

PAGBABALIK-LOOB

**5 BASIC SACRED STEPS TO BEGIN YOUR
FILIPINO INNER CHILD HEALING JOURNEY**



**LEARN WHY DECOLONIZATION,
BOUNDARIES, AND RECLAIMING YOUR
SOFTNESS ALL GO HAND-IN-HAND**



Welcome!

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I founded The Hilom Collective in November of 2024, which is an open and safe membership community where Filipinos everywhere can heal their inner child, take back their boundaries, and decolonialize how they perceive themselves.

What started as an intimate advocacy turned into a ripple effect, linking members throughout the diaspora, creating an overall narrative of healing, remembrance, and return. Decolonization lies at the core of the process because we are not able to heal fully unless we grasp the histories that created our suffering.

This freebie is meant as your soft introduction: a facilitated resource to guide you towards reconnecting with your Filipino inner child, examining the patterns you hold, and making small but significant strides towards healing. I want you to feel value here and in knowing that you are already part of something larger.

Dr. Nette

ABOUT ME

Hello, my name is Dr. Nette, and I'm a Filipino-American clinical psychologist, and The Brown Psych is my practice where I created a space to celebrate the special paths of healing for Filipinos experiencing life-between-cultures.

My own experience as a Filipino and as a cancer patient reminded me of how far-reaching and multifaceted our wounds are, and how frequently they connect back not only to individual experiences, but to family histories of survival, sacrifice, and silence.



Why It Matters



Balik Loob is "to return inward", to go home to yourself, to reunite with the parts of you that have been silenced, forgotten, or hidden. It's an act of remembering who you are behind the expectations, obligations, and pressures you've been carrying for so long.



If you've ever felt guilty for saying no, if you've felt the ache of disconnection from your ancestors or culture, if you've carried invisible family burdens that were never really yours to hold know this: you are not alone, and you are not broken.



This freebie is not here to "fix" you. It's here as a gentle invitation to remind you that healing has been waiting inside you all along. One small reflection, one soft step, one breath at a time, you can begin the journey back to yourself. And you don't have to walk it alone.



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Understanding The Filipino Inner Child

In Western psychology, the “inner child” is often seen as a personal wound, a reflection of individual childhood pain or unmet needs. But for Filipinos, our inner child is not only shaped by personal experience; it’s embedded in family, culture, and history.

Scholars like Pe Pua and Prospero Covar remind us that Filipino identity is deeply relational, anchored in kapwa (shared self), utang na loob (debt of gratitude), and hiya (shame/modesty). These cultural values are beautiful but can also become heavy when distorted by colonial legacies and generational expectations. We learn early on to prioritize family and community, sometimes at the cost of our own needs.

EJR David highlight how colonialism didn’t just change our lands, it shaped how we see ourselves. Colonial mentality teaches us to devalue our own skin, language, and traditions. Filipino indigenous psychology and liberation psychology push us to expand healing beyond the individual. Healing the Filipino inner child means remembering:



You are not just healing you, you are healing the stories passed down through colonization, displacement, migration, and survival.



Healing must be both personal and collective. We cannot free ourselves if we are still trapped in systems that teach us to abandon our softness, silence our needs, or disconnect from our ancestors.



When you begin this journey, you are not just reclaiming your personal wholeness, you are participating in a larger movement of cultural and historical healing.

You are saying: I will not carry these burdens alone anymore.

Reflection Prompts:

Write or voice-note your answers, let them flow without judgment.

What stories or expectations have I carried that didn't start with me?

Where in my body or heart do I feel the weight of those inherited patterns?

When I imagine releasing even a little of that weight, what becomes possible?



Healing The Filipino Inner Child Means Healing Across Layers

COLONIAL HISTORY



- Spanish, American, Japanese colonization
- Catholic guilt
- Colonial mentality
- Migration and diaspora wounds

FAMILY & CULTURAL VALUES



- Utang na loob (debt of gratitude)
- Hiya (shame, modesty)
- Kapwa (shared self)
- Pakikisama (smooth interpersonal relations)
- Family loyalty and sacrifice

PERSONAL INNER CHILD WOUNDS



- Unmet emotional needs
- Childhood wounds
- Longing for safety, love, and self-expression



Now That You Know This



You've just uncovered a powerful truth:
Your healing is not just about your personal past, it's about the deep, layered histories you carry in your body, your family, and your culture.



But here's the good news:
You don't have to untangle all of it at once. Healing happens in small, intentional steps, the kind that gently invite you back to yourself without pressure or overwhelm.

In the next section, I'll guide you through 5 Essential Steps to begin reconnecting with your Filipino inner child.

These steps are not rules or tasks, they are invitations. Take them at your own pace, knowing that each reflection brings you closer to coming home inward





Step 1: Name Your Inherited Stories

Filipino culture teaches us values like *kapwa*, *utang na loob*, and *pakikisama*: beautiful ways of staying connected. But through centuries of colonization, these values were reshaped into expectations of sacrifice, silence, and self-erasure. We were taught that being “good” meant always serving, obeying, and putting others first, even when it hurt.

This is why awareness is the first act of healing. Many of the wounds we carry, shame, guilt, not-enoughness, didn't start with us. They were shaped by family survival, colonial rule, migration, and poverty. By naming these inherited stories, we begin to loosen their hold and open the door to reclaiming who we really are.



Reflection Prompts

What family expectations or cultural messages have shaped how you see yourself?

Which stories feel heavy, like they don't fully belong to you?

Where in your life do you feel you're living someone else's script?

Gentle Practice: Write down or voice-record three inherited stories you are ready to question or rethink. You don't have to “fix” them today, just notice them.



Step 2

Honor Ancestors Without Self-Erasure

In many Filipino families, honoring ancestors means loyalty, respect, and fulfilling family expectations. But colonization layered on harmful ideas, that honoring the past means obeying without question or sacrificing yourself completely. True pagpapahalaga (valuing) of your roots does not mean you must abandon your own needs or dreams. You can honor where you come from without losing who you are.

Healing the inner child is not about cutting off from your family or culture. It's about creating space where both your history and your individuality can exist. When you recognize that you are both connected and allowed to take up space, you break cycles of self-erasure and open the way to more authentic, loving relationships, with family, with culture, and with yourself.



Reflection Prompts

Where in your life do you feel you must “disappear” parts of yourself to stay loyal to family or culture?

What do you truly admire or cherish about your ancestors or lineage?

What's one part of yourself that longs to be honored alongside your family's expectations, not underneath them?

Gentle Practice: Write a letter (or voice-note) to your ancestors or elders. Thank them for the gifts they've passed down and gently name the patterns you are ready to release. Let this be a sacred act of respect and self-reclamation. .



Step 3

Listen to the Needs of Your Inner Child

Many of us grew up learning to silence or dismiss our own needs, especially when family, survival, or expectations took priority. Over time, we may have learned that asking for softness, care, or attention made us “too much” or “selfish.” But your inner child still lives within you, carrying quiet longings that deserve to be heard.

Listening to your inner child is not about staying stuck in the past, it’s about recognizing the parts of you that still need tenderness today. When you begin to listen without judgment, you open space for healing, for joy, and for reclaiming the softness that was once denied.



Reflection Prompts

What did you need more of as a child love, rest, safety, play?

When was the last time you felt safe enough to express your true feelings?

What part of you feels tired of being ignored or silenced?

Gentle Practice: Place a hand over your heart, close your eyes, and imagine sitting beside your younger self. Without needing to fix or explain anything, simply ask: “What do you need today?” Listen softly and write down whatever comes.



Step 4

Set Gentle Boundaries

In Filipino culture, we're often taught that love means sacrifice that saying "no" is selfish, disrespectful, or ungrateful. But boundaries are not walls; they are bridges that protect both you and your relationships. Without clear, gentle limits, love becomes tangled with resentment, exhaustion, and quiet suffering.

Setting boundaries honors both your own needs and the people you care about. It says: I want to stay connected, but I also need space to breathe and be myself. Healing begins when you give yourself permission to create that space even if it feels unfamiliar or uncomfortable at first.



Reflection Prompts

Where do you feel most drained or overextended in your life right now?

What boundary have you been afraid to set because you fear it will disappoint someone?

How would it feel in your body to protect even one small part of your time, energy, or heart?

Gentle Practice: Choose one tiny boundary today, something as simple as saying no to an extra task, pausing before replying to a message, or giving yourself quiet time. Remind yourself: It is safe to protect my own space.



Step 5

Reclaim Joy and Play

For many of us, joy and play were the first things sacrificed when life became about duty, survival, or meeting others' expectations. Yet your inner child longs not only for healing, but for aliveness. Reclaiming joy is not frivolous, it is an act of resistance and self-remembering.

When you allow yourself to play, laugh, and create freely, you reconnect to parts of you untouched by shame or pressure. You remind yourself that you are not only here to endure, you are here to live fully. This is where healing becomes celebration.



Reflection Prompts

What did you love doing as a child that you stopped making time for?

When was the last time you felt playful or creative without worrying about being "productive"?

What small moment of joy can you invite into your life this week?

Gentle Practice: Choose one tiny boundary today, something as simple as saying no to an extra task, pausing before replying to a message, or giving yourself quiet time. Remind yourself: It is safe to protect my own space.



Why Decolonization Matters in Healing

True healing is not just about tending to your personal wounds, it's about understanding where those wounds came from. For many Filipinos, the pain we carry is not only from our own lives, but from centuries of colonization, displacement, and survival. We inherited stories that taught us to shrink, to obey, to erase parts of ourselves to fit into systems that were never built for us. Decolonization invites us to look honestly at how these histories shaped our sense of worth, belonging, and identity.

When we decolonize, we are not rejecting our families or our culture, we are peeling away the layers of oppression that taught us to disconnect from our own softness, our own needs, and even our own joy. We begin to see that healing isn't just about "getting better" or "fixing ourselves," but about returning to a fuller, freer version of who we've always been. We remember that we come from ancestors who knew wholeness before they were told to forget.

This is why decolonization matters: because you deserve to live a life that is not shaped by shame, silence, or survival alone. You deserve to take up space, to feel pleasure, to rest, to say no, to play, to create, to love on your own terms. Healing your inner child is an act of remembrance, a way of saying: I refuse to carry these old wounds into the future. You are not just healing for yourself; you are healing for those who came before you, and those who will come after.



How to Continue This Work Inside The Hilom Collective



Healing does not happen in isolation. As Filipinos, we are shaped by *kapwa*, the deep knowing that we exist in relationship with others, that our healing is intertwined, and that we remember ourselves more fully when we are witnessed in community.

Inside *The Hilom Collective*, you don't have to walk this journey alone. You are held by a circle of Filipinos around the world, all coming together to unlearn, reclaim, and heal in ways that honor both family and freedom. This is a space where your softness is welcome, your boundaries are respected, and your growth is celebrated, all at your own pace.



How to Continue This Work Inside The Hilom Collective



Here's what you'll find when you join us:



Weekly Events

Focused topics on Filipino Inner Child Healing, Boundaries, and Breaking Generational Trauma



Guided Journaling & Reflection Prompts

Thoughtful, no-fluff prompts that help you go deeper



Live Support Group Circles

Heart-to-heart spaces to share, connect, and be supported



How to Continue This Work Inside The Hilom Collective



Here's what you'll find when you join us:



Private Community of Kapwa

A safe, members-only space with Filipinos worldwide who get it.



On-Demand Online Courses

Practical tools to guide your healing wherever you are



Members-Only Offers & Early Access

Special rates and first invitations to new workshops and programs





You don't have to navigate this healing journey alone. When you join The Hilom Collective, you're stepping into a sacred space where you are seen, supported, and reminded that you are never too much and never too far gone to come home to yourself.

Together, we break cycles, reclaim joy, and heal one gentle step at a time.

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www.thebrownpsych.com

**Ready to Join Us?
We're Here to Welcome You**



**Healing Together,
Rising Stronger**

To learn more or join, visit:

<https://thebrownpsych.com/hilom-collective>



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