Managing or Leaving an Emotionally Immature Relationship: Your 6 Weeks

Welcome to your group

Over the next six weeks we'll move gently from bringing safety back into your body, to understanding the patterns you've been living with, to healing and looking ahead. Whether you're a partner or a family member, and whether you're staying, leaving or still unsure, every path is respected here. There is no pressure to leave.

Many people arrive feeling they are the problem, or that they are “too much” or “too difficult” or “they just have to try harder”. This group starts where you always deserved to be: seen, heard, accepted and supported. My hope is that in this group we all have each other's back.

Each session

- **Arrive and ground:** a short breathing, tapping or grounding practice to settle in
- **Check in:** sharing a word or symbol on how you're going
- **This week's focus:** a short therapeutic sharing, then time to reflect and share at your own pace
- **Practice together:** breathing or tapping as a group on this week's focus, or on specific challenges participants are experiencing
- **Check out and take-away:** bringing the focus home with you, where you need it most

Your six weeks

Week 1: Arriving safely

- Our group commitments, and how we co-create a safe space together
- Getting to know each other: your first name, what's brought you here, and what you're hoping to gain (no heavy details yet: we go gently until you have trauma-informed tools to care for yourself)
- Your nervous system: an introduction to Polyvagal theory – the gateway to understanding emotional immaturity and your trauma responses
- Deep breathing to calm and regulate – your poor nervous system has probably been crying out for this
- **Take-away:** your deep breathing plan for the week, and your main take-away

Week 2: Tapping – it's weird but it works

- Check-in: when did your deep breathing help? How are you feeling?
- An introduction to Emotional Freedom Techniques (also known as tapping)
- Tapping together on your feelings: grief, loss, guilt, blame, shame and fear for your future
- **Take-away:** a short tapping practice to help you through the tough moments

Week 3: The pattern

- Check-in: when did your tapping help? A symbol to share how you're feeling
- Understanding the cycle of toxic bonding, coercive control and abuse, and how it may play out in your relationship

- Why it can be so hard to leave: the pull of hope and hurt – toxic bonding
- What hooks you? The ways a partner or family member may hook you, and the predictable play book:
- The poor me's
- Guilt and obligation
- Anger and threats
- Silent treatment and stonewalling
- Lying
- Financial control
- Double binds: where you just can't win
- Gaslighting
- DARVO (deny, attack, reverse victim and offender)
- Smear campaigns
- Hoovering: being pulled back in after you've stepped away
- **Take-away:** noticing which hooks show up for you, and tapping on those

Week 4: Protecting your peace

- Check-in: what did you need to tap on? Noticing where feelings are held in your body
- Boundaries: what they are, holding them, and what may happen when you do
- Yellow rocking and grey rocking
- **Take-away:** one boundary to practise this week and forever more, with a tapping to help

Week 5: Healing the hurt

- Check-in: where did tapping protect your peace?
- Tapping to ease the trauma
- Making room for grief: for the relationship you hoped for
- What do you need now?
- **Take-away:** one way you will care for yourself this week, and a tapping to allow self-care without feeling selfish

Week 6: Your future – we all want the best for you

- Check-in: where do you feel change or healing happening?
- What would you like your future to hold?
- Your plan for when the old pattern pulls you back
- Building support around you beyond the group
- Next steps, and fond farewells
- **Take-away:** a commitment you will make to yourself, and a short feedback form *(to help Tess keep learning too!😅)*

Staying safe

Talking about these patterns, and especially about leaving, can stir things up, both within you and at home. Your safety comes first.

- **A quick exit is always fine.** If someone walks in during our group session, just wave and leave the call. No explanation needed. Rejoin if you can, or I'll check in with you afterwards to make sure you're safe.
- **Keep your materials private.** If someone may read your phone, email or messages, consider a separate email address for group resources, and clear your history if needed.
- **Keep yourself safe.** Change your passwords, and have your devices checked for tracking or cloning apps.
- **A one-to-one safety plan** is available. Just let me know.
- **1800RESPECT:** 1800 737 732 (24 hours, family and domestic violence support)
- **Lifeline:** 13 11 14
- **In an emergency:** 000

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