think that you are not good enough as a person.

If there were unfair, abusive, manipulative, traumatic situations and people sa buhay mo growing up, it certainly affected you at the same time pwedeng may naiwan na marks or wounds sayo emotionally or psychologically.

So it's important to reflect, where do you need healing from? Identify what hurt you in the past, how you got hurt and how deep is the cut? Then start acknowledging that wound. Aminin mo na may sugat. Alamin mo paano ka nasaktan, gaano kalalim, sino ang mga tao na maaaring nag contribute o naging source ng iyong sugat , tapos ibigay mo ang listahan kay Dr. Strange para ma-resolve niya sa multiverse. Char!

**Willingness to heal.** Kapag na identified mo na yung sugat mo, ang susunod mong kailangan i-assess ay ang willingness mo to heal. To go through the process of treatment. It is different for everyone at depende rin sa sugat. May mga sugat na hindi natin kailangan pumunta sa emergency room to be treated, may mga nadadaan naman sa vicks vaporub. So you need to check if it is something beyond your ability and knowledge. If that's the case, it's okay to seek help.

You also need to check if you're ready to treat your wound and revisit the past events in your life that will bring healing to you. The process or treatment should be clear to you. Handa ka bang unawain at balikan kung kailangan ang mga bagay na nakasakit sayo?

What does it take for you to begin your healing journey? What are you willing to do to start healing? It has to be clear. What's interesting about this part is that you realize that you have the power to decide how and when you'd heal. Kung kailan mo gustong palayain at paghilumin ang sarili mo, ikaw ang pipili. Walang pwedeng pumilit sayo. Walang pwedeng gumawa nito para sayo. It is both good and terrifying news, that it is really up to you.

What if hindi ko gusto mag heal? You might ask. Again, the answer is, it is up to you. Kung hindi mo pa gusto or hindi ka pa ready, that's okay as long as you're aware and accepting of other

things that come with your choice. In other words, if it is serving you at beneficial para sa iyong wellbeing not to allow yourself to heal, that decision is yours to make. But I'm saying, a lot of our problems and unhealthy coping may have rooted from unhealed wounds and unprocessed emotions and thoughts. Kaya as much as possible, kailangan natin ito ma-resolved upang tayo ay maka move forward sa ating buhay at maiwasan ang mga paulit ulit na issues or problema na ang root cause ay ang ating unhealed psychological or emotional wounds

Is healing really necessary? Short answer, yes. Kung tayo ay mayroon sugat, hindi ba dapat lang na gustuhin nating gumaling ito? Di ba ginagamot natin kasi bukod sa inconvenient magkasugat at makikita ni crush, ayaw din natin ng may constant pain tayong nararamdaman. But if we keep it fresh, we will be in constant pain at palagi nating babantayan ang sugat na yan. Same thing sa emotional wounds, kung hindi ka maghihilom mula sa mapait na nakaraan, habang buhay kang matatakot umasa, umibig, at magtiwala muli.

**Healing journey.** Bakit journey? Kasi you need to understand that it is a process. Tulad ng paglalakbay, may ups and downs. Kung minsan akala mo wala ka ng pain pero meron, meron, meron pa rin pala. I want to reiterate that it is going to be different for everybody. You should notice by now that it's my favorite phrase to say. Kasi mahilig mag kumpara ang mga tao and in doing so, nakaka invalidate tayo ng healing process at journey ng iba.

May mga tao kasi na napakabilis lang sa kanila maghilom. Yung tipong kamamatay lang ng asawa, the following year, may bago na. That happens kasi nga iba iba eh. Mabilis nga sila eh, diba? Tsaka hindi naman ibig sabihin noon ay fully healed na sila just because they are in a new relationship or chapter of their life. Kaya huwag din natin i-judge. May mga tao naman na after their partner has passed, hindi na talaga nila makita ang sarili with another person. Again, it doesn't necessarily mean na hindi pa sila healed. Hindi lang kasi yun ang factor or basehan ng healing.

Paglalakbay ang paghilom. May mga dadaanan ka na kayang kaya mong lagpasan, may mga lugar din naman na hirap kang mapagtagumpayan. There are good and bad days. Kung minsan may mga sugat na ang bilis gumaling, may mga nakasugat din naman sayo na ilang taon mo ng dala dala. Siguro naiinip ka na rin minsan kung kailan ka magiging fully healed. I suggest that while that's the goal, to fully heal, just enjoy the journey and try to be better than yesterday. Take one step at a time towards healing.

This journey will not only help you deal with your pain but also develop empathy towards other people. The more you know that healing can't be rushed, you become more empathic and understanding of others. Kasi alam mo na hindi madali mag heal, mas nauunawaan mo na ang behavior kung minsan ng iba ay maaaring nagmula sa malalim na sugat. So, imbis na patulan mo, you can easily brush it off and just genuinely pray for their healing.

## CHAPTER II: BOTTLED UP EMOTIONS

Ang chapter na ito ay tungkol sa pag iipon, pagtatago at pagtanim ng galit, sama ng loob, hinanakit, resentment, at lahat na ng masasamang bagay at elemento na naranasan mo sa iyong buong buhay. Taas ang kamay ng mga taong kapag kinumusta mo ang laging sagot ay ‘okay lang’ kahit hindi naman talaga okay.

While you might think that it is always safe to keep your thoughts and feelings to your chest, it could actually be more harmful to you and the people around you. Minsan iniisip mo mas okay nang hindi sabihin ang tunay na nararamdaman kaysa naman magalit pa ang isang tao sayo o baka magkaroon ng gulo o kaya mag trigger ng world war.

Pero napakahalaga na ma-express mo ang iyong thoughts and emotions. Alam mo yung feeling na constipated ka for a long time? Diba ang sama sa pakiramdam? Kasi hindi functioning ang body mo normally when it happens. Hindi nailalabas ang waste. Ganun din ang emotions natin, kapag hindi nailalabas, nakakalason ng pagkatao. Nakakasama sa emotional state mo.

Let’s identify the possible reasons why people tend to bottle up their emotions instead of expressing and processing them properly or appropriately.

1. **Fear of rejection and invalidation.** Kinikimkim mo na lang ang mga iniisip at nadarama dahil takot kang i-dismiss, i-reject, o invalidate ng ibang tao ang thoughts and feelings mo. Minsan sinasabi ng mga tao, masyado kang OA or

sensitive at ikaw lang ang nagbibigay ng sarili mong interpretation. Sinasabi din nila na ikaw lang din ang gumagawa ng ikasasama ng loob mo. So dahil sa mga comments na yan, naisip mo na huwag na lang sabihin kasi nasaktan ka na nga emotionally, parang lalo ka pang nagkasugat dahil sa rejection and invalidation ng mga tao sa paligid mo.

Ang invalidation ay ang pagsasabi sa isang tao na mali ang kanilang nararamdaman o hindi dapat maramdaman ang certain emotion in a very condescending, insensitive and ill-mannered approach. Bakit ito nakakasama imbis na makabuti? Because you do not allow the person to be honest with what they feel which results in disability to process what they're going through. How can healing take place if they had to conceal the wound?

Karamihan kasi sa atin ay lumaki sa household na bawal umiyak, bawal magalit, bawal sumagot. Kapag hindi naman nagsalita, sasabihin “Tinatanong kita! Bakit di ka sumasagot?!” at kapag sumagot naman, “Aba teka, sumasagot ka na sa ‘kin? Wala kang respeto?!” Gusto mo tuloy itanong, saan po ba ako lulugar? Ano po ba talaga? Sasagot po ba ako o hindi?- It’s just too hard to read between the lines, sometimes lalo na kapag hindi consistent.

While writing, nasa ilalim ako ng puno ng mangga namin sa bahay. Nakaupo ako sa stone table when I heard our

neighbor, sabi niya sa toddler na daughter niya, “Di ka tatahimik? Di ka tatahimik?! Kapag sinabi kong tahan, tahan! isara mo ang bibig mo para hindi ka masaktan!” It was so disturbing, hindi ko nakikita pero may scenarios in my head when I heard them. Sakto naman I’m writing this chapter at perfect example yung nanay sa invalidation and rejection of feelings. Asking the child to stop crying without helping them process what they’re going through will lead to bottling up of emotions. The child might think it’s wrong to show your emotions or even to feel them. So she will shut her feelings without developing the skills needed in processing these issues.

Ito ang isang dahilan kung kaya natututuhan na lang ng isang tao na manahimik, mag kimkim at mag ipon ng hinanakit. Sa takot na ma-reject, ma-dismiss, ma-label at ma-invalidate.

2. **Learned helplessness.** Masyado ka nang nasanay na walang tumutulong, walang nakakaintindi o walang sumusuporta sayo. Feeling mo wala ka nang choice kung hindi masanay sa discouragement, frustration, and pain. Kaya pinipili mo na lang i-bottle up ang emotions mo. You hide and lock it up and seal it with bitterness and resentment.

Siguro sinubukan mo na rin ang lahat ng solusyon o option na meron ka para makaalis sa problematic situation mo pero walang nangyari or wala pa ring nangyayari. It makes

you feel stuck and helpless. Minsan akala mo hindi na magbabago ang sitwasyon or life circumstances mo kaya tinatanggap mo na lang. Ito yung kind of acceptance na hindi healthy, most of the time it is resentful, bitter and at times cynical.

Wala namang mangyayari so bakit pa ko hihingi ng tulong? Bakit pa ko kikilos? Bakit ko pa ishe-share sa iba? Yung feeling mo wala ng pag-asa, it's a helpless and hopeless situation in your mind so wala ka ng motivation or strength to do something about it. In this case, we just put it in a bottle and keep it there. We don't choose to face or process it. We just bury them.

- 3. Irrational thoughts or thinking.** Ito yung pag-iisip na nag-iisa ka lang sa pinagdadaanan mo, na isolated ang case o sitwasyon mo, that help is not available or walang tutulong sayo. Minsan ito rin yung thought na hindi mo sasabihin ang nararamdaman mo dahil iniisip mo na agad na huhusgahan ka or you will be blamed or nobody will ever understand.

These thoughts are irrational dahil wala naman tayong evidence na totoo ang mga iniisip natin. May mga paniniwala ka na maaaring hindi totoo, mali or unhealthy. Kung minsan iniisip mo na lahat ng tao ay judgmental, cynical, mean or selfish. Kapag ganito ang tingin mo sa mga tao in general, madalas talagang itatago mo na lang ang mga naiisip at nararamdaman mo.

Hindi kasi lahat ng feeling mong totoo ay totoo nga. Hindi kita masisisi, pwedeng may mga pinagdaanan ka nag lead sayo to having these irrational beliefs. Lahat naman ng tao nararanasan yan one way or another. Isa ito sa mga dahilan why people choose to bottle up their emotions.

## Why it helps to unbox, unveil, and pour your heart out?

- **Develops the ability to identify and understand your emotions.** We cannot understand something that we don't confront or face. The first step in understanding your emotion is to identify them. Diba pag may kinikilala kang tao, usually you start with saying your name, identification part muna. Same thing with emotions. Kung hilong hilo at litong lito ka na sa mga nararamdaman mo, siguro you need to identify them clearly so you could understand it better. It's only possible when you express it and put it out there.

Napansin mo minsan kakain lang kayo ng lunch with your friends, you will ask each other, saan tayo kakain? And then most of you will say 'kahit saan' 'kahit ano'? Why? Because you guys don't know what you want to eat that day. It starts with self-awareness before you can easily express your choices kasi it only becomes clear to you when there is awareness.

In the same way, the reason why you are confused with your emotions or by your emotions is because you don't really know them. You don't usually identify or process them. This is actually very powerful when you learn to develop awareness and understanding of your emotions. You get to identify, ay hindi ko pala siya mahal, naawa lang pala ako sa kanya. Or hindi na pala ako galit, pero nasasaktan pa rin ako dahil sa ginawa niya. It becomes clear to you- kung anong nararamdaman mo talaga at wung anong kailangan mong gawin about it.

- **It is a learning experience.** Expressing and processing your thoughts and emotions make you realize many things about yourself, others, and life itself. You'll be surprised how it could change your perspective for the better. Imagine, in every life situation (good or bad), may napupulot kang aral. It helps you become stronger and wiser. Eventually, you're able to pass it on to others.

Everything has a purpose, even your pain. You can turn it into a great teacher and guide. There are things you don't learn in school but in the process of growth, life, maturity and life experiences. Allowing yourself to go through what you go through will definitely give you an opportunity to grow.

You also develop empathy towards others. When you understand something, it's easier to empathize. Kung nawalan ka na ng mahal sa buhay, mas malalim ang pang

unawa mo sa mga tao when they are grieving. If you have experienced failure, you get to say the right words for people going through it and it gives them comfort.

When you took a particular exam (e.g. licensure exams, college entrance exams, etc.), diba mas nakakapagbigay ka ng advice sa mga tao who are about to take it pa lang? Because you learned from that experience, you also want to be of help. Same thing when you process your emotions and you have a better understanding of it, you also get to help people when they're vulnerable.

- **Increases self-awareness.** I cannot stress this enough. Self-awareness sounds cliché, common, shallow, but trust me, it's deeper and more meaningful than how it's presented to us. Dito mo malalaman ano ba yung mga factors kung bakit you feel some of your emotions, it explains why or where your thoughts are coming from.

Awareness is always the first step and when you are already aware, you get to understand, process and integrate it into your life. You will know your triggers, the pattern of your emotions and how you can manage it properly. Hindi mo makikilala ang sarili mo kung palagi mong sasabihin na okay ka kahit hindi ka okay, kung lagi mong itatago ang nararamdaman mo, kung hindi mo iexpress ang gusto mo.

Self-awareness helps you break free from the things that don't really represent you in terms of your values, beliefs, personality, and authenticity. Would you rather be loved for who you are not, or disliked for being you?

Start getting to know who you are, including your thoughts, emotions, and life experiences. Eventually, you will learn how to calm your anxious mind and make sense of your emotions. At para alam mo rin kung ano ba talagang gusto mo, hindi yung iba-block mo ngayon tapos bukas add friend mo ulit. Huwag din kayong mahilig sa on again off again na relationship, hindi naman kayo switch, kaya tigilan niyo yan. Comment down below if you want me to write about it. Char!

- **Boosts your mental health.** Expressing and processing are good for your mental health. Imagine being constipated, diba ang hirap? Hindi mailabas ang dapat ilabas. It happens mentally too. Diba pag galit ka tapos hindi mo nailabas para kang sasabog? Para kang magbubuga ng apoy? Parang uumusok yung tainga at ulo mo? Yung pag hinawakan ka, mapapaso sila. Kailangan nila ng pot-holder, ganern!

Hindi ko sinasabi na galit na galit ka so okay lang manakit. Hindi ganon, ha. Emotions are meant to be experienced. Kasi part ng pagiging tao yan. When I say that, I mean it should be identified, felt, processed. Kasi may dahilan kung bakit mo nararamdaman ang mga feelings na yan.

Kaya hindi dapat pigilan at itago. In fact, that might do more harm than good. Dito sa bansa natin, madalas ganyan ang sasabihin, 'huwag na nating pagusapan', 'tumahimik na lang kayo'. Tuloy, yung iba sa pananahimik, nagkakaroon ng insanity. Tumahimik nga, sarili na lang ang kinausap, tumatawa at umiiyak magisa habang nanghuhuli ng langaw na hindi naman nag eexist.

It is not wrong to feel your emotions. Acting on it in a way that is harmful to you and others is wrong. It also doesn't make you a bad person if you feel what you feel, it only means vulnerability is normal, natural and part of life.

Allow yourself to cry and see reality without filters. Life sucks sometimes, it can get ugly and that's okay. So go ahead, share your thoughts, write them down, find a hobby that you find therapeutic, consider going to therapy or counseling sessions. Whatever is helpful and will make you express and process in a healthy manner instead of bottling it up.

Yung iba naman, ibang bote ang nasa isip. Hindi yung magkaka amats ka, ha. Masakit na nga sa ulo, pag gising mo nandiyan pa rin ang problema. How is that helpful? O dedefend mo pa? Sasagot ka pa? Drink moderately ka pa dyan. Huwag ako.

## CHAPTER III: SAD THAT DOESN'T WANT TO BE SAD

Nobody likes to be sad. Some would go and do wild things just to avoid sadness. It's crazy how people are always in pursuit of happiness and would do anything not to feel otherwise. Did it ever intrigue you? I'm not saying we should pursue sadness. I'm saying there's no more room for other things including sadness. So when it comes, we don't know how to deal with it. As if it is not part of life or it shouldn't be.

Bakit obsessed ang tao sa entertainment? Excessive shopping, movie/tv series marathons, drinking, parties and many others? Because if they are happy, they want to be happier by celebrating, if they're unhappy, they do it to be happy or console themselves. We obsess over entertaining ourselves because we don't want to make room for sadness or any similar emotion.

Alam mo yung mga tao na gusto lang nila masaya lang, happy lang lagi? Sila yung madalas malungkot. Kasi hindi naman posible yung gusto nila eh. We can't be happy all the time. That's not how life works. It's messy. We feel different emotions about various occasions or life circumstances. Sure, we can change our disposition into something more optimistic but it doesn't mean getting rid of sadness. We just can't get rid of it. Not gonna happen. We just get better in processing or managing it but it is always part of life.

So dahil nga hindi madalas pag usapan ang sadness, this chapter will focus on that. I categorized how most of us deal with sadness.

- **The Great Pretender.** Ito yung tipo ng tao na kaya niyang itago habambuhay na malungkot or nalulungkot siya. Lagi siyang okay lang, masaya lang, nevermind the problem. They'd rather say they are doing well than making it known that they are dying inside. Kahit nabibigatan na siya at malapit nang bumigay, hindig hindi niya sasabihin na hindi siya okay.

Ito yung kahit hindi ka masaya, you want people to see you happy and doing well. You're becoming someone you're not because you'd rather do that than accommodate sadness and understand where it is coming from. Hindi kaya ng ego mo to show your vulnerability so you'd rather pretend and fake it 'til you make it.

You know that you're actually very sad deep inside, probably for reasons that you clearly understand or perhaps you don't know where it's coming from. Nonetheless, you don't want to show it. So, you wake up everyday and fake your happiness. Thinking that maybe, one day you don't need to fake it anymore.

- **In denial.** Ito naman kung minsan, you label it as something else or blame people instead of admitting that you're sad. 'Hindi ako malungkot, stressed lang ako kasi yung officemate ko hindi ginagawa yung trabaho niya!'

'Hindi ako malungkot, masaya nga ako na nag cheat siya, para may dahilan na talaga akong makipaghiwalay sa kanya!' Yung mga ganyan, denying sadness. Pushing it away. Ayaw mag identify na siya ay malungkot.

Feeling mo okay naman lahat sa buhay mo so bakit ka malulungkot? Iniisip mo na hindi ka dapat malungkot kahit na malungkot ka talaga. Mahirap sayong aminin na nalulungkot ka so you deny it.

You reject the idea of feeling sad. You probably don't accept the fact that it is part of life. You might think it's inconvenient to become sad, so you don't allow yourself to experience it.

Ang difference nito sa pretender, may acknowledgement siya ng sadness pero ayaw niyang ipakita sa iba. Ito namang denial, walang acknowledgement or acceptance of sadness at all. You don't try to deal with it. You just do your daily routine and think that it will pass.

- **Numb thyself.** Ito na yung exciting part. You are not in denial nor pretending, refusal ito to feel sadness. Acknowledgement and acceptance that it is real or existing is there but they're choosing not to feel it so they numb themselves by detaching emotionally or mentally, substance use or abuse and many other unhealthy ways to stay numb.

One of the reasons why some people can't stop drinking or using other substances like drugs is because they don't want to feel anything. They want to forget their pain or misery.

Sometimes you can't handle your pain or sadness that you want to escape and not feel anything anymore. You see, our problems with alcohol and drugs may have rooted from something deeper than what we see on the news. It is a social, behavioral, psychological problem. We need to get into the root of addiction and that is managing our mental health.

Hindi ito dahil sa kanta ng Linkin Park kaya maraming gustong maging numb. It's because people don't know how to deal with pain. So they'd rather not feel anything. It's about time that we understand and educate others that pain can be managed with skills and healthy coping.

In conclusion, sadness that doesn't want to be sad is the most heartbreaking because you are not just denying it as part of life, it also implies that you are not allowing yourself to be fully human.

## CHAPTER IV: SOMETHING'S MISSING

Fear of missing out (FOMO) is one of the biggest issues these days especially because of social media, everyone's connected 24/7 and it's never cool to miss out on anything. We've been programmed to think that we need to buy or achieve or accomplish something in order to feel complete or fill a void. We always feel like we lack something and that we need to be updated just about everything. How much is the newest iPhone, which restaurant is the coolest or what can I buy online according to TikTok.

Despite the world's development, everything is searchable at our fingertips, anyone can share anything, we all have a platform aka social media to become the next video creator, musician, social media manager and whatever you wanna be. Still, people can't seem to feel content or complete. There's always something that's missing.

We hear about the famous and rich people committing suicide or experiencing depression and other mental health issues. Did you ever wonder why? People still find it hard to be satisfied with life. Is there anything we can do to fill that void? Here's an attempt to share with you some thoughts or insights that you may find helpful:

**Instead of finding happiness, do something meaningful.** When you do something that adds meaning to your life and makes you value living, it automatically makes you feel good or happy.

Instead of finding something to do to feel happy, why not make others happy? It could be sending an encouraging message, cooking for someone you love, listening to a friend, recommending a good book or a nice restaurant. It doesn't need to be grand, serving others is about the intention you have. If you intend to be helpful or supportive, no matter how simple or small these gestures are, you are making someone happy and in doing so, you also feel fulfilled.

There was a time in my life where I can't seem to overcome my sadness. I wanted to feel happy again and when I tried serving others, being of help to them and just trying to reach out and see if there's something I could do for them, it made me feel better. That I was contributing to someone's life. I feel like I'm serving a purpose.

Maybe there's someone at home or your workplace who needs your encouragement or presence. Meron ka palang important role sa current environment mo that could make your life more meaningful. In the process of pursuing that, you become happy.

Akala ng tao minsan magastos maging masaya. Kailangan maraming pera para sumaya- this is wrong. In fact, some people are very poor that money is all they have! Money can buy you good and enjoyable things and experiences but it can never give you joy, contentment, and meaning.

Try to do your best in everything that's been entrusted to your care, it could be your work, studies, raising kids or family, or

running a business. You'll be surprised how the things you do can have a great impact on your life and others'. It gives you a great sense of meaning, suddenly your time on earth becomes purposeful and you realize that your life matters. It eventually brings happiness, you'll see.

**Be more intentional and pursue what matters to you.** Sometimes life seems routinary and ordinary. It's like an unending cycle. It is tiresome when you are not in charge of it at dinadala ka lang ng hangin o alon kung saan saan. We need to be more intentional or mindful of how we spend our time and energy.

The world can get noisy, dumadagdag sa mga ingay sa isip mo ang maraming information at opinion from other people. Mahirap nang i-identify yung facts sa dami nang naglalabasan na misinformation and fake news. So, you need to identify which voice to listen to and which ones to shut down.

How are you normally spending your time? Lumilipas lang ba ang oras na wala ka halos ginagawa kundi i-entertain ang sarili mo with netflix, online shopping, gaming, hanging out with friends or doing nothing? While it sounds like a good life, I hate to break it to you, pero hindi sumasaya ang isang tao doing nothing.

Maraming articles or studies sa psychology na nagpapatunay na being more intentional, working on things that add value to your life and mindfulness can contribute sa iyong overall happiness. In fact, kapag walang ginagawa ang isang tao, madalas ay nalulungkot siya kasi wala syang sense of purpose or meaning.

So, we should not strive for a donya life lang. You can make it your goal to become rich, there's nothing wrong with that as long as you have pure intentions. Pero kung rich lang para sa selfish reasons, doon may problema. Accumulating things cannot give you long term happiness. It can make you happy in a short period of time but it will fade eventually.

You should be intentional, ibig sabihin may clear goals and plans at alam mo ang reason behind your choices or decisions. For example, gusto mong magkaroon ng better relationship with your family or friends, gagawa ka ng effort at opportunity para mag spend ng time with them or serve them one way or another. Pinaglalaanan mo ng oras at energy, ganon ang intentional. You try to be present and act on your intentions. Otherwise, wish mo lang yun kung hindi mo gagawan ng action.

If something is important enough to you, it will show because you will act on it. Based on your intention, because it matters to you. You can become intentional when you know what truly matters to you. Ano ba ang mga bagay o mga tao na mahalaga sayo? What are things you value? How do you know what matters to you? Simple lang, saan ba nauubos ang resources mo like time, money, energy mo? That means, yun ang mahalaga sayo, yun ang importante sayo.

When you spend time and energy on things that you truly value and treasure, it makes you genuinely happy. So if your priorities do not match how you spend your resources, it's about time to really give importance to what matters to you. You work so hard

for your family, pero ang nangyayari you tend to neglect them because of work. Then it's time to redirect or renavigate your intention and priorities. This will surely add to your happiness. Kasi kung ano ang mahalaga sayo, at kung may panahon ka para doon, that will make you happy.

It could also be the career move that you've been planning to do pero natatakot kang gawin. Remember that your fear doesn't always reflect reality. It is natural to experience fear especially towards uncertainty, sometimes we can't get rid of it right away and that's okay. Pero in spite of your fear, you can decide to do it anyway lalo na kung ito ay something that you are passionate about and it's what you value at mas magsisisi ka kung hindi mo gagawin. Of course, it should be a calculated risk. I'm not saying don't plan or think about it and just follow your heart blindly- no, that's not what I meant. Careful and intentional planning should be part of it.

**Focus on what you have, not what you don't.** Kumbaga huwag hanapin ang wala, kung anong mayroon ka, doon ka mag focus. Napakadaling mag focus sa kung ano ang lacking or kulang sa buhay natin pero it takes a lot of gratitude and grace to count your blessings. When you start paying attention to the people and things in your life, you become more grateful and according to studies, gratitude is related to overall life satisfaction or happiness.

Paano ba natin ito gagawin? Instead of browsing through social media, looking for the cool or trendy things to buy in order to fill a

void, work on how the things that you own can be more functional or helpful to your daily life. Kung may mga bagay na hindi mo na ginagamit at maaari pang pakinabangan ng iba, ipamigay mo na o ibenta mo sa murang halaga. That way, nabawan ang items sa bahay mo na wala ng use at the same time, nakatulong ka sa mga taong on a budget. Magbawas ng gamit and liabilities. Dapat lahat ng gamit sa bahay mo ay ginagamit at makakatulong sayo o sa pamilya mo.

Another thing that you can do is check your cabinet before allowing yourself na mabudol ng online shopping. May mga damit ka ba na hindi mo ginagamit in the past 6 months or hindi mo na isusuot in the next 6 months? Time to let them go before buying new stuff. Bakit? Kasi mas maraming bulk of things we don't use will only add to our stress. Instead of thinking na marami kang dapat bilhin na mga damit, you need to make sure na lahat ng nasa cabinet mo ay gusto mo, nagagamit mo at paborito mo. Otherwise, hindi mo talaga yan kailangan.

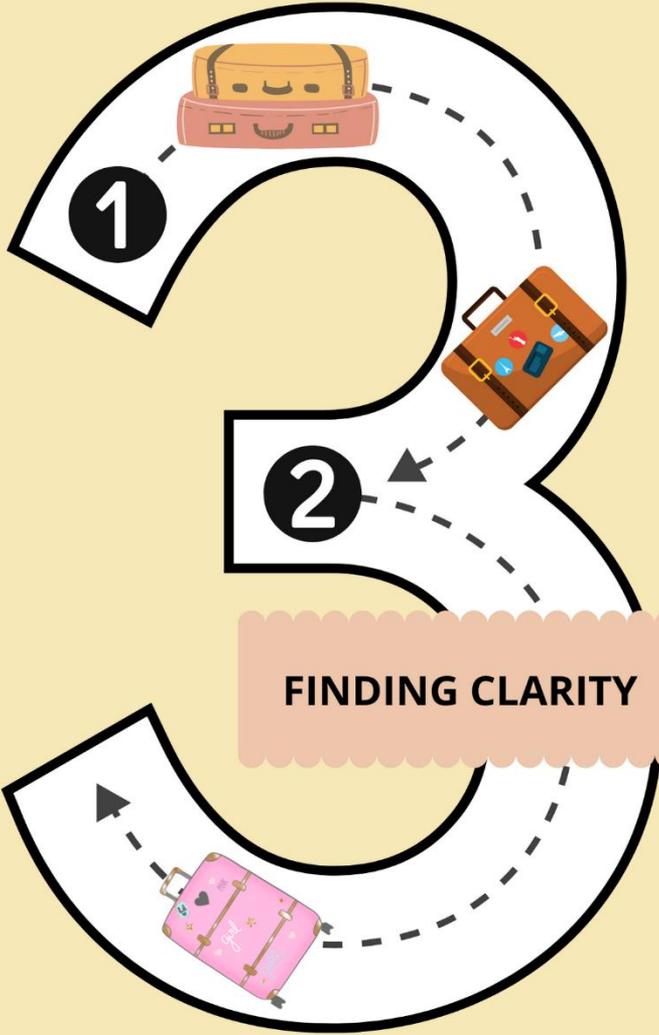
When you shop, you need to ask yourself, kailangan ko ba talaga ito or meron lang akong pinupunuan na emptiness emotionally kaya gusto ko itong bilhin, para sumaya? Or you might want to buy or collect things so you can impress people and get the validation that you need? Is it just your ego? Your emotion? Make sure to reflect first before getting more stuff.

Sa mga tao sa paligid mo, imbis na maghanap ka ng maghanap ng cool friends or jowables, bakit di ka mag focus sa mga taong nandyan sa buhay mo, try to appreciate the good in them- sa mga

kasama mo sa work o sa bahay, sa current friends that you have. Kung minsan naman naghahabol ka sa mga tao na ayaw na sayo, kapag ganyan, nakakalungkot talaga yan. Kapag hinahanap mo ang wala at ayaw nang maging part ng buhay mo, hindi mo yun mapipilit kasi it's not up to you. It is something you can't control. So, instead of wishing for people to stay in your life, focus on the ones who chose to stay. Appreciate them kasi mas deserve nila yung time and energy mo. Kasi sila yung nandyan.

Kung minsan nagagalit yung iba sa mundo kasi feeling nila napag iiwanan na sila in terms of their personal life. Yung iba nilang kilala may mga asawa at pamilya na. Meron nang mga negosyo at mataas ang positions sa company. Pero alam mo, kanya kanyang journey naman yan sa buhay, walang nauuna walang naiwan kasi hindi naman tayo in a race. So run your own race. Work on yourself and enjoy the season you're in instead of comparing your life to others.

When you become more reflective about what you have, the less you see what's lacking. Wala namang buhay na walang kulang. Sa palagay ko laging may kulang kasi hindi perpekto ang buhay dito sa mundo. Tsaka lahat kasi temporary lang, nagbabago din lahat. So don't try to fill in the void or get rid of it, instead, learn how to live with it. How to live a life that is imperfect or incomplete. How to still live happy and content in spite of what's lacking.



# CHAPTER I: CUP OF TEA



“You can’t be everybody’s cup of tea...Nobody’s everybody’s favorite.”

—Kacey Musgraves

Everybody longs to be loved, appreciated, and validated. We become devastated when we get rejected. Ayaw na ayaw natin ang pakiramdam na hindi tayo gusto ng mga tao sa paligid natin. Kung minsan dumarating pa ang time na ginagawa mo lahat para lang ma-please at magustuhan ka ng mga tao sa bahay, trabaho, school, and other communities. Kasi meron tayong need for belongingness bilang tao. Kaya kahit hindi ka natatawa sa jokes or hindi mo gusto ang isang movie o tv series na pinapanood nila o hindi ka mahilig sa kape o milktea na iniinom nila, makikisama ka pa rin para lang magustuhan ka, para ma-please mo sila.

Sa buhay, meron at meron talagang mga tao na hindi ka magugustuhan kahit anong gawin mo. May mga makakasama ka sa trabaho na lahat ng ideas or suggestions mo ay irereject niya. Sa dami ng applicants kung minsan hindi ikaw ang napipili or may mga mahal ka sa buhay na sadyang hindi ka paborito o hindi ka bet. Rejection happens. Kung minsan hindi naman exactly rejection, probably a dislike or you’re not favored or hindi ka accepted. It happens kasi iba iba ang mga tao. Kaya diyan pumapasok sa differences in terms of values, beliefs, interests, personality- ang conflict, dislike or rejection.

Mahirap magkasundo kapag hindi kayo pareho ng mga interests, paniniwala o personalidad. Kapag masyadong magkaiba at hindi posible ang compromise, hindi maiiwasan na mag clash or ma-dislike ang kapwa. Kaya importante na malaman ang dalawang bagay: (1) how to treat people who don't like you? and (2) how to deal with being disliked. Dito iikot ang paguusap natin sa chapter na ito.

## **How to treat people who don't like you?**

**Give them the time and space that they need.** Kapag lagi mong pinipilit ang sarili mo sa taong hindi ka gusto, it doesn't only make you look stupid, it makes them feel worse about you because nobody likes someone who forces themselves into them. May it be any kind of relationship. Kapag na-feel mo na hindi ka welcome, please, do yourself a favor, stay away from these people.

Bigyan mo sila ng panahon at oras para makilala ka at mag decide kung gusto ka nila or hindi. Just be yourself and let them observe you. Kung ito ay sa trabaho, gawin mo what is expected of you para makita nila that you are responsible at mabawasan ang dahilan why they don't like you. I'm not saying please others, I'm saying be genuine, be true to yourself and the work that you do so that it will reflect the person that you are.

Kung bubuntot buntot ka sa mga tao na ayaw makipagkaibigan sayo, you will only feel bad about yourself and it will affect how

you carry yourself or how you function. Kahit naman dumikit ka ng dumikit sa kanila, kung ayaw nila sayo, there's nothing you can do to make them like you. It is always up to the other person whether they will like you or not. Kaya bigyan mo din sila ng choice, huwag mong ipilit yung sarili mo kasi kapag hindi genuine ang treatment sayo at napilitan lang, hindi rin yan lasting at not worth having din dahil fake.

Learn to give them space and time to observe and decide if they like you or not. Don't always tag along because that is more annoying. Don't be clingy and insensitive because you will definitely push them farther away. Sometimes akala mo okay mag reach out at mangulit until magustuhan ka nung tao, pero nakakawala din kasi ng self-respect yun kung minsan. Kaya dapat balanced. If they invite you, you can show up pero don't invite yourself. Don't be desperate for other people's acceptance because it doesn't define your worth.

**Learn to co-exist with them.** Despite the differences, kailangan mong tanggapin na hindi mo mababago o madidiktahan ang mga paniniwala at opinyon ng iba lalo na kung tungkol sayo. This acknowledgement means you try to co-exist with them lalo na kung katrabaho o kapamilya mo kahit may differences or disagreements. You don't need to like each other. You just need to co-exist. Let them be and allow yourself to be. Hindi naman kailangan gusto mo yung tao para i-treat mo sila bilang tao. Hindi rin kailangan gusto mo ang isang tao o gusto ka ng isang tao para pwede kayong maging professional at mag trabaho together.

Learning to co-exist will allow you to still grow kahit may mga tao na hindi mo gusto o hindi ka gusto sa paligid mo. It will not stop you to share your thoughts and do well in class or at work kasi sa totoo lang naman talaga, part ng buhay yan. Hindi lahat ay magugustuhan ka at hindi rin lahat ay magugustuhan mo. As you mature, you would realize that it doesn't really matter because there are other more important things in life than being liked by people. As long as you're not stepping on anyone's toes and just focused minding your own business, okay na yon.

**Treat them right.** Hindi madaling gawin 'to. Yung asar na asar ka sa tao tapos gagawan mo ng tama o mabuti? Easier said than done. But, you need to hear me out. While we all struggle in this department, it is important to note that doing the right thing reflects who you are as a person and it doesn't depend on what kind of human being the other person is. Ang tama ay tama, ang mali ay mali. Hindi pwedeng dahil ayaw mo sa isang tao eh you will treat them with injustice. Huwag mo silang gawan ng mali kahit na ginawan ka pa ng mali. The least that you can do is not cause them harm, in fact, Christ even challenged that by saying love and do good to your enemies. But we are just talking about treating them right or with fairness.

If they ask you work-related questions, huwag kang mag damot. Share what you know. If they asked you for help at iisang team naman kayo sa department, then if you're able, help them out. If they try to talk to you kahit ayaw mo silang kausap, magpaka tao ka at makipag usap, hindi naman kailangan matagal ang chikahan ninyo, just don't appear rude or disrespectful lalo na if they are older than you. Huwag mo silang intentionally ipahiya o gawan ng

hindi maganda dahil lang ayaw nila sayo o ayaw mo sa kanila. Give them the credit that they deserve even if you don't like them. Don't wish them bad things or curse them at the back of your mind. Remember, if it's hard to do good to them, at the very least, don't hurt them or do evil to them.

## How to deal with being disliked?

**Develop a strong sense of self-identity.** Kung ang sinasabi ng ibang tao ang laging mas mahalaga sayo and you really don't know who you are and your worth as a person, ibig sabihin you will easily get swayed by people's opinion and perspective of you. You would easily believe and accept people's opinion about you. You get bothered just because you did not please a particular person or they have some negative things to say about you.

That's why it's important to know yourself, develop a sense of self-awareness and identity that is not easily shaken by external factors. Hindi yung sinabi lang ng officemate mong bad hair day ka eh agad agad kang mag emergency leave para magpa rebond! OA yarn?! O kaya sabihin lang nung boss mo na i-edit mo yung ginawa mo eh magdadrama ka na sa social media na taken for granted at underappreciated ka sa trabaho at inisip mo na agad na you are not doing enough at kapalit palit ka.

A strong self-identity will allow you to accept and take ownership of your mistakes and shortcomings. It will also validate you when you did a great job. Hindi ito lahat naka depende sa mga tao sa paligid mo, madalas sa sarili ito nanggagaling tapos validated by

people you trust and those who love you genuinely. Kapag kasi kilala mo ang iyong sarili- not in a narcissistic manner, meron kang healthy self-image so hindi ka kaagad naapektuhan ng mga negative words dahil nga alam mo yung totoo at hindi totoo tungkol sayo.

When people start disliking you or even canceling you, having a strong self-identity will help you become resilient. Hindi ka basta basta mawawasak ng mga chismis at evil intentions ng mga tao. Kapag matibay ang foundation mo within you, no external effort can ruin that so easily. They will have to try harder.

**Acknowledge the fact that you cannot please everyone.** You can't be everybody's favorite person. Kahit si Taylor Swift maraming haters, kahit sinong artista o influencer pa yan, they can't be everybody's cup of tea. It's just not possible. Kapag meron kang acceptance na hindi naman talaga lahat ay magugustuhan ka, no matter what you do, magkakaroon ka rin ng peace. Kasi hindi lang naman tayo nagkakaroon ng kapayapaan sa mga bagay na hindi natin tinatanggap.

Kaya tanggapin mo na na hindi lahat ay tatanggapin ka. Pero hindi naman ibig sabihin agad noon na hindi ka katanggap tanggap. Kung minsan ayaw ka lang talaga nilang tanggapin sa mga kadahilanan na hindi mo rin naman kontrolado. Kung minsan din naman may mga kaugalian o nakasanayan ka na hindi katanggap tanggap sa iba. Ganun lang talaga.

One of the saddest parts of life is to try to please everyone around you. Bakit sad? Kasi una, hindi naman posible yun so kahit anong

gawin mo hindi mo yun maa-achieve. Pangalawa, kasi parang hindi mo mahal ang sarili mo kapag ang focus mo ay matanggap ka at gustuhin ka ng iba. Hindi ko naman sinasabi na i-goal mong dumami ang haters or bashers mo. Ang akin lang, kung alam mo naman na wala kang ginagawang masama sa kapwa mo at ayaw pa rin nila sayo, huwag mo na ipilit. Don't try to please them or win them. At the end of the day, when you are true to yourself, you will attract the right people without even trying.

**Choose who to listen to.** Hindi lahat ng nagsasabi sayong maganda ka ay nagsasabi ng totoo, yung iba matindi lang ang pangangailangan, sis. Kaya dapat may discernment ka rin. Life can get noisy especially with social media, everyone's online and connected 24 hours. Everyone is in the know, in other words dumadami na ang marites. If you will listen to everyone's opinion about you, maloloka ka lang kasi nga hindi lahat ay facts, may mga misinformation, fake news, haka haka and tiktok references na information.

When dealing with being disliked or rejected, it's important to hear from the people who want you to grow and those who sincerely care about you. Ito yung mga kapamilya, kaibigan, mentors who only want the best for you. Yung sasabihin ang totoo no matter how painful or ugly. They will correct you if they must, recognize the good in you and encourage you to be the best version of yourself. So, surround yourself with these kinds of people so that kapag may mga time sa buhay mo na hindi ka pinili o hindi ka gusto, at least may mga tao na nandyan para i-remind ka of your worth and identity.

## CHAPTER II: RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

*“Radical acceptance is a distress tolerance skill that is designed to keep pain from turning into suffering. While pain is part of life, radical acceptance allows us to keep that pain from becoming suffering. By accepting the facts of reality without responding by throwing a tantrum or with willful negligence. In other words, **it is what it is.**” (Harris, 2022; Bray, 2013)*

Radical acceptance means you acknowledge reality and allow it to sink in as it is. You are not resisting. You are completely accepting reality with your mind, body and spirit. It doesn't mean you approve of it, it only means you recognize that you cannot currently change the present situation, even if you do not like it.

By choosing to radically accept the things that are out of your control, you prevent yourself from becoming stuck in unhappiness, bitterness, anger, sadness and suffering.

Meaning to say, ang radical acceptance hindi ibig sabihin nito na pumapayag ka o tinatanggap mo na lang passively ang sitwasyon. Ang ibig sabihin ng radical acceptance ay hindi mo muna binabago ang reality, tinitignan mo objectively, sinusuri mo as it is at pino-proseso mo ang isang pangyayari ng walang halong opinyon o kahit na anong uri ng bias. Hindi ito interpretation mo, kumbaga ito talaga yung event o situation as it is.

Di ba kung minsan yung isang problema o sitwasyon, nauunahan tayo ng sarili nating interpretation at feelings kaya mahirap nang

makita clearly and objectively at dahil doon, mahirap din magkaroon ng acceptance at ang nagiging focus natin ay yung nararamdaman na natin. For example, photo mo sa camera, yung clear at walang any filter, parang ganyan ang radical acceptance. Seeing things as it is, without a filter.

Paano ba ito nakakatulong? Kapag kasi nakita mo ang isang sitwasyon as it is, this reality cannot hurt you without your permission, parang nilagay mo muna siya sa isang container tapos you will treat it as a science experiment, may scientific methods kang susundin para ma-process mo and come up with the right conclusions.

You might be thinking, bakit ganon? Walang feelings involved? Of course meron, hindi katulad niya. Any situation will definitely elicit a reaction or emotion from people. But in the process of learning radical acceptance, you get to deal with your emotions more objectively and clearly. It saves you from unnecessary suffering or even drama.

Malawak ang concept na ito pero pipili lang tayo ng ilang bagay na pwede nating magamit sa araw araw.

## **Here are some practical ways to apply radical acceptance:**

- **Observe if you are questioning or fighting reality.** Most of the time, instead of observing or understanding a situation, we jump right into fighting it. We fight reality,

we don't believe, recognize or accept it. When this happens, imbis na magkaroon ka ng acceptance, ang nangyayari, denial and resistance. Alam naman natin kapag yan ang ating naging path, hindi tayo agad makakarating sa desired destination natin.

Halimbawa break up, you need to observe how you are reacting or responding to this event. Are you fighting it? ("*Hindi ako papayag*", "*hindi ko kayang tanggapin*") or are you processing it as it happens? ("*He/She broke up with me*", "*We're not together anymore*"). See the difference? Yung first reaction focused on what one feels or how unpleasant the event is while the second one states facts.

It helps to see reality as it is so you can process it more effectively. Once you've observed that you are fighting it, learn to see it again in a less subjective manner. Stick to the facts and see it from there. Remove yourself from the equation and see the problem as if you are not part of it in order to think objectively.

- **Allow disappointment, sadness or grief to arise within you.** This is the part where you allow yourself to feel what you feel and process your thoughts about what happened. Do not deny how you're feeling, instead, be more aware of what you truly think or feel without judging it. Kung minsan kapag napapansin mo na nagagalit ka o nalulungkot ka, sinasabi mo sa sarili mo na hindi ka dapat magalit o malungkot o kaya hinuhusgahan mo ang sarili

mo for thinking or feeling that way. Kapag ganito ang ginawa mo, you are actually being dismissive and invalidating yourself and what you're going through. So allow yourself to be vulnerable, recognize your emotions as you experience it.

You become honest about your thoughts and emotions without judgments. *"Nagagalit ako, in fact galit na galit ako."* *"Okay lang magalit, I will allow myself to go through it."* *"Sobrang lungkot ko. Ang sakit sakit, parang sasabog ang puso ko."* -be able to say these things without judging yourself. Allow, admit, acknowledge. Kasi dito ka magkakaroon ng paglaya at pag hilom.

→ **Acknowledge that life can be worth living even when there is pain.** This one for me is the most profound. We cannot live a life without pain, pressure, stress, problems and other struggles. We can't deny the unpleasant events in life. But the great news is you can learn to manage it. You can certainly live a great life in spite of painful experiences because pain can be managed skillfully!

Recently, I've experienced losing a friend na halos kasabay kong lumaki, we went through many life stages and phases together. She died after a few days of her diagnosis, nobody was prepared enough to accept or process the loss. It was too fast and unexpected to say the least. I wasn't able to have a proper goodbye. It's still very painful that I'm crying while writing this.

*“I should’ve said yes to her wishes more when she was still here”*

*“I should’ve spent more time”*

*“Kung alam ko lang...”*

*“Naparamdam ko kayang mahal ko siya? I wish I had said it enough.”*

*“Why was she taken too soon?”*

*“Why did she have to go through such a painful experience?”*

I have countless thoughts and no words to suffice what I want to express. May mga pain pala talaga na hindi mo kayang ipaliwanag, parang kulang ang salita. Pero hindi ko nilabanan. Tinanggap ko lang yung pain, hinayaan ko yung sarili kong dumaan sa kung ano man ang pinagdaanan o pinagdadaanan at pagdadaanan ko pa. Niyakap ko ng buong buo ang pain. There have been sleepless nights or I’d randomly cry when I’m reminded of her. May it be a song or a funny memory or a conversation or food that she likes.

Many painful events in life ay parang grief, walang timeline. We cannot control the process and it will always differ from one person to another. But that’s okay. You will get there. You will be okay. You will find the healing and comfort and peace you’ve been longing for.

I hope you realize through this book that pain is part of what makes life meaningful and beautiful. So don't hold back, embrace it when it comes and learn from it like a great mentor and friend. It will help you prioritize what truly matters and make each day count.

## CHAPTER III: RANDOM Q & A

***Disclaimer:** This part of the book is just a summary of random questions and answers. It will differ from one person to another. The answers may or may not be applicable to you or your situation, so consulting a mental health professional is advised and highly recommended.*

**PS: Other answers should not be taken too seriously. LOL.**

**Q: Paano po ba kumalma sa gitna ng sitwasyon at pangyayari sa paligid mo na hindi mo control?**

Everything is temporary and any situation we face is going to pass and you will be fine again. Identify what you can control and do something about your situation. If it's completely out of your control, you need to be more accepting that there are things that we cannot control or change and that's okay. Learn deep breathing, practice mindfulness and radical acceptance

**Q: How to sleep? When everything is quiet na sa gabi biglang dumadami ang iniisip.**

Condition your mind and body to sleep. 30 minutes before going to bed, try to relax and put your gadgets away. End your day with gratitude, think of good things that you're thankful for. Organize your thoughts by having a checklist so you won't have to worry

because you are prepared enough for the next day. It will help lessen your worries.

### **Q: What's the most effective way to control anger issues?**

Get to the root of the issue. Be reflective. Ask these questions:

What made you angry?

Is it really the situation or your interpretation of it?

Does your anger match the situation or not?

Then choose to see things objectively. Process your anger in a healthy manner by proper communication and allowing yourself to be vulnerable and feel what you feel minus destructive behavior. Express your anger through arts/music/physical activity/writing etc.

### **Q: How to stop being insecure?**

Insecurity has a lot to do with our own thoughts. We need to identify the life experiences that may have contributed to it and heal from them. A lot of contributing factors such as family, environment, experiences, social media, society's expectations and many more affect how we see ourselves. But at the end of the day, it is our responsibility to define who we are as a person and prioritize self-authenticity which can only be achieved with self-awareness, self-acceptance and self-love.

### **Q: Can't control my temper. Any advice?**

- Process your emotions and life experiences
- Avoid bottling up of emotions
- Communicate clearly and properly
- Express emotions through various activities
- Understand your thoughts and feelings because you can't deal with something that you don't understand

### **Q: I'm having a hard time with work. What should I do?**

Reflect. What makes it difficult? What can be done within your control? Are you having a hard time due to external factors (work environment, people you work with, work itself)? or due to internal factors (your thoughts, emotions, motivation, perspective, interpretation)? Try to communicate with your boss and colleagues (kung okay or close kayo). They might be able to guide you through it. If you're losing motivation, you might be needing some rest to regain your balance and strength.

### **Q: How to handle people who use emotional blackmail?**

Emotional blackmail is a form of manipulation that uses demand, abuse, threats etc. What to do with people who do this to you:

- Communicate if compromise is still an option.
- Cut your ties/end your relationship with them if it is taking a toll on your mental health or life in general.
- Set healthy boundaries.
- Minimize interaction with them.

- Do not tolerate any kind of emotional blackmail. Let them know that you are not allowing it.

**Q: May friend po ako na deeply in love (yung relationship na you and me against the world) at hindi niya tinatanggap ang reaction ng pamilya o kaibigan niya about it. How to handle this person po?**

We cannot make people see from our perspective. We cannot put them at a certain page we're on. If they are blindly in love, you and the rest of the world cannot make that person realize what he/she needs to realize. Wait for that person to learn what he/she needs to learn in that relationship. Only give advice if they are asking for it. Show that you genuinely care without being intrusive or disrespectful. Or kung gusto mong mas simple, unfriend mo na lang. JOKE.

**Q: How to deal with quarter life crisis? Feeling ko people my age have accomplished many things already while ako wala pa.**

Quarter life crisis is experienced differently by different people. Focus on your goals and personal values. Sometimes, the pressure is coming from external factors like comparing yourself or life with others'. Try to recognize your accomplishments or progress no matter how small or simple instead of magnifying what's lacking. Keep on moving forward, try to learn new skills and surround yourself with people who will bring out the best in you. Focus on being the best version of yourself. It's not a race. Your season will come.

### **Q: How to deal with family problems/conflicts?**

No family is perfect. It is composed of individuals with different personalities, values, beliefs etc. Because of our differences, we tend to have disagreements/conflicts and that's okay. Open communication, understanding and empathic listening will help you have a better relationship.

### **Q: How to handle trauma?**

Allow yourself to go through your thoughts and emotions. Talk to someone you trust/mental health professionals. Remember that healing is a process. Find therapeutic activities and self-care practices.

### **Q: How to be consistent?**

Set goals- what is it that you want to be consistent about? What is your intention or the “why” behind this goal? Form habits and routines that will lead you to accomplish your goals and be intentional about it. You can only be consistent if you find something meaningful. When you lose motivation, you just need to go back to your “why” or “meaning” in what you do.

### **Q: Ano pong dapat gawin sa mga tao na paulit ulit kang sinasaktan?**

Siya dapat ang sumagot ng tanong na how to be consistent. Ang sakit naman ng tanong mo beh. Eh bakit nga ba pinapayagan mong saktan ka ng paulit ulit? Minsan kasi ginagawa nila yan sayo

kasi akala nila okay lang sayo. So prove them wrong. Ipakita mo sa kanila na hindi ka pumapayag na saktan ka nila repeatedly.

**Q: Meron po akong partner na sobrang bait sa akin at mahal na mahal niya talaga ako. Pero ewan ko kung bakit paulit ulit akong nag chi-cheat sa kanya. Wala po akong masabi sa kanya, lahat ng friends ko napapa sana all po. Tinatanggap pa rin niya ako kahit na nasasaktan ko siya for being unfaithful.**

Ikaw ba yung partner nung nananakit ng paulit ulit? Yung totoo? Well sabi mo nga mahal ka nung tao, no doubt about it. Pero, ikaw ba mahal mo ba talaga siya? Kasi kung mahal mo siya, you will choose not to hurt him/her repeatedly or intentionally.

**Q: Para po sa breadwinners na tulad ko, paano po ba sabihin sa parents na hindi na muna ako makaka support sa kanila para maka focus din ako sa future ko? Paano po malaman na ready na sila mentally to hear this?**

Parents should be the ones responsible for their kids. It's okay to give back and honor your parents by being good to them pero hindi sya dapat sapilitan at obligation. Kapag kailangan mo nang mamili between your parents or your future family/dream, medyo mahirap yon. You need to have a conversation with them. Sometimes the problem is not the problem itself, minsan ang problema talaga ay hindi napaguusapan. So initiate that conversation, don't wait too long until they are mentally prepared, though syempre right timing din dapat. If you wait until

they're ready then you may not get the chance to talk to them about it. Be honest and respectful as you tell them your concern.

**Q: Paano po ba dapat sagutin ang mga taong tinatanong ka kung kailan ka magaasawa o magaanak? Bakit po kaya may mga ganitong tao?**

Kulang pa siguro ang problema nila sa buhay kaya pati mga concerns mo ay ginagawa nilang business nila. Hindi mo naman kailangan mag paliwanag o sagutin yung mga tanong nila. Life is not a series of press conferences that we owe people some explanation.

# a message of hope



***In this world you  
will have trouble.  
But take heart! I  
have overcome the  
world.***

JOHN 16:33



***Lord, I acknowledge I am a  
sinner. I accept your gift of  
salvation. Be my Lord and  
Savior. Take full control of  
my life today until forever.  
In Jesus' name, Amen.***

# ABOUT ME

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHOTO



SKILLS / TALENTS

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PET PEEVES

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CHARACTERISTICS

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DEAR SELF,

**THANK  
YOU!**

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WITH LOVE

○ ○ ○ ×

# My Journal

Date:

I'm happiest when I...

I'm unhappy when I...

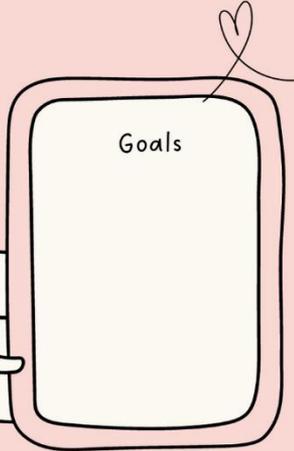
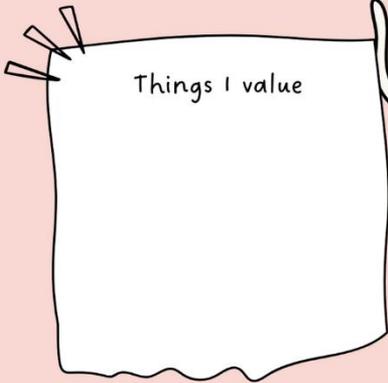
MY STRENGTHS

THINGS I WANT TO IMPROVE

Things that motivate me:

MY FAVORITE QUOTE:





# REFLECT

HOW DO I DEAL WITH...

UNPLEASANT EVENTS

ANGER

SADNESS

DISAPPOINTMENT

NOTES :

# Radical Acceptance

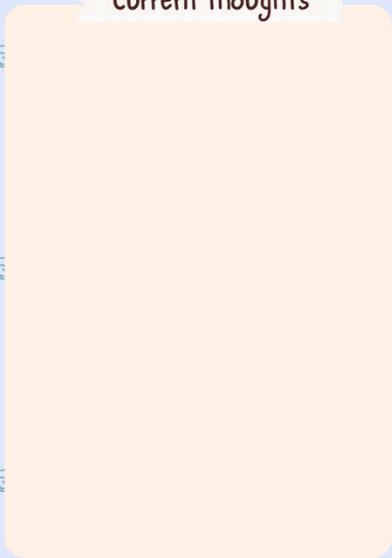
Things that I need to accept



My feelings about it



Current thoughts



# GRATITUDE JOURNAL

Date:

What am I looking forward to?



What am I grateful for?



The good things that happened to me



# Things to celebrate



1

2

3

4

5



MY ACTIVITIES

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

SELF-CARE  
PLANNER

"ME" TIME



SELF-CARE GOALS



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

## EDUCATION

**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA  
KEARNEY USA**

Globalization of School  
Psychology



**ST. SCHOLASTICA'S  
COLLEGE**

BS PSYCHOLOGY AB  
GUIDANCE & COUNSELING

**UNIVERSITY OF SANTO  
TOMAS**

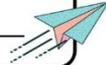
MA GUIDANCE &  
COUNSELING

Number of TV series  
you've started watching  
but not able to finish:

26. Ako lang ba ang ganito?

K-drama that made you cry

SNOW DROP



## Quotable quote

"Some people must know  
they don't always have to  
CC the world- the universe,  
rather."

-Tita Witty

## Book recommendations

Purpose driven life  
Minimalism  
Ikigai  
The Monk who sold his  
Ferrari  
The 5 AM CLUB



## Current favorite song

Jireh by Elevation  
Worship

## Current OPPAS

Park Seo Joon  
Jung Hae In  
Song Joong Ki  
Go Kyung Pyo  
too many to mention!



