

A COMPASSIONATE GUIDE

For us introverts
who have always
felt like *something's*
wrong with them



I hope this guide is useful, and if nothing else, that it reminds you you're not broken. You simply learnt to adapt, in the most beautiful and powerful way. Those adaptations aren't needed at this point in your life. Thank them, embrace them, hold them... and let's begin.

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NARM & BEING ME THERAPIST

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BEFORE WE BEGIN

A note, just for you

If you've ever carried the quiet ache that *"something is wrong with me,"* especially as an introvert who feels everything more deeply, then you're in the right place.

I lived there for years, until I discovered that what I was feeling wasn't personal failure. It was the after effect of what many call developmental trauma: the repeated emotional misses, confusion, stress, or lack of safe connection while growing up that shape our nervous system and the stories we tell ourselves about being "enough."

This short guide is a bridge between that silent "I'm broken" feeling and language that helps it make sense. We'll look at common survival patterns: people pleasing, freezing, overthinking (especially common in introverts who learnt to play small) that once protected you but now leave you exhausted, anxious, or ashamed. Seeing them as adaptations, not defects, softens self blame.

You'll also get a few simple, body based noticing practices, no perfection required, to help you stay with what you feel for just a moment, so safety and compassion have space to grow.

Each section ends with a reflection prompt. Take them slowly. There's nothing to "fix" before you're allowed to feel better. Feeling enough can begin in small, doable ways, starting now.

You're not broken

If the word *trauma* lands heavy, you don't have to adopt it. Start with whatever is true: *I feel broken, not enough, too much*. Bring that. You're welcome here exactly as you are.

It's like you've been seeing the world through a pair of broken glasses. Every experience, every relationship, every challenge, distorted by the belief that you're not enough. And when you're looking through a cracked lens, especially as an introvert who already notices every subtle shift in tone, expression and expectation, it makes sense that life feels overwhelming. That you freeze. That you overthink. That you shrink.

This guide is a starting point. It's not a magic fix, and it won't give you all the answers. But it might help you begin to see yourself differently, less as a problem to be solved, and more as a person who has been surviving the only way they knew how.

And that's where real change begins: when we stop trying to "fix" ourselves and start learning to feel safe, enough, and whole, just as we are.

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You're not broken. You were shaped.

Why you feel this way

Let's get one thing straight: the way you feel is not random. It's not because you're weak, lazy, or failing at life. It's because of how you were shaped. Your sense of "I'm not enough" didn't come out of nowhere. You learned to feel this way.

This is what we call developmental trauma. It's not always a big, obvious event, like abuse or neglect. It's often the subtle, repeated experiences that teach your nervous system how to survive. It's growing up in an environment where you felt unseen, misunderstood, or unsafe, especially as a quiet, sensitive, introverted kid who wanted to stay out of trouble.

It's learning to suppress your needs to please others and avoid conflict. It's being told, in big or small ways, that you weren't good enough just as you were.

Here's something most people don't realise: as children, we'll do anything to stay connected to the people we rely on, our parents, our caregivers, the people who are supposed to love and protect us. Even if it means cutting off parts of ourselves. We split from our truth, our feelings, our needs. It's not a conscious choice, it's survival.

Some call this developmental trauma, the way repeated emotional moments shape your nervous system, and your sense of "enough."

But here's the thing: those patterns that helped you survive as a child are now keeping you stuck as an adult. The constant overthinking. For many introverts, these patterns show up as shrinking, staying quiet, or hiding parts of yourself so you wouldn't be judged. The people pleasing. The freeze response when you try to take action. It's all part of a survival system that's been running the show, without you even realising it.

And here's the most important thing I want you to hear:

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*We disconnect from who we are because staying connected to those around us felt like a matter of **life or death**.*

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And that split is painful. It's like tearing a part of yourself away, losing a limb. But you do it because you have to. Because you're a child, and your survival depends on it.

Over time, this shapes how you see the world, like wearing those broken glasses. Everything gets distorted. You assume people are judging you. You feel like you have to earn love. You shrink back when things feel overwhelming. This isn't your fault. It's your nervous system doing its job to keep you safe.

You can change this. Not by forcing. Not by trying harder. Not by fixing yourself, but by learning to notice what's happening, gently, and by building safety in your body, one step at a time. That's what we'll explore next.



Reflection prompt

Pause for a moment. Take a breath. What do you notice in your body right now? Are there any sensations, tightness, warmth, pressure, or something else? What thoughts are coming up? What feelings are present? Just notice. No need to fix or change anything. This is a chance to get curious.

How to start noticing it (gently)

This is where things begin to shift, not by fixing yourself, but by noticing what's actually happening. Gently. Without judgment. Without rushing.

It might feel strange at first, because you've spent so long in survival mode, cutting off parts of yourself to stay safe, pushing down your feelings, numbing the discomfort, overthinking, trying to make sense of it all. It's survival. It always has been.

The truth is, it's painful to come back to the parts of yourself you had to leave behind. It can feel like opening an old wound. That's why your body resists. That's why toxic guilt and shame show up, because they're trying to keep you safe. They're not the problem; they're the body's way of ensuring you don't feel or do the things that weren't allowed when you were younger.

This is what my teacher, Gaia, calls the personal lie, the belief you carry deep down: "I'm not enough," "I don't deserve love," "I'm broken," "I'll never be happy."

These aren't facts. They're stories your nervous system clings to, to keep you from the risk of feeling that old pain. They're powerful survival adaptations, and they make perfect sense when you understand them that way.

But here's the shift: you can begin to notice these patterns without being consumed by them. You can start to see them for what they are: old stories, old strategies that helped you survive, but don't have to define you now.

And here's the most important part: when you shine a light on the feelings and emotions that are most painful, those you've disconnected from for so long, they often aren't as scary or overwhelming as they seemed. They begin to soften, to come out of the dark.

This work isn't about avoiding or cutting off from these parts of you; it's the opposite. It's about allowing, accepting, and gently inviting them back. The parts you've hated, rejected, or feared are often the most tender, the most beautifully human parts of you. And when you start to welcome them back, you begin to feel whole. Complete. Seen, warts and all.



The next time you catch yourself feeling small, stuck, or overwhelmed, try this:
pause, breathe.

Reflection prompt

Right now, take a breath and notice: what do you feel in your body? Are there any sensations, tightness, warmth, pressure, or something else? What's the emotion or thought underneath it? What's the personal lie you're holding in this moment? Can you offer yourself just a little kindness, knowing this is your body's way of protecting you, and that it's safe to begin exploring it now?

This is survival, not truth.

You might not like what you find. That's okay. This is about creating safety, not chasing perfection. It's about learning to stay with yourself, gently, even when it feels messy. The goal isn't to get it "right." The goal is to begin noticing. That's the first, most powerful step.

You don't have to fix it... feeling enough now

Here's the part most people never tell you: you don't have to heal everything to feel more at peace today. You don't have to untangle every memory, process every emotion, or solve every problem to start feeling enough.

Peace doesn't come from fixing yourself, especially for introverts who've spent their whole lives trying to act confident, outgoing, or "stronger." It comes from gently learning to stay with yourself, especially the parts you've tried to run from.

That truth might feel hard to believe, and that's okay. Your nervous system might still be clinging to the old stories, the personal lies. But you can start to let in the possibility, just a little at a time. This is the practice: instead of chasing "better," you pause. You breathe. You notice what's here. And you remind yourself, *I don't have to fix this.*



The truth is, you already are enough. You always were.

Reflection prompt

Take a moment, close your eyes, and ask: *What if I didn't have to fix this? What if I could just feel it, stay with it, and know that it's okay to feel what I feel? Can I allow myself to soften, even just a little?*

This is not about getting it perfect. As an introvert, you've likely spent years trying to meet everyone else's expectations. This is where you finally start meeting your own. It's not about being endlessly calm or happy, it's about learning to hold all of it: the fear, the shame, the guilt, the tenderness, and knowing that none of it makes you broken.

When you soften, allow, and welcome the parts of you that feel hard to love, something shifts. You stop fighting yourself. And slowly, you start to feel a little more at peace, a little more whole, exactly as you are. This is not a quick fix. But it's a beginning... and sometimes, a beginning is enough.

You don't have to do this alone

This work is hard. It's messy, uncomfortable, and sometimes it feels like you're the only one struggling. But here's the truth: you're not alone. If you're feeling stuck, overwhelmed, or like you just don't know how to take the next step, that's okay. You don't have to figure it all out on your own.

This guide is a starting point, but it's not the whole journey. We were never meant to do this work in isolation. Healing happens in connection, with others who get it, who've been there, and who can hold space for your story without trying to fix or rescue you. It's not about having someone else solve it for you. It's about having someone by your side as you learn to feel safe in your own skin.

Reflection prompt

Take a moment and ask yourself: *What would it feel like to let someone in, just a little? To not have to hold all of this by myself?*

YOUR NEXT STEP

Walk with me

Reading about this is one thing. Being walked through it is another.

COMING HOME · A FOUR WEEK WALK BACK TO YOU

Fourteen *gentle walks*, with me

Coming Home is my four week experience. Fourteen short walks on video, 10 to 20 minutes each, out in the fields... just you and me. I spent 37 years believing something was wrong with me too. This isn't more to understand. It's somewhere to actually feel it, at your own pace.

Walk with me

OR WORK WITH ME, ONE TO ONE

The *Gentle Container*

Three months of private work together, for the quiet ones nobody has ever quite seen. It starts with a free half hour chat. No pitch, no pressure... and if it isn't right, I'll say so.

Start with a free chat

And if neither feels right just yet, you're always welcome to simply reach out, jon@jonimondi.com. You are enough. You are not broken. And I'd be honoured to walk alongside you.

Big love,

Jon 💙