

# Elderly Care for an Abusive Parent

The plan worksheet: Making peace and regulation your goal.



## Writing opportunity #1:

Name the primary message you are experiencing from guilt and shame. Once you have found that message, write it at the top of a page with quotation marks. It is the title of your experience. Can you write out any other time in your life that message has existed?

*Example: "If you do not do what they are telling you, it will just make things worse?"*

**Your title here: "**

**"**

**What ages do you remember the shame/guilt based messages?**

**What were the circumstances in your life at that time?**

**What coping skills did you have at that time (if any)?**

**What was your core belief about yourself from this experience?**

**As an adult, what coping patterns do you have now that you did not have then?**

**Can you tap into those coping patterns now to see every past version of you through a lens of compassion, and kindness?**

**What do they need to hear from you to feel like they are a part of your decision-making process? (Ex: I will take care of you no matter what. I will listen when you bring me your memories.)**

## Writing opportunity #2: Accepting what is yours and releasing what is not.

Through all of the above, it can be difficult to know and understand what is meant for you and what is not. While many who have experienced trauma have done much work to restore and heal, we sometimes do not see what has crept in while in survival mode. Here are a few prompts that are important for understanding what is yours and what is not:

**What messages feel heavy that you receive from others around the ways you are navigating this process? Is it internal (from a part of you?) Is it coming from someone else with an agenda to get something from you?**

**Can you change the messages coming from within?**

*\*The internal messages need some breathing room. Zooming out can help offer that. That means holding that message and observing where it is coming from and how that part of you came to that conclusion. Applying understanding to any part of you who has felt this can take the intensity away.*

**How do you want to process the messages coming from others? Do you want to confront them, or simply let yourself know “This has nothing to do with me?”**

**How does it feel to acknowledge someone else's message that is not meant for you to carry?**

**How do you want to protect yourself going forward from taking on other peoples messages?**

**How do you want to accept the parts of you who will continue to send messages because they want/need clarity?**

### **Writing opportunity #3: Ongoing care plan based on any decision.**

What we have discussed here is not the societal norm or standard people talk about. There is a loss in this being the story. Write out just a few lines on your relationship with grief.

**Have you given yourself permission to grieve what you needed in a parent that you did not get?**

**What does that grief offer the younger versions of you that have had to cope without it?**

**What ways can you pause grief when you need a break?** (This is a real thing. Grief is a beautiful and powerful process, but often drives such strong and intense emotions, that it convinces you it is your new normal. Because you are feeling old pain, it seems like it will stay. It won't, and sometimes you need to have a break from it).

**In what ways do you want to end your day when the grief has come? What ways do you want to respect that process?**

## Writing opportunity #4: Spreading the good stuff.

Learning about what your mind and body needs to feel safe and experience peace is a critical part of any person's journey. Once you find those things, it is important to build on them, and spread them to more parts of your life.

**What has been a regular practice that helps you feels alive, safe, free?**

\*\*\*There are many resources like breathing techniques, time outdoors, reading, connecting with someone who hears you, time with pets, that do wonders for someone where they can relax and enjoy being present.

The more present you are, the more able to not take on other people's stuff and to hear your own inner dialogue.



**What are ways you can add time to the things that help you most in your life on a more consistent basis?**

**What does it mean to treat yourself well as you navigate this chapter with your parents overall health?**

**How do you want to feel when this chapter ends?**

**What are the steps you can take on your way there that promote growth?**