

# **From Surviving to Thriving:**

## *7 Steps to Heal from a Toxic Relationship*

A journey from emotional chaos to clarity, peace, and self-reclamation.

## **Why Healing from a Toxic Relationship Is So Damn Hard**

...and What You Can Do About It

Maybe you left them.  
Maybe they left you.

But the pain didn't leave with them.

You still think about them.  
You still question what happened.  
Some part of you still hopes for closure... or even their return.

You check their socials.  
You scan their WhatsApp profile picture.  
You reread old texts or scroll through photos — searching for something to soothe the ache.  
But it doesn't help.

Instead, it hits you like a wave — a gut-punch of grief — while you're at the gym, in the car, or mid-sentence at work.

It's like being on fire. And when you're on fire, you'll do anything to extinguish it.

That's what those desperate texts and silent check-ins are: survival mode.  
You're trying to regulate a nervous system in agony.

And maybe, somewhere in the chaos, you've asked yourself:

“Why can't I just move on?”  
“Why do I miss someone who hurt me?”  
“What's wrong with me?”

### **Here's the Truth:**

There's **nothing wrong with you**.  
You're not broken.  
You're bonded.  
You're on fire — emotionally, spiritually, neurologically.

We'd never expect someone with a broken leg to sprint a marathon.  
So why do we expect ourselves to "just move on" after surviving emotional trauma?

## Trauma Bonding: The Invisible Chain

Toxic relationships don't just break your heart.  
They **rewire your brain** and hijack your nervous system.

When love is fused with fear, manipulation, or extreme emotional highs and lows, your body goes into survival mode. You form a **trauma bond** — a powerful, addictive attachment that keeps you hooked, even when you know the relationship is harmful.

Every time your partner pulled away, then came back with affection, your brain got a hit of dopamine — just enough to keep you chasing the high. Add moments of intimacy or sex, and your body released oxytocin — the “bonding hormone” — deepening the illusion of connection.

This isn't weakness.  
It's biology.  
Your nervous system has been trained to confuse chaos with love.

## Hormones & Heartbreak

This isn't just emotional. It's **chemical**.

- **Cortisol** surges from chronic stress, leaving you foggy, wired, and unable to rest.
- **Dopamine** rewards even the smallest hint of hope or contact.
- **Oxytocin** binds you after closeness, even when that closeness was abusive.

You're not just missing a person — you're detoxing from a neurochemical addiction.  
Your body is reacting. Not your soul.

## The Path to Healing

Time alone isn't enough.

Healing from a toxic relationship takes **intention**.  
It takes nervous system repair, emotional release, and boundary work — not just with others, but with yourself.

That's why I created this 7-step program.

It's not a quick fix.  
But it *is* a map — a way back to you.

## What You've Been Through: When Love Feels Like War

If you're here, chances are:

You were in a relationship that wasn't just difficult — it was **destabilizing**.

You gave everything.  
You tried to love harder.  
You tried to fix it.  
And somewhere along the way, **you lost yourself.**

You may have experienced:

- Constant **gaslighting** that made you question your reality
- Emotional highs that felt euphoric, followed by devastating crashes
- **Blame-shifting, silent treatments, or rage** whenever you tried to set boundaries
- Feeling like you were too much... or never enough
- Being idealized, then discarded, again and again
- Walking on eggshells
- Apologizing for things that were never your fault

And through it all, you kept asking:

“Is it me?”

“Am I the crazy one?”

“Why can’t I be enough for them?”

## **You Might Have Been Dealing With Cluster B Patterns**

Let’s be clear: You’re not here to diagnose anyone.

Their pain is not your responsibility. It never was.

**Whether they had a label or not — toxic is toxic.**

But it can be healing to understand the dynamics.

Many of my clients unknowingly loved people who exhibited **traits of Cluster B personality types**, such as:

- Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD)
- Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD)
- Histrionic Personality Disorder (HPD)
- Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD)

These traits can include:

- **Love bombing:** Fast affection, idealization, future promises
- **Gaslighting:** Denying your reality or blaming you for everything
- **Devaluation:** Sudden criticism, emotional withdrawal, or cruelty
- **Discarding:** Abruptly leaving, ghosting, or showing no empathy
- **Hoovering:** Sucking you back in just when you start to move on
- **FOG:** Keeping you stuck through **Fear, Obligation, and Guilt**

The cycle becomes addictive. The pain becomes normal. And you forget what calm even feels like.

## The Aftermath: The Pain No One Sees

After this kind of trauma, you may find yourself struggling with:

- Brain fog, insomnia, or panic attacks
- Obsessive thoughts or rumination
- Shame, guilt, and emotional numbness
- Feeling like a stranger to yourself
- Mistrust of others — and of your own judgment

You're not overreacting. You're not weak.  
You were *psychologically injured*.

But there's hope. And there's a way forward.

## You Can Heal — Gently, Intentionally, Fully

This program isn't just about “moving on.”

It's about:

- Understanding what happened to you
- Releasing the trauma from your body
- Breaking the trauma bond
- Rebuilding safety, trust, and boundaries
- Reclaiming the self that got buried under survival

You're not too sensitive.  
You're not broken.  
You were conditioned to believe your truth didn't matter.

But it *does* matter.  
And we're going to **unlearn those lies — step by step**.

## Ready to Begin Your Healing?

This 7-step program is your roadmap back to wholeness.

You're not alone — and you don't have to figure this out on your own.

**Book a free discovery call** and take your first step toward peace, clarity, and coming home to yourself.

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✉ charl@charlpienaar.co.za

📞 082 331 4116

**Before we begin please always remember....**

## **Healing Isn't Linear — And That's Okay**

**You'll move through the pain in cycles, not in straight lines.**

Before we begin, let's get one thing straight:

**Healing from a toxic relationship is not a checklist.**

It's a *journey* — often a messy, sacred, spiraling one.

You don't go through the stages of grief once and never look back.

You cycle through them again and again — denial, anger, bargaining, sadness, acceptance — sometimes all in one day.

Especially when the relationship involved trauma, manipulation, or emotional dependency.

So if you've ever thought:

- *"But I already cried about this..."*
- *"Why am I angry again?"*
- *"I thought I was over them..."*

Let me assure you:

You're not failing.

You're *healing*.

Each time the pain resurfaces, it invites you to meet it with a little more wisdom, a little more compassion, and a little less self-abandonment.

The same goes for these 7 steps. You won't walk through them just once.

You'll revisit them in layers, with new awareness each time.

What felt impossible in Step 1 may feel empowering by the time you revisit it after Step 6.

This is a spiral staircase, not a straight road.

Some days you'll feel like you're flying forward. Other days you'll crawl.

Both are movement.

Both are sacred.

So take a breath.

Be gentle with yourself.

Let's begin again — together.

# Step 1: Regulating the Nervous System

**Before you can heal, you must feel safe in your own body again.**

After a toxic relationship, your nervous system often stays stuck in survival mode — swinging between anxiety, shutdown, numbness, and emotional overwhelm.

You're not "too sensitive."

You're not broken.

You're *dysregulated* — and that's a trauma response.

Living in emotional chaos — with gaslighting, manipulation, or walking on eggshells — puts your body in constant threat-detection mode. Over time, this rewires your system to stay in fight, flight, freeze, or fawn... even after the relationship ends.

You may notice:

- Trouble sleeping or relaxing
- Racing thoughts or obsessive overthinking
- Difficulty concentrating
- Panic attacks or emotional outbursts
- Feeling "on edge" or emotionally numb
- Chronic fatigue or muscle tension
- Addictive behaviours like scrolling, bingeing, or constantly checking their socials

Your body isn't betraying you — it's trying to protect you.

But now, it needs a different kind of safety. A softer rhythm. A return to calm.

## What Regulation Actually Looks Like

Regulation doesn't mean being perfect or never getting triggered.

It means knowing how to return to safety — again and again.

When you're regulated:

- You breathe more deeply
- You feel grounded rather than scattered
- Your reactions match the moment — not your past
- You respond from clarity, not panic

This is the foundation of all healing.

And it starts with your body — not your thoughts.

## How We Begin

Healing your nervous system isn't about doing more. It's about learning to *be* with yourself — gently, consistently, intentionally.

You don't have to meditate for an hour or force yourself into fake peace.  
You start small. You start *now*.  
Every act of care tells your body: "You are safe now."

## 1. Ground the Body

Come back into your body — safely and slowly.

- **Somatic grounding:** Feel your feet pressing into the ground. Notice your breath in your belly.
- **Tapping (EFT):** Gentle tapping on specific points calms anxiety and anchors awareness.
- **Cold water therapy:** Splash your face or hold something cold — it stimulates the vagus nerve and resets the stress response.

## 2. Use Your Breath as Medicine

Your breath is your fastest tool for calming the nervous system.

- **Box breathing (4-4-4-4):** Inhale, hold, exhale, hold — each for 4 seconds.
- **Extended exhales:** Inhale for 4, exhale for 6–8. This helps shift out of fight-or-flight mode.

## 3. Engage in Rhythmic Movement

Your nervous system responds well to rhythm — it's familiar, like a heartbeat in the womb.

- Gentle walking, swaying, dancing, yoga, or tai chi discharge stored tension.
- Repetitive movements regulate the vagus nerve and help you feel safe again.
- **Weight training** can be powerful. At first, it may trigger unsafe sensations (burning muscles, racing heart), but afterwards, it activates your calming response and builds trust in your body.

## 4. Nourish the Body

What you eat and drink affects your ability to heal.

- Eat balanced meals with protein and healthy fats to stabilize blood sugar.
- Limit caffeine, alcohol, and sugar — they mimic adrenaline and heighten anxiety.
- Stay hydrated. Your body needs clarity and energy to recover from trauma.

## 5. Create Micro-Routines of Safety

Small rituals restore trust between your body and your mind.

- A simple morning or evening routine (just 5 minutes) builds predictability and calm.
- Examples: lighting a candle, journaling one sentence, stretching, or taking a warm shower.

## 6. Limit Digital Stimulation

Overstimulation keeps your nervous system in high alert.

- Take screen breaks — especially from doom scrolling or obsessing over their social media.
- Replace noise with calming inputs: gentle music, nature sounds, or silence.

## 7. Co-Regulate with Others

We heal in relationship — especially after we've been wounded in one.

- Reach out to emotionally safe people, trauma-informed coaches, or therapists.
- Listening to a calm, supportive voice (e.g., in guided meditations) can regulate you through co-regulation.
- **Avoid retelling your trauma to everyone.** It can re-traumatize you. Work with one trusted guide / coach who can help you move forward, not just look back.

## Why This Step Is Non-Negotiable

Without nervous system regulation, it's impossible to:

- Set and maintain healthy boundaries
- Break trauma bonds
- Trust yourself again
- Reconnect with your true identity
- Create and sustain safe relationships

So many people skip this step — and stay stuck in survival mode.

But *this* is where transformation begins.

This is where you pause.

This is where you breathe.

This is where you come home to yourself.

## Ready to Begin?

I offer personalized guidance rooted in trauma-informed nervous system repair — including movement, nutrition, mindset, and emotional accountability.

We'll build a healing plan tailored to *your* experience, at your pace.

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✉️ [charl@charlpienaar.co.za](mailto:charl@charlpienaar.co.za)

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## Step 2: Disconnecting — Boundaries With Yourself

### Breaking the energetic bond and reclaiming your space.

After a toxic relationship ends, the connection doesn't just live in your mind — it lingers in your nervous system, your habits, your impulses, and yes, your phone.

Healing begins when you choose to disconnect — not just from *them*, but from every hook that keeps pulling you back into the cycle.

This is where boundaries become sacred.

But here's what most people miss:

**The most important boundaries aren't with them. They're with yourself.**

### Why Disconnection Feels So Hard

This step may be the hardest of all. You're trying to convince yourself — or at least begin to accept — that it's truly over. That they are not coming back.

Trauma bonds *feel* like soul ties.

You may logically know the relationship was unhealthy, but your body and mind still crave the comfort of old patterns — checking their profile, rereading messages, fantasizing about closure.

It feels compulsive... because it *is*.

Each small act of reconnection (scrolling, texting, watching their stories) gives your brain a tiny dopamine hit — then drops you into a deeper spiral of pain.

This isn't about willpower.

This is about gently but firmly guiding yourself back to **self-respect and inner safety**.

### What Boundaries With Yourself Look Like

Boundaries are not punishment.

They are protection.

They are the bridge between who you were in survival... and who you are becoming in healing.

Some essential self-boundaries include:

- **No Contact:** This is non-negotiable. Block their number. Mute or remove them on social media. Not to be petty — to protect your peace.
- **Digital Discipline:** Stop checking if they've seen your story. Delete old chats. Archive or remove photos.  
(You don't need daily hits of pain. You need space to breathe.)
- **Create 'Urge Space':** [Know what to do] When the urge to reach out hits, pause. Breathe. Name the emotion. Consciously choose something else: journal, go for a walk, call your coach.

- **Stop Playing the Story on Loop:** Tell yourself the *truth* — not the fantasy. Write down what actually happened. Keep it visible. Reality is your anchor.
- **Set a Self-Talk Standard:** If you wouldn't say it to a friend, don't say it to yourself. Compassion is your compass.

## Reclaiming Your Energy

Disconnection isn't just digital or physical.  
It's energetic.

You've already given too much of your time, your dreams, your peace.

Now, it's time to call your power back.

### Daily practices that help:

- **Cord-Cutting Visualization:** Imagine energetic threads between you and them — then gently cut those cords, not from anger, but from sovereignty.
- **Mantras for Releasing:**
  - “I release what was never mine to carry, and return it with love.”
  - “Every time I choose me, I weaken the bond.”
  - “I call my energy back to me.”
- **Create a Ritual of Release:** Burn a letter. Delete the photos. Cleanse your space. Make it symbolic. Let your body *feel* the shift.

## When No Contact Isn't Possible

Sometimes, complete disconnection isn't an option — especially when you share children, finances, or legal ties. But even then, **you can still protect your peace.**

The key is **structured contact with strong boundaries.**

Here's how:

- **Have a Plan:** Know what the communication is about *before* it happens. Stay focused on logistics — not emotions, not history.
- **Set a Time Limit:** Keep it short and purposeful. 10 minutes is often enough. Set an alarm if needed.
- **Use Neutral Channels:** Text or email works better than phone calls. Consider co-parenting apps that help keep things factual.
- **Stick to the Script:** Don't respond to baiting, guilt trips, or manipulation. You're here to exchange information, not emotions.
- **Debrief and Regulate:** After contact, take 5 minutes to ground yourself. Shake it off. Journal. Breathe. Come back to *you*.

This isn't about being cold — it's about being clear.  
You're protecting your nervous system, your healing, and your children.

## Why This Step Matters

You can't heal if you're still in the loop.

You can't move forward if you're still emotionally tethered to someone who hurt you.

This step is about choosing **you** — even when it's hard. Especially when it's hard.

When you take these actions to disconnect, you will hear a little voice inside you protesting, begging to hold on.

**Let that voice speak. Listen to it. Then lovingly tell it:**

**"We're not going back there."**

Disconnection isn't about forgetting.

It's about remembering who you are — without their distortion.

## Let's Do This Together

Most people fall back into contact because they try to do this step alone.

**That's where I come in.**

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✉️ charl@charlpienaar.co.za

📞 082 331 4116

You are allowed to choose peace over chaos — and you don't need their permission to do so.

## Step 3: Processing the Grief

*Loss isn't just about them. It's about all the versions of yourself you gave away.*

You don't just grieve the relationship —  
You grieve the potential.  
The promises.  
The future you imagined.  
Even the parts of yourself you abandoned to stay.

This grief is real. And necessary.

But here's the truth most people avoid:  
**You can't heal what you won't let yourself feel.**

### What Grief After Toxic Love Looks Like

- One moment: anger.
- The next: deep longing.
- Then: shame. Then: hope. Then: nothing at all.

You may wonder, *"Why am I still crying over someone who hurt me?"*

Because grief doesn't follow logic. It follows **love, loss, and nervous system memory.**

You're not broken. You're grieving what broke.

### Ways to Process the Grief

#### 1. *Name What You Lost*

Make a grief list — not just about them, but about you.

- "I lost my voice."
- "I lost time with people I love."
- "I lost trust in myself."  
Naming helps unfreeze the pain.

#### 2. *Make Space for the Waves*

Grief isn't linear — it's cyclical.

You'll revisit the same emotions again and again, just in deeper layers.

Create containers for those waves:

- Cry in the bath
- Scream in the car
- Journal at night  
Let it move through you, not define you.

### *3. Stop Looking for Closure*

You don't need their apology to heal.

Closure is an **inside job**.

Write a letter to them that you never send.

Write one to yourself, too — the one who stayed, who hoped, who tried.

### *4. Grieve With Support*

You don't have to carry this alone.

Grief needs **witnessing**.

Share it with someone safe — a coach, a therapist, a trusted friend.

## **Why This Step Matters**

Unprocessed grief becomes baggage.

It shows up as distrust, defensiveness, numbness... even disease.

Grieve now so you don't have to bleed later.

You're allowed to feel it all.

You're allowed to break — and rebuild.

Grief is not weakness. It's the cost of loving deeply.

And you're allowed to heal loudly.

**Let Me Hold Space for Your Grief** In our sessions, you get a safe container for your truth, your tears, your transformation. You will be seen, heard, and honored.

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✉ [charl@charlpienaar.co.za](mailto:charl@charlpienaar.co.za)

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## Step 4: Break the Pattern to Heal the Pain

**It's not just about grieving them — it's about grieving the patterns.**

After a toxic relationship, grief isn't just about missing the person — it's about mourning the part of you that kept choosing familiar pain, hoping it would finally feel like love.

The real grief often begins when you realise:

**“This wasn't the first time I abandoned myself to feel wanted.”**

This step invites you to look beneath the breakup — into the roots.

Because often, what we call “love” was actually a trauma reenactment:

- Overgiving to be chosen.
- Silencing yourself to avoid conflict.
- Confusing chaos with chemistry.

These aren't just adult patterns — they're survival strategies from childhood.

This step is about naming those inherited roles (the fixer, the peacekeeper, the rescuer) and allowing the grief to surface — not to drown in it, but to *alchemize* it.

**What this step looks like:**

- Journal your “emotional timeline”: What similar patterns show up in past relationships?
- Identify your attachment style and where it came from.
- Begin inner child work: Speak to the version of you that learned love meant self-sacrifice.

**Mantras to hold:**

- “This grief is not weakness — it's clarity.”
- “I release the need to repeat what wounded me.”

### Let's Break the Cycle Together

I'll help you identify deep-rooted emotional patterns, unpack your attachment history, and gently hold space for grief without shame. This isn't about blame — it's about freedom.

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🌐 [www.charlpienaar.co.za](http://www.charlpienaar.co.za)

✉️ [charl@charlpienaar.co.za](mailto:charl@charlpienaar.co.za)

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## Step 5: Reclaiming Power – Rebuilding Self-Worth From the Inside Out

**They didn't break your worth — they only distracted you from it.**

Toxic relationships are not just painful — they are depleting. They leave you second-guessing yourself, questioning your value, and craving validation from people who keep withholding it.

This step is about taking your power back — not by fighting for external approval, but by restoring *inner alignment*.

Because true power isn't loud.

It's a quiet, unshakable knowing:

**“I am enough. I am allowed. I am whole.”**

### How to begin reclaiming your worth:

- Make a list of traits you love about yourself that were never seen or appreciated in the relationship.
- Set one boundary that honours your energy — and hold it.
- Identify the inner critic's voice (often inherited) — and consciously replace it with your own.

### Key shifts:

- From self-doubt to self-trust.
- From people-pleasing to self-honouring.
- From proving your value to simply *embodying* it.

### Mantras to rebuild:

- “I do not have to shrink to be loved.”
- “I matter, I will not abandon myself to keep someone else comfortable.”

### Let's Reclaim Your Power

I'll support you in rebuilding core self-worth, setting boundaries that stick, and anchoring into your truth — so you never settle for less than you deserve again.

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🌐 [www.charlpienaar.co.za](http://www.charlpienaar.co.za)

✉️ charl@charlpienaar.co.za

📞 082 331 4116

## Step 6: Embody – Integration Through Action

### Healing becomes real when it's lived.

Insight is important. But integration is where healing actually takes root.

This step is about becoming the person you've been working to remember — *not just in theory, but in your body, habits, words, and relationships.*

It's no longer about "knowing better."

It's about *being* different.

Your nervous system starts to feel safer. Your reactions slow down. Your choices reflect your truth — not your trauma.

### What embodiment looks like:

- You *feel* the difference between a red flag and real connection.
- You move away from old triggers, not out of fear — but from wholeness.
- You make aligned choices, even when they're unfamiliar or uncomfortable.

### Practices for integration:

- Embodiment routines: daily movement, breathwork, grounding rituals.
- Relationship audits: "Does this align with the version of me I'm becoming?"
- Shadow work: bring compassion to the parts of you that still feel afraid or small.

### Mantras for integration:

- "Calm is not boring. Calm is my power."
- "I trust the signals of my body. They are my truth."

### Let's Anchor Your Growth Into Daily Life

I'll help you build emotional regulation tools, routines of embodiment, and real-world strategies so your healing becomes part of your *lived experience* — not just a memory of what you overcame.

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✉️ charl@charlpienaar.co.za

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## Step 7: Rise – Create Your Vision, Focus, and Prepare for Real Love

**This is your comeback. Your reclamation. Your new chapter.**

The final step is not about “moving on.” It’s about *moving forward with intention*. Not just to avoid another painful relationship — but to consciously design the life and love you actually want.

Now that your nervous system is more regulated, your inner compass more trusted, and your heart more rooted — you’re ready to rise.

This step is about creating clarity:

Who do I want to become?

What kind of love do I desire?

What does success, connection, purpose *actually* look like — for *me*?

**What this step includes:**

- Creating a focused life vision — career, connection, love, inner peace.
- Defining your standards — not just in romance, but in *every* area of life.
- Setting goals from alignment, not urgency.
- Reimagining love: not as rescue, but as reciprocity.

**You’ll know you’re here when:**

- You feel hopeful — not desperate.
- You’re at peace alone — and open to love from overflow, not lack.
- You’re no longer chasing — you’re *attracting*.

**Mantras for this stage:**

- “My past shaped me, but it does not define me.”
- “I trust what I’m becoming — even when it’s unfamiliar.”

### Let’s Build the Life You Were Meant to Live

I’ll help you craft a clear vision, set meaningful goals, and prepare your inner and outer world for healthy, connected love. You’ve done the healing — now it’s time to rise.

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