

Understanding the Anxious Pursuer Pattern & Reclaiming Self-Trust

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# O1 Introduction



This guide isn't here to label you, it's here to help you understand the survival strategies you've been using to feel safe in connection. If you've found yourself clinging to people who feel just out of reach, over-explaining to avoid being misunderstood, or feeling panicked when someone pulls away, this guide is for you.

The Chaser pattern is a nervous system adaptation, often rooted in early experiences where love felt inconsistent, unpredictable, or conditional. When emotional distance felt threatening, your system learned to close that gap quickly, often through urgency, self-abandonment, or over-functioning. This guide will help you understand how that pattern formed, what it's protecting, and how to begin relating to it with more awareness and choice.

This isn't about fixing yourself. It's about building the internal safety to pause, notice what's happening in your body, and respond without collapsing into old habits. The more you can stay with your experience, the more clearly you'll begin to feel what's true for you, and the less you'll need to chase connection in order to feel secure.

This guide will walk you through the roots of the Chaser pattern, introduce you to your tender parts, and offer tools to rebuild trust with yourself so that love can feel like something you choose, not something you chase.

You don't need to be perfect. You just need to be willing to get curious. The more clearly you can see your survival strategies, the more choice you'll have in how you meet yourself, and others, in the moments that matter most.

**Gentle Disclaimer:** This ebook is a tool for self-reflection and healing, not a substitute for therapy or professional advice.



This book is for anyone who feels deeply impacted by connection, whose nervous system becomes highly activated by changes in closeness, distance, or emotional availability. If you often find yourself reaching for reassurance, overthinking how you're being perceived, or struggling to settle when things feel uncertain, this pattern may resonate.

The Chaser response is a survival strategy, an adaptation shaped by early environments where love may have felt inconsistent, conditional, or unpredictable. It's not a flaw in your character. It's the nervous system's way of seeking safety through proximity, attunement, and emotional tracking.

This pattern often reflects a deep capacity for care, presence, and emotional sensitivity. But when it's driven by fear or urgency, it can lead to overextending, self-abandoning, or chasing connection at the cost of your own stability. The work is not about turning that sensitivity down. It's about building the internal safety to let it guide you with clarity, not panic.

This book is for anyone ready to get curious about their patterns, whether you're right in the middle of them, just starting to notice them, or supporting someone else through theirs. You'll find tools here for building self-trust, strengthening boundaries, and creating the kind of connection that doesn't require you to lose yourself.

Therapists, coaches, and healing practitioners will also find language here to better support clients navigating anxious attachment patterns, through a lens that is nervous system-informed, emotionally honest, and deeply compassionate.



In this guide, you'll explore the Chaser pattern through both the mind and the body. You'll begin to trace how early relational experiences shaped your sensitivity to emotional distance, your fear of abandonment, and the urgency that drives your pursuit of closeness. These are nervous system responses wired for survival. This guide will help you understand why these patterns persist, how they show up across different contexts, and how to build the internal steadiness that allows connection to feel safe, mutual, and self-honoring.

Through trauma-informed insight and grounded practices, you will:

- Understand how anxious attachment develops and why it persists
- Recognize how the nervous system drives urgency, pursuit, and emotional dependency
- Rebuild a sense of safety within, rather than outsourcing it to others
- Catch the signs of anxious pursuit before they escalate
- Use somatic practices to stay with your emotions, regulate in real time, and respond from self-trust rather than urgency

You'll begin to understand how these patterns live not just in your thoughts, but in your nervous system. You'll learn how anxious pursuit is fueled by the body's survival responses, often shaped in environments where love felt unpredictable or conditional. You'll also explore how multiple adaptive patterns can coexist within you. Recognizing these layered responses allows you to meet yourself with more clarity, compassion, and choice.



Your longing for closeness speaks to something wise in you, your nervous system's deep sensitivity to connection, safety, and attunement. If you feel pulled to close the gap when someone pulls away, or find yourself hyper-aware of shifts in tone, timing, or availability, that doesn't mean you're needy. It means your system is tracking for safety in the best way it knows how.

This pattern of anxious pursuit is about survival. It's about hope, hope that connection can be steady, that love can land and stay, that you won't be left to carry the emotional weight alone. This guide meets you in that hope and offers tools to help you root it in something more stable: your own capacity. When you build that capacity within, closeness no longer has to be something you chase, it becomes something you can hold.

For many Chasers, love came with conditions. You may have had to work for closeness, manage other people's emotions, or prove your worth to feel secure. Emotional intensity became the norm, and emotional absence felt like danger. These responses aren't flaws. They're strategies, learned in response to environments where consistency and co-regulation weren't always available.

This journey is about creating a new rhythm in your system. One where you don't need to perform for connection or panic when space appears. One where safety and self-trust come from within, not just from being chosen.

The more awareness you bring to these layers, the more choice you have. That's why this journey matters. Because healing isn't about becoming less sensitive, it's about becoming more steady in how you hold that sensitivity. And that steadiness changes everything.

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The Core Pattern



## The Chaser

At the core of the Chaser pattern is a nervous system wired to protect connection. When closeness feels like it's slipping away, your system registers it as a threat and does what it knows to do: pursue, reach, fix, restore. This pursuit doesn't come from weakness. It comes from the body's learned association that distance equals danger.

For you, closeness may not just feel comforting, it may feel necessary to stay regulated. Disconnection can stir panic, urgency, and a powerful impulse to close the gap. The moment someone pulls away, your system may activate into repair mode: What did I do? How can I bring them back? How do I make sure I'm not being left?

These reactions aren't flaws. They are familiar. If love in your early life felt inconsistent, conditional, or unpredictable, your system adapted to stay safe by staying close. You may have become hyper-attuned to shifts in tone or timing. You may have learned to over-function, appease, or emotionally overextend to protect the bond. These are not reflections of your worth, they are protective patterns your body learned to survive uncertainty.

It's also common for this pattern to be drawn to partners who have an aversion to closeness, those who pull away when intimacy deepens or become overwhelmed by emotional needs. This isn't accidental. Your system may unconsciously seek out what's familiar: working for love, managing distance, proving your worth. And when those patterns meet someone else's avoidance, it can reinforce the urgency to chase. The more they pull back, the more your system activates, and the harder it becomes to tell whether the relationship is truly safe or just familiar in its instability.

Underneath the urgency is someone with a profound capacity for love, attunement, and care. Someone who longs to feel safe in closeness, without having to fight for it. That part of you doesn't need to be silenced or fixed, it needs to feel held. It needs to learn that connection can stay, even if you don't chase it. And that begins with learning how to stay with yourself first.

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The Core Wound



The Chaser pattern forms in environments where love felt inconsistent, unpredictable, or conditional. These early experiences taught your nervous system that connection was something you had to work for, and that disconnection meant danger.

These are some common origins of the Chaser pattern:

- Emotionally unavailable or inconsistent caregivers: If care and attention were present one moment and withdrawn the next, your system may have adapted by seeking constant reassurance. You learned to stay alert to emotional shifts so you could try to close the gap before it widened.
- Conditional love or approval: If love was only offered when you behaved, performed, or met certain expectations, you may have internalized the belief that being yourself wasn't enough. Connection became something to chase, not something safe to receive.
- Abandonment or threat of abandonment: Whether someone physically left or just felt emotionally distant, your system may have started to equate separation with danger. Even short periods of disconnection can now feel overwhelming, because they echo an earlier sense of being left behind.
- Neglected emotional needs: If your feelings were ignored, minimized, or treated
  as excessive, you may have learned that closeness requires effort. You may now
  override your own needs in order to maintain connection, believing that being
  too much will push people away.
- Hyper-attunement to others' emotions: If you had to monitor the moods of others
  in order to stay safe or avoid conflict, your nervous system likely became highly
  attuned to shifts in tone, attention, or responsiveness. This sensitivity was
  protective, but it can now feel exhausting.

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The Primary Survival Strategy

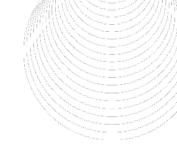


The Chaser pattern often forms in environments where connection felt unpredictable or easily lost. Your nervous system may have adapted by reaching outward, tracking shifts in tone, timing, or attention as signs that closeness was slipping. You may have learned early that love could disappear without warning, and that staying connected took effort. So you anticipated needs, soothed conflict, and overextended yourself to hold things together.

But sometimes, the pursuit gives you something else too: a sense of direction. In the heat of chasing connection, there's a feeling of purpose. Like if you just say the right thing, give enough, shift just slightly, you might hold the bond together. It's not always conscious, but it runs deep: the belief that love is earned through effort. That being chosen means being useful. That the more you give, the safer you'll be.

Over time, this can become a loop. You chase someone who pulls away. You feel temporarily soothed when they return. But in the space between, you lose your footing. You adapt, adjust, over-function, trying to be lovable while abandoning parts of yourself in the process. Then the anxiety creeps in. The exhaustion. The ache of feeling unseen, even when you're doing everything "right." This loop points to a nervous system that equated love with survival. A system that learned to merge, appease, or overextend in order to stay close. But every time you chase connection at the cost of your own center, your body reinforces the link between love and self-sacrifice.

The work now is to slow the spin long enough to listen for what lives beneath it: the grief, the fear, the hope that maybe, just maybe, you could be loved without contorting to earn it. And when you stop running toward someone else, you finally get the chance to meet yourself.



#### Journal Prompts:

- What do you believe closeness requires from you?
- In what ways have you contorted or over-functioned to preserve connection?
- Who might you be if you stopped chasing and started listening to your own nervous system first?



# Nervous System Snapshot

Primary nervous system response: Fight + Fawn

Primary fear: b

Core response: pursuing, overexplaining, clinging to connection

**Hyper-attuned to:** distance, silence, shifts in availability

What creates stress: inconsistency, unmet emotional needs, delayed responses,

relational ambiguity

What soothes: reliable presence, clear reassurance, attuned repair

When connection feels shaky, your body doesn't wait to think, it acts. For the Chaser, safety has become tied to closeness. The moment something shifts, a pause in tone, a delayed message, a subtle drop in availability, your system picks it up like radar. Somewhere along the way, distance meant danger. And now your body moves fast to close the gap.

This response isn't about control. It's about survival. Your system learned that proximity is what keeps you safe, so it reaches. It explains. It over-functions. It offers more, softens more, gives more. Not because you're trying to lose yourself, but because losing the other feels unbearable.

And over time, this strategy becomes automatic. The harder you try to hold connection, the more it reinforces the belief that love must be earned. That your needs are too much. That you must contort to be kept. Your body starts to confuse effort with safety, and stillness with threat.

The work now is to slow the reflex. To stay with yourself when the urge to reach gets loud. Because connection isn't sustainable if it comes at the cost of your own center, and safety doesn't have to mean sacrifice.



The Chaser pattern is driven by urgency. If love felt unpredictable growing up, your system may have linked connection with effort. Like staying close meant staying useful. That if you didn't act fast, you might be forgotten. So your body adapted, show up more, give more, try harder.

The problem is that urgency doesn't just preserve connection. It reinforces a painful belief: that love has to be earned in real time. That if you stop reaching, everything will fall apart. And that your safety depends on someone else staying close. This is where you interrupt that loop.

You don't have to prove your worth to be chosen. You're allowed to pause when someone pulls away. You're allowed to notice the panic in your body without acting on it. That discomfort doesn't mean something's wrong, it just means your system is doing what it was trained to do.

Choosing yourself in those moments isn't selfish. It's how you start building safety inside yourself instead of chasing it outside of you.

From here, we'll walk through what to do when the impulse to chase shows up. How to stay grounded. How to recognize the difference between love and anxiety. And how to build connection that doesn't come at the cost of your own stability.

This is where urgency stops running the show. And where you start relating from a place that actually feels safe.



The Chaser pattern is often misunderstood. On the outside, it can look like over-giving, overthinking, or moving too fast. But underneath is a very real nervous system response: a body that learned to stay safe by staying close.

At the center is a simple fear:

"If I'm not chosen, I'm not safe."

That fear plays out in subtle, consuming ways:

- If someone pulls away, you assume you did something wrong
- If they leave, it feels like you might fall apart

This fear doesn't shout. It hums beneath the surface every time a text goes unanswered or a tone shifts slightly. It drives you to reach, to fix, to keep the connection alive at all costs, even when it hurts.

For the Chaser, the ache isn't just emotional. It's physiological. Your body scans for signs that love is slipping away and rushes in to repair it before it's gone. You've learned to associate stillness with abandonment and effort with survival. So you try harder. You give more. You stay too long in places that ask you to chase what should be freely given.

This is the nervous system bracing for loss. Somewhere in your story, love became something you had to earn through effort and emotional labor. So you got good at sensing disconnection before it happened, and reacting before you could be left.

But under all that reaching is someone worthy of love that stays. Someone who doesn't need to prove they're enough to be kept close.



# How It Plays Out in Relationships

#### From Reaching to Rooting

The Chaser enters relationships with a deep hunger to be met. Not just loved, but chosen, prioritized, secured. When connection feels uncertain, your nervous system goes into overdrive. You reach out, over-explain, overthink. You analyze every silence, every delay, every change in tone. You try harder, hoping that effort will anchor the relationship.

In the moment, it feels like you're fighting for love. But often, you're fighting not to be left. You might mistake anxiety for chemistry. You might find yourself attached to emotionally unavailable people, confusing their distance with depth you haven't yet unlocked. You might say yes when you mean no, just to keep the connection alive.

This chasing comes from a brilliant survival strategy that says, "If I can just be enough, they won't leave." But the harder you try to hold on, the more unsteady you feel. The relationship becomes a rollercoaster of highs and drops, where reassurance never lasts and peace feels out of reach.

Over time, you start to lose yourself. You forget your own needs, your own pace, your own boundaries. You bend to stay close, but the closeness never feels secure enough to rest.

Healing this pattern doesn't mean pulling away or pretending not to care. It means rooting into yourself. Learning to hold the ache without outsourcing it. Feeling the fear of abandonment and choosing not to abandon yourself. You do not have to chase connection. You are allowed to let love come toward you, slowly, steadily, and with reciprocity. You are not too much. You are worthy of a love that knows how to stay.

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Recognizing the Pattern

# The First Step in Healing Is Noticing the Panic

For someone with the Chaser pattern, the smallest signs of emotional distance can feel like abandonment. A shift in energy, a missed call, or a delayed reply can send your nervous system into panic. In those moments, your thoughts speed up. You might feel the urge to reach out, explain yourself, or fix something that might not even be broken.

This panic is not irrational. It comes from a history where inconsistency or withdrawal meant emotional pain. Reaching became a way to stay safe. But when you operate from panic, it often reinforces the very fear you're trying to avoid. You might come on too strong, say too much, or try to secure reassurance in ways that overwhelm the other person, which can lead to more distance, not less.

Healing begins by noticing the first wave of panic before it takes over. Not to suppress it, but to sit with it long enough to understand what it's asking for. Most often, it's safety. Reassurance. Grounding. These are needs you can start learning to meet internally. The moment you pause and anchor in your body instead of reaching outward, you're practicing a new way of relating, one that builds inner stability instead of outsourcing it.

#### Journal Prompts:

- What situations tend to trigger your panic response the most?
- What does your body feel like in those moments?
- What do you usually do to try and feel better and how does it impact the relationship?
- What fear is usually underneath that urgency?



At the core of the Chaser pattern is a fear of not being chosen. That fear doesn't just live in your mind, it takes over your nervous system. It shows up in the urgency to fix, to explain, to hold on tighter the moment you sense someone pulling away.

But here's what's often hard to admit: sometimes, that fear-driven chasing does push people away. Especially partners who are more avoidant-leaning, who interpret emotional intensity as pressure. This doesn't make your feelings wrong. But it does mean that when you lead with panic instead of presence, the very connection you're craving can start to collapse under the weight of that urgency.

This isn't about blaming yourself, and it's not about learning to suppress your emotions just to keep someone close. It's about taking honest inventory of your pattern. Have there been times when you've reached before pausing? Over-explained to avoid silence? Interpreted space as abandonment and reacted before asking what was true?

This is how the pattern reinforces itself. You chase because you're scared they'll leave. But the chase becomes too much, too fast, and then they do leave. Not always because they're unavailable... but because the energy felt like demand instead of desire. That confirmation deepens your fear and makes the next chase even more desperate.

Healing doesn't mean performing "chill" to avoid being too much. It means learning how to hold the wave instead of outsourcing your calm. It means feeling your fear without letting it choose your next move. And it means recognizing when someone is actually unsafe... versus when your fear makes it feel unsafe.

When you root into your own value, the chase softens. You stop begging to be chosen. You start choosing yourself first, and only make space for people who meet you in that same energy.

That's when everything shifts.

#### Journal Prompts:

- Have I ever mistaken space for rejection?
- What did I do in response?
- When I feel that urgency to fix or hold on, what part of me is afraid?
- Have I chased someone who may have actually needed space, not disconnection?
- What's the difference between being expressive and being explosive?
- What would it feel like to be chosen without chasing?



Physical sensations: There's might be a tightness in your chest or stomach, a buzz of urgency that feels hard to ignore. You might notice restlessness in your body, difficulty sitting still, or a racing heartbeat. When someone pulls away, even slightly, it can feel like your entire system is on alert. Your thoughts speed up. Your body leans forward. It's like your nervous system is bracing for disconnection and trying to prevent it before it happens. You might feel calm once you get a message back, not because you're regulated, but because you were bracing.

#### Mental cues:

This pattern often comes with thoughts like:

"What did I do wrong?"

"Maybe I just need to explain better"

"If I don't reach out, they'll forget about me"

You might overanalyze silence, replay conversations, or interpret neutral signals as rejection. You may find yourself analyzing their tone, rereading messages, or wondering how to fix what feels off, even if nothing concrete has happened.

Behavioral patterns: You might reach out more than usual, check in repeatedly, or scan for signs of reassurance. There can be a tendency to over-explain, over-share, or apologize quickly, even when you're unsure what you did. Sometimes the impulse to connect feels so strong it overrides your sense of self. You may find yourself prioritizing repair over reflection, or pursuing closeness even when your body feels anxious or unsteady.

What might be happening beneath the surface: This is a nervous system in pursuit of safety. The chase isn't about drama or desperation, it's about trying to soothe the ache of perceived distance.

Awareness takes time to develop. Start by gently observing these moments without judgment. Keep a journal to note when they occur and how your body and mind react. Over time, you'll begin to notice patterns.

#### You can ask yourself:

- What just shifted that made me feel like I had to work harder to be chosen?
- Is there a part of me that believes love has to be earned?
- Can I offer myself the steady presence I'm seeking right now?

This kind of noticing builds capacity. And with time, capacity builds choice.



# Practice: Pause and Name

When you feel the urgency rise, the pull to reach out, fix it, explain yourself, or close the gap, the most powerful thing you can do is pause and name what's happening.

You don't need to stop yourself mid-reach.

You don't need to force stillness.

You just need to notice: I'm slipping into the chase.

That awareness is where the rewiring begins.

This pattern usually kicks in fast. One shift in tone, one delayed response, one moment of uncertainty, and suddenly your system is spinning, convinced something's wrong and it's up to you to restore the connection.

#### To meet it with compassion, try saying (internally or out loud):

- "This is my nervous system reaching for safety."
- "The urgency is real, but I can slow down."
- "I don't have to earn love with effort."

You're not too much. You're just trying to feel safe. And you don't have to abandon yourself to be chosen.

#### After you name it, try asking:

- What just made my system feel unsafe?
- Am I trying to prove I matter?
- What would it feel like to stay still and breathe instead of chase?

That pause might feel impossible at first, but it's in that pause that your power returns.

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From Pattern to Practice



Your nervous system might equate space with danger, or silence with rejection. So you reach, explain, check in because your body learned that love could vanish, and it became your job to keep it close.

But healing doesn't mean shutting that down or forcing yourself to stop caring. It means building your capacity to sit with the discomfort of not knowing. To stay with the longing without rushing to resolve it. To hold the pause without making it someone else's job to fill it. This isn't about turning your needs off. It's about turning the urgency down.

Regulation doesn't happen in big, dramatic moments. It happens in small, steady ones that teach your system: "I can stay. I can hold. I'm still safe, even here."

#### Try practicing with simple shifts like:

- Sitting beside someone you love without trying to perform closeness
- Letting a message sit unread without assuming the worst
- Noticing when your chest tightens with urgency and breathing through it before acting
- Saying how you feel without immediately asking for reassurance
- Asking: Is this a need, or is this fear in disguise?

The goal isn't to never want reassurance. It's to slow the loop down.

To create a little more space between the feeling and the action.

Every time you stay with yourself, instead of outsourcing your safety, your system learns something new:

You're not losing love. You're coming home to it.



### **Use Anchors**

A 3-step self-anchoring ritual for when the urgency hits

1. Place your hand on your chest or belly. Feel your body.

Say to yourself (silently or out loud): I'm here. I cannot be abandoned as long as I am with me. Take 3 slow breaths into your hand. Feel the rise and fall. No rush.

#### 2. Name the part. Separate from the panic.

Ask yourself:

What part of me is afraid right now?

What is it needing most?

Let the answer come softly, without judgment.

It might say: "I feel forgotten,"

"I want to be chosen."

or "I'm scared they're pulling away."

#### 3. Offer the thing you're seeking.

Say gently:

You are not too much.

You are not being left.

I see you.

I'm here with you.

Place both hands over your heart.

Breathe into that reassurance.

Stay with this for at least 30 seconds.

Feel the energy settle.



Chasing doesn't create safety, clarity does. Connection isn't built by hiding your fear or shrinking your needs. It's built by staying honest without abandoning yourself in the process. Clarity creates safety because it anchors you in what's real. When you know where you stand, what you feel, what you need and what's true for you, you stop trying to manage someone else's response. You stop walking on eggshells, hoping your silence will keep the connection. Clarity means being willing to name your truth, even if it changes. That honesty is what creates an internal steadiness. You're no longer relying on someone else's behavior to feel okay. You're rooted in yourself. And that's what makes real connection possible, because it's not built on pretending, performing, or waiting to be chosen. It's built on being known.

As a Chaser, it's easy to express needs through urgency, blame, or protest, especially when it feels like you've been ignored or dismissed. But when your needs come out as accusations, they push people further away, even if what you're asking for is deeply valid. What builds connection isn't just expressing what you need, but how you express it. When you can name your longing with clarity and self-responsibility, you create the conditions for honest connection. You give the other person a chance to meet you where you are, or to show you that they can't. Either way, you're no longer stuck guessing or chasing scraps of reassurance. You're standing in truth. And that's what creates safety, not just for you, but for the relationship itself.



#### 1. name the fear clearly, own it as yours

"when i feel you pull away, my fear of not mattering gets activated. i know that's something i'm working on, and i also want to be honest about where it takes me internally."

this signals self-awareness and invites connection, without guilt-tripping.

#### 2. speak the need, not the strategy

"i noticed myself wanting to text you a bunch of times last night because i felt anxious. what i really needed was a sense of closeness. i'm not asking you to fix that, i just want to be transparent about what comes up for me."

this separates the behavior (chasing) from the core need (closeness) and removes pressure.

#### 3. reveal the meaning-making, without assuming it's true

"when you don't respond for a while, part of me tells the story that i did something wrong or that you're pulling away. i'm not saying that's your intention, that's just where my mind goes, and i want to work through it rather than act from it."

this builds trust because it invites repair instead of reaction.

#### 4. own your edge, invite co-creation

"i'm working on not over-functioning in relationships, but it's hard for me to know when to lean in and when to pause. would you be open to talking about how we can navigate that together?"

this shows growth and signals you're not outsourcing your safety, but also not pretending you don't need support.

When you lead with urgency, you often bypass what's actually underneath: the soft, vulnerable need that feels too risky to name. Maybe it's a longing to feel chosen. Maybe it's fear that you're too much. But when you don't slow down to connect with that core need yourself, it stays buried under anxious action, and the other person can't meet a need that isn't clearly expressed. Getting in touch with your own truth first, naming it inwardly, without judgment, is what makes it possible to share it cleanly. It shifts the energy from "make me feel okay" to "here's what I'm holding." And that self-honesty is what turns urgency into intimacy.

Getting to know our most vulnerable parts, our fears, longings, and insecurities, is our work. No one else can do it for us. When we expect a partner to regulate those parts without first meeting them ourselves, we unconsciously place the responsibility for our healing in their hands. We wait for reassurance instead of building inner stability. And in doing so, we stay stuck in a position of powerlessness, always reacting, always needing, always waiting. That's not connection. That's dependency disguised as love. Real power comes from turning inward first, learning how to hold those tender parts with care, and then choosing to share them, not as demands, but as truths. That's how we step out of the victim role and into self-leadership.

#### deep-dive journal prompts to meet your tender parts:

- when was the first time i remember feeling like i had to do something to earn love or attention? what did i learn about love in that moment?
- whose love felt inconsistent, and how did i adapt to try and hold onto it?
- what emotions or needs were not safe to express in my early environment? how did i learn to hide or suppress them?
- when i feel urgency in a relationship now, what does it remind me of from my past? who does it remind me of?
- what part of me is still trying to rewrite an old story by getting it right this time?
- what belief formed in me as a child that still shapes how i relate to closeness and distance today?



For the Chaser, safety has often meant staying close, even if that closeness came at the cost of yourself. You've learned to monitor the other person's tone, mood, silences. You reach out, fill the gaps, send the extra text.

But safety that depends on staying close at all costs isn't safety. It's selfabandonment.

Real connection doesn't require you to manage the moment or fix the vibe. It doesn't demand constant proof that you're lovable. It invites you to stay connected, not just to them, but to you.

It becomes easier to stay connected to yourself in moments of trigger when you've built a relationship with your tender parts. When those parts are no longer strangers, when you've spent time getting to know their fears, their stories, their unmet needs, you're less likely to abandon them or act from them unconsciously. Instead of spiraling into urgency or shutting down, you can recognize what's being activated and respond with care. You can pause, breathe, and say, I know what this is. That inner familiarity creates a sense of steadiness. You're not lost in the trigger, you're in relationship with it. And that's what turns reactivity into self-leadership.



#### in-the-moment prompts to return to self during a trigger:

- What part of me is feeling activated right now, and what is it afraid of?
- Am i trying to control this moment, or can I allow myself to feel what's here first?
- What do I wish the other person would say or do, and how can I offer that to myself right now?
- Is this feeling familiar? when have I felt this before?
- What is my body trying to tell me that my mind is trying to outrun?
- If I could speak to the most tender part of me right now, what would I say?

Safe relationships don't punish you for needing reassurance. They don't make you beg to feel secure. They meet you in your tenderness. And they give you room to regulate without abandoning your truth. But in order to build that kind of safety with someone else, you have to start by building it with yourself. If you lead with blame or reactivity, it becomes hard to tell whether the relationship itself is unsafe, or whether unhealed parts are hijacking the moment. Your work is to know your needs, tend to your triggers, and stay connected to your truth, so you can show up clearly enough to see how someone responds. That's how you find out what's real.

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Somatic Practices for Healing



Healing anxious attachment isn't just about changing thoughts,it's about rebuilding trust with your body. Because the body is where safety lives. And for many Chasers, the body hasn't felt like a safe place to be. Urgency pulls you up and out of yourself. The impulse to close the gap takes over. But real healing begins when you stop outsourcing that safety and start building it from the inside. That means learning to hear what your body is whispering, when it says yes, when it says no, when it says not yet, and honoring those messages instead of overriding them. Over time, this is what creates regulation. Not forcing connection. Not chasing reassurance. But coming back to yourself, again and again, until the inner signal becomes clearer than the panic. That's what embodiment is. And that's what makes secure connection possible.

The practices that follow are not about fixing yourself. They're about coming home. When you live in a state of anxious attachment, your attention is almost always directed outward, reading the other person, scanning for rejection, trying to control what's coming next. These practices are an invitation to turn inward. To gently rebuild rapport with your own body, one cue at a time. The goal is not perfection or immediate peace. The goal is presence. Learning how to hear the quiet yes or no that lives beneath the panic and choosing to honor it. That's how trust is rebuilt. Not all at once, but slowly, through consistency, care, and self-respect.



**Purpose:** To reconnect to your internal "compass" and begin distinguishing between your body's true signals and anxiety-driven impulses.

#### How to do it:

- Sit or lie down somewhere quiet. Take a few grounding breaths.
- Bring to mind a very clear yes—a moment, memory, or person that feels safe, soft, open. Let your body recall that experience. Where do you feel the yes?
   What happens to your breath, your posture, your jaw, your belly? Just notice.
- Then gently bring to mind a clear no—something that felt like a boundary, a hard stop, a contraction. Stay present with it, without judgment. What does no feel like in your body?
- After the practice, write down what yes and no feel like in your body. This
  becomes your personal blueprint for attunement.

**Use it when:** Practice this regularly to strengthen your ability to recognize what yes and no feel like in your body. The more familiar these internal cues become, the easier it will be to notice them in moments of uncertainty or urgency. Think of it as building a relationship with your inner compass, so that when the noise gets loud, you can still hear yourself.



## The Delay Ritual

**Purpose:** To slow down the urgency to act (text, call, fix, explain) and build tolerance for stillness.

#### How to do it:

- The next time you feel the pull to reach out in a panic, set a timer for 5 minutes. During those 5 minutes, place one hand on your chest and one on your belly.
- Breathe deeply and ask yourself: What am I needing right now? What am I afraid will happen if I don't close this gap?
- Let the sensations come up. Notice without trying to change anything.
- When the timer goes off, ask yourself: Do I still want to act from this place? Or do
  I want to respond from a different part of me?
- Even if you still reach out, you've created space between impulse and action, and that's the muscle that matters.

**Use it when:** You feel urgency rising in your body and want to reconnect to your internal sense of choice.

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Actionable Tools for Progress



## Actionable Tools for Progress

Progress doesn't always look like huge breakthroughs. More often, it's found in the small moments of self-check-in, the quiet pauses where you ask yourself how you're doing and respond with care.

This chapter is about building that habit. Not as another task to perform, but as a way of reconnecting with yourself consistently. Healing anxious attachment means learning to track your own experience, notice your patterns in real time, and gently course-correct when you've veered off-center.

These tools are here to help you build that muscle. Because the more familiar you become with your internal landscape, the less likely you are to abandon yourself in pursuit of someone else. Self-check-ins are how you stay rooted. They're how you recognize your growth. And they're how you start making choices that reflect your healing, not your fear.



### Daily Self-Check-In

- 1. What am I feeling in my body right now? (tension, ease, fluttering, tightness in chest, shallow breath, etc.)
- → "Today, my body feels..."
- **2. What emotions are present for me today?** (anxiety, calm, fear, hope, grief, longing, irritation, relief...)
- → "Right now, I feel..."
- 3. Am I reaching outward for reassurance, or can I turn inward first?
- → "What would I want someone else to say to me right now?"
- → "Can I offer that to myself instead?"
- **4. What part of me is most activated today?** (the child who wants to be chosen, the part afraid to be alone, the one who doesn't trust slowness...)
- $\rightarrow$  "The part of me that's loudest today is..."
- **5. What is one act of self-respect I can take today?** (a boundary, a pause, a moment of breath before reaching out, a truth I need to name...)
- $\rightarrow$  "To honor myself today, I will..."

#### **Suggested Practice:**

Use this check-in in the morning before reaching for your phone, or at night to close the loop of your day. Over time, these check-ins help track your emotional landscape and reinforce the habit of turning inward rather than chasing outward.



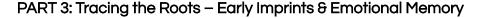
A progressive journey from within.

#### PART 1: Returning to Self – Present-Moment Awareness

- What sensations do I usually associate with feeling "unsafe," and how do they show up in my body before my mind names them?
- What do I tend to override in myself the moment I start feeling uncertain or disconnected in a relationship?
- When I imagine not reaching out, what do I believe will happen, and what does that belief say about how I see myself?
- What's the first physical cue my body gives me when I feel like I'm being rejected? Do I listen to it, or do I push through?
- What have I been pretending feels okay, just to keep the connection?

#### PART 2: The Body Remembers – Rebuilding Somatic Trust

- What does no feel like in my body? How does it differ from discomfort that comes from growth versus misalignment?
- When I go against what my body is telling me, what's the consequence, emotionally, physically, relationally?
- What would it look like to move more slowly when I feel urgency? How might my body benefit from that pause?
- Where do I carry the most tension in my body during moments of relational fear, and what does that part of my body need from me?
- What parts of me are asking to be heard, but I've been too focused on others to listen?



- Who taught me I had to work for love, and what did I have to suppress to keep their affection?
- What did I learn about needing things from others? Was it safe to need? Was it met with warmth or withdrawal?
- When was the first time I felt like I was "too much"? What part of me shut down or changed in response?
- What did I witness in the relationships around me growing up? How did those models teach me to relate to closeness or distance?
- If my anxiety in relationships could speak as the child version of me, what would it say it needs most?

#### PART 4: Meeting the Tender Parts – Inner Dialogue & Reparenting

- What do I often criticize myself for in relationships and what part of me is actually trying to protect me through that behavior?
- What is the most tender truth I've been avoiding about how I feel when I'm chasing someone?
- What does the part of me who fears being left need to hear. not from someone else, but from me?
- If I could sit with the youngest version of me during a moment of panic, what would I do differently than what was done to me?
- What part of me still doesn't believe that love can come without performing?

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- What does being in integrity with myself look like when I feel activated by someone else's distance?
- What's a boundary I've been afraid to set because I'm scared it will cost me connection?
- When have I confused proximity for safety? What happened when I did that?
- How do I want to feel in my relationships and what would I need to start honoring in myself to create that?
- In what ways do I want to show up differently the next time I feel the pull to chase, and what support do I need to make that possible?

#### PART 6: Integration – Building Safety Through Consistency

- What can I do daily to build a deeper relationship with my body, even when I'm not triggered?
- What are three signs I'm abandoning myself and three things I can do to come back to me?
- What practices help me slow down enough to hear what's true beneath the urgency?
- What would change in my relationships if I trusted that I didn't have to chase to be loved?
- If I treated my inner world like a relationship I was devoted to, what would I do differently starting today?

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The Secondary Patterns



It's easy to want to find "your type" and stick a label on it. To say I'm the Chaser and try to organize your entire healing journey around that. But the truth is, attachment patterns aren't fixed identities, they're adaptive responses. They're shaped by your history, your nervous system, your environment, and your relationships. And most of us carry more than one.

You might lead with a Chaser pattern in romantic relationships, reaching, over-explaining, chasing closeness when it feels like it's slipping away. But in conflict, you might shut down like a Fortress. Or in friendships, you might shapeshift to keep the peace. You may not always notice when these switches happen, but your nervous system does. It's tracking for safety, running the code it knows best for the context you're in.

Some patterns are primary, they show up most often, or feel like your default. Others are secondary or tertiary, more subtle, often protective strategies layered on top of your primary survival response.

This chapter is here to help you notice the complexity of your patterns to help expand your awareness. Because the more clearly you can recognize the different parts of you that get activated, the more choice you have in how you respond. And healing isn't about deleting parts of yourself. It's about knowing who's in the room when you get triggered, and learning how to respond with clarity, care, and self-leadership.

You don't need to fit into a box. You're allowed to be layered. And the more you understand your layers, the more you'll begin to relate to yourself with compassion instead of confusion.



When a Chaser pattern is layered with a secondary Devotee response, the outward urgency to pursue connection is softened by a deeper tendency to idealize, over-give, or emotionally worship the other person. This combination creates a relational loop where the Chaser actively reaches for closeness, but does so through self-sacrifice or quiet submission rather than protest or confrontation.

Instead of saying "I need more from you," this pattern often sounds like "I'll be whatever you need me to be, just don't leave." The Devotee influence can make the Chaser more compliant, more romanticized in their longing, and more likely to suppress resentment for the sake of preserving the bond.

While the Chaser wants reassurance, the Devotee tries to earn it through adoration, loyalty, or emotional caretaking. This can lead to a dynamic where the individual bypasses their own needs, loses themselves in the other, and mistakes one-sided devotion for love.

Over time, this blend can reinforce self-abandonment as a love language, where closeness is pursued not just through urgency, but through over-functioning and idealization. Healing means learning to reclaim your own center, value reciprocity over intensity, and separate true connection from emotional performance.

- When someone pulls away or becomes distant, do I tend to respond by softening myself, trying to be more patient, more loving, or more understanding in hopes they'll come back?
- Do I put people on a pedestal, even when my needs aren't being met?
- Do I focus so much on making the other person feel loved that I forget to ask if I feel loved too?



When a Chaser pattern is paired with a secondary Spiral response, the result is a highly activated, emotionally intense pursuit of connection, often marked by volatility, protest, and panic when closeness feels threatened.

This blend tends to feel everything all at once. The Chaser wants reassurance and consistency, but the Spiral brings in emotional overwhelm, reactivity, and fear-driven behavior. Instead of simply reaching out to feel close, this combination might lash out, collapse, or spiral into shame after expressing too much, too fast. There's often a desperate push-pull dynamic: reach out, feel exposed, retreat, then try again, each time hoping the connection will soothe what's unraveling inside.

This mix creates a cycle where closeness is both craved and flooding. The nervous system swings between hyper-connection and emotional dysregulation. The fear isn't just about being left, it's about being too much, losing control, or not being able to tolerate the space between interactions.

Healing this blend means learning to regulate in the in-between moments. To slow down enough to name what's actually being felt before acting on it. And to recognize that expressing your needs doesn't have to come at the cost of emotional safety, for you or the relationship.

- When I feel someone pulling away, do I tend to panic, reaching out impulsively, saying too much, or reacting in ways I later feel ashamed of?
- Do I mistake emotional intensity for real connection?
- After reaching out, do I spiral into shame or fear that I went too far?



When a Chaser pattern is layered with a secondary Shapeshifter response, connection is pursued not only through urgency, but through adaptability and self-suppression. This person doesn't just reach, they contort.

At the surface, the Chaser longs for closeness, reassurance, and emotional safety. But rather than expressing that directly, the Shapeshifter part scans for what the other person wants and becomes it. This can lead to abandoning core needs, values, or even personality traits in hopes of keeping the connection intact.

You might tone yourself down to seem more "easygoing," mute your needs to avoid appearing "needy," or agree to things that don't feel right just to avoid rocking the boat. It's not just I don't want to be left. It's I'll become whatever you need me to be, just don't leave.

This blend can make it difficult to know what you actually feel or need because your nervous system has learned that shape-shifting earns love, while authenticity feels risky. Over time, this leads to disconnection from self, chronic over-functioning, and a deep ache to be chosen as you are.

Healing this pattern means slowing down enough to feel yourself before scanning for who you need to become.

- Do I adjust how I express my needs or emotions based on what I think the other person can handle?
- When I feel anxious, do I make myself more agreeable to keep the connection?
- Am I so focused on being chosen that I forget to check if I feel safe or seen?

# Chaser + Fortress (Fearful Avoidant, Dismissive-Leaning)

When a Chaser pattern is layered with a secondary Fortress response, it creates a push-pull dynamic within the self. The Chaser part longs for closeness, reassurance, and emotional contact, often reaching out, overexplaining, or anxiously scanning for signs of disconnection. But the Fortress part has learned to protect through distance, withdrawal, or emotional shutdown when things feel overwhelming or unsafe.

This means you might pursue someone intensely in one moment, and then emotionally wall off the next. You may feel the need to connect, but the moment it starts to feel too vulnerable, too inconsistent, or too risky, the Fortress steps in to shut it down. That shutdown is your system trying to regain control when closeness starts to feel too destabilizing.

This pattern can feel confusing. You want intimacy, but you don't fully trust it. You crave closeness, but you also fear being hurt or losing yourself in it. You may even find yourself unconsciously testing partners, reaching out, then pulling away, because part of you wants proof that someone can handle your walls and your need.

Healing this blend means learning to stay with your emotional experience longer before reacting. It means softening the protective impulse without abandoning the part of you that needed it. And most of all, it means trusting that connection doesn't have to cost you your safety, or your space.

- Do I reach out, then pull back when things get too vulnerable?
- Do I feel safer initiating connection than receiving it?
- Do I want love, but only on my terms with my guard still up?



When a Chaser pattern is paired with a secondary Vanisher response, it creates a conflicting dynamic between pursuit and avoidance, where the drive to connect is strong, but the fear of truly being seen or vulnerable is just as present.

On the surface, the Chaser part reaches outward: texting first, seeking reassurance, trying to close the gap. But beneath that, the Vanisher part is scanning for threat, looking for flaws, and planning exit routes, often as a way to stay in control. You may obsess over someone one day and feel emotionally checked out the next. Or long for intimacy while subtly keeping parts of yourself hidden or unavailable.

This blend often comes from early experiences where love felt unreliable, and closeness felt like a setup for disappointment. So while one part of you is hungry for connection, another part is already halfway out the door. You may crave deep relationship, but sabotage it once it becomes real, pulling away emotionally, criticizing the other person, or convincing yourself they aren't enough.

Healing this pattern means recognizing that not all distance is safety, and not all closeness is a trap. It's about learning to sit with the discomfort of being known without trying to control, test, or escape. You can want connection without abandoning yourself, and without disappearing when things get real.

- Do I chase connection, then pull away or find faults once it gets close?
- Do I often feel torn between wanting intimacy and wanting to be left alone?
- Do I withhold parts of myself in relationships, even while hoping to feel fully seen and loved?



When a Chaser pattern is paired with a secondary Stoic response, you get a mix of emotional urgency and emotional control. The Chaser part wants closeness, reassurance, and emotional availability from others. But the Stoic part has learned that expressing vulnerability is risky or even shameful, so it stays composed, restrained, and emotionally self-contained.

This creates a dynamic where you may be chasing connection on the outside, while withholding or downplaying your emotional truth on the inside. You might long to be held but say, "I'm fine." Or reach out but mask the intensity of what you're feeling. You expect others to meet your needs, but you struggle to articulate those needs clearly because a part of you believes you should be able to handle it on your own.

This blend often comes from environments where emotional expression wasn't modeled or welcomed. So you learn to intellectualize pain, keep things together, and stay strong, even while aching for connection. Over time, this can lead to frustration, resentment, or emotional burnout, as your internal world remains unseen even by the people you're trying to get close to.

Healing this blend means learning to let yourself be impacted. To allow your truth to be expressed without filtering it through stoicism. You don't have to choose between needing and being strong.

- Do I want emotional support but struggle to show my own feelings?
- Do I downplay my needs while hoping someone will notice?
- Do I feel I have to stay strong even when I want closeness?

# Chaser + Lonewolf (Dismissive Avoidant, Self-Reliant)

When a Chaser pattern is layered with a secondary Lone Wolf response, it creates a deep inner conflict between emotional dependence and radical self-reliance. The Chaser part longs for closeness, validation, and reassurance, often feeling anxious when there's distance or uncertainty. But the Lone Wolf part has learned that depending on others is dangerous, unreliable, or weak, so it retreats, isolates, and tries to handle everything alone.

This combination often shows up as someone who desperately wants to be chosen, but simultaneously resents needing anyone at all. You might reach out for connection, then feel ashamed of that need. Or you might suppress your longing entirely, convincing yourself that you don't need anyone while quietly craving closeness.

It's a protective split: I want love, but I'll never need it. The result? You stay emotionally underfed, caught between the fear of being alone and the fear of relying on someone who might let you down.

Healing this blend means giving yourself permission to need without shame. It means recognizing that needing connection doesn't make you weak and that self-reliance built on fear isn't true strength. You don't have to choose between independence and intimacy. Real safety comes from being able to hold both.

#### What this might feel like:

- Do I long for closeness but feel ashamed or weak for needing it?
- Do I reach out for connection, then feel the urge to pull away and handle it all myself?
- Do I say I'm better off alone, even when I want to be chosen?



When a Chaser pattern is paired with a secondary Anchor response, there's a steadying influence beneath the urgency. The Chaser part still craves reassurance, fears disconnection, and can feel anxious when things feel uncertain but the Anchor part brings in self-awareness, emotional regulation, and a growing ability to pause before reacting.

This blend often shows up as someone who feels the familiar pull to reach out, overexplain, or close the gap but now has enough internal safety to slow down and check in first. You may still feel the waves of anxious activation, but the Anchor allows you to witness it rather than be overtaken by it. You start to ask: Is this impulse coming from truth, or fear? Do I need to act, or just soothe myself first?

It doesn't mean you've "outgrown" your Chaser tendencies. It means you're beginning to hold them differently, with more compassion, more discernment, and more choice. The Anchor part is what makes it possible to stay with your experience without needing someone else to fix it. And as this part strengthens, your relationships shift too, because you're no longer seeking safety through others, but bringing safety into the connection.

- Do I still feel anxious in relationships, but now pause to check in with myself before reacting?
- Do I notice when I'm reaching for reassurance and try to meet myself first before turning outward?
- Do I feel like I'm learning to stay with my emotions instead of acting from them immediately?

10 Conclusion



You've just walked through the deeper layers of the Chaser pattern, not as a label, but as a reflection of the strategies your nervous system developed to stay connected in the face of fear, inconsistency, or unmet needs. Along the way, you explored how urgency, longing, and self-abandonment often work together beneath the surface, and how turning inward is the beginning of real safety.

Here's what you've begun to uncover:

- That your impulse to chase connection isn't weakness, it's a signal from a part of you that learned love had to be earned
- That slowing down and getting to know your tender parts helps you stay grounded in the moment, rather than consumed by it
- That safety is built through consistency with self, not perfect behavior from others
- That your body carries wisdom and the more you honor its yes and no, the more clarity you gain in every relationship
- That checking in with yourself daily builds trust, emotional fluency, and nervous system regulation
- That you're likely shaped by more than one pattern, and understanding your secondary responses brings compassion and nuance to your growth
- That your healing doesn't mean never being triggered again. It means building the capacity to hold the trigger without abandoning yourself in it
- And that you are already capable of creating the kind of connection you crave by starting with yourself



Healing isn't a straight path. It's not something you complete and never revisit. It's more accurate to think of it as a spiral. You'll revisit the same fears, triggers, and patterns more than once, not because you've failed, but because healing happens in layers.

Attachment wounds are formed through repetition, through the same emotional experiences happening over and over in your early environment. So it makes sense that healing those wounds also requires repetition. You might notice that you keep circling back to the same core themes: feeling rejected, not enough, too much, unseen, or unchosen. That's not a sign you're broken. That's your system pointing to where the pain still lives.

Each time you re-encounter those moments, you're being given an opportunity, not to fix it, but to meet it differently. To build more capacity. To respond with more awareness. To notice the urge to chase, collapse, or contort and pause instead. That pause is progress. That awareness is healing.

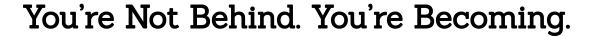
You may still get hijacked by the younger parts of you who learned that love requires self-abandonment. You may still feel the pull to reach, over-explain, or blame yourself when things feel uncertain. But the more you practice staying present with what's happening inside you, the more you rewire the belief that panic means danger and distance means you're unlovable.



This is what healing actually looks like:

- Seeing the pattern sooner
- Naming what's happening without judgment
- Choosing not to abandon yourself in the moment
- Reconnecting with your body, your truth, and your safety, even when it's hard

You're not regressing when you get triggered again. You're revisiting the wound with more tools, more presence, and more self-trust than you had the last time. That's not going backwards. That's integration. Healing isn't about never getting triggered again. It's about being able to stay with yourself when you do.



If you've made it this far, take a moment to really acknowledge what you've just done. You've looked directly at the patterns that have shaped your relationships, your nervous system, and the parts of you that learned to chase love in order to feel safe. That's not easy work, but it's powerful work.

This is about finally seeing yourself clearly, your needs, your fears, your longings, and learning how to stay with those parts instead of outsourcing your safety to someone else. You now have language for what once felt confusing. You have tools to slow things down. You know what it means to check in with yourself, to anchor in your body, and to lead with your truth instead of your fear.

You will still have moments where the urgency hits. Where you question everything. Where old instincts pull you back into old patterns. That's okay. You're not supposed to do this perfectly. You're supposed to keep returning, to yourself, to your center, to your capacity. That return is the work.

Let this be your reminder:

You are not too much. You are not broken.

You are learning how to love without losing yourself.

And every time you pause, reflect, and choose to stay with yourself instead of chasing something outside you, you're rewriting the story.

You're not behind. You're becoming.

This work is yours now. Take it with you. Let it ground you. Let it meet you in the moments that shake you.

And most of all, let it remind you that you're already on your way.

You're doing beautifully.





### The Chaser

In "The Chaser," explore the delicate dance of intimacy as the longing for closeness battles against the fear of loss. Journey through the complexities of connection, uncovering how anxious patterns shape your relationships and keep you in a cycle of pursuit. Discover the transformative power of self-acceptance and learn to create safe connections without losing yourself in the chase for love.

This e-book is for educational and informational purposes only. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional psychological, therapeutic, or medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the guidance of a qualified mental health professional with any questions you may have regarding your mental or emotional well-being. The insights, archetypes, and frameworks shared here are not diagnostic labels, they are tools for self-reflection and transformation. Every healing journey is deeply personal. Use what resonates, release what doesn't, and remember: you are not broken. You're learning how to come back to yourself.