



A Very Important Friendship

Often, we try to stop people-pleasing by using strategies such as setting boundaries and being more assertive in how we communicate. We decide we'll be more true to ourselves, prioritise our own needs, and say no. However these are quite grown-up ways of being. Given that it was the little child within who first came up with the idea that we need to please to be loved, it makes sense to start from there.

The child that you once were is still there in your subconscious. They crave your attention and love. So approach them with compassion, kindness and patience. Give them the validation and approval they've been seeking. As you do this they have no need to seek that validation and approval from others by people-pleasing.

It's very important that you let them know that just because you want to do things differently from now - they've done nothing wrong and that you wholly accept them.

Next, tell them how much you value them. Say 'Thank you,' for their hard work, and let them know that you can see just how much they've been doing a fantastic job of protecting you from rejection through the years.

Reassure them that you're not trying to push them away; that you'll keep them safe in your heart-space always, but that they can start to have fun and be joyful now, instead of carrying the burden of your problems.

One of the most powerful ways you can do this is by writing a letter to your inner child. I've encouraged many people to do this exercise, and every time they share it with me, it brings tears to their eyes, and relief.

In your letter, speak to them by name. If you had a nickname and you feel comfortable with that, call them by that nickname. Or you could call them by your name with 'Little' beforehand. For example 'Little Mary.'

Make your friendship with your inner child a lifelong friendship and speak to them every day