

REFUSAL OF THE CALL

The External Road to Fulfillment is never Fulfilled.

I just want people to like me. I'm not loveable. I don't belong. I am stupid and because of this, I will be abandoned. Those are the unhealed, negative message that runs through me.

Just like a soundtrack in a movie, this unconscious mantra has played out in every aspect of my life from a very early age.

What core wound created your unconscious mantra? When we're exploring our core wounds, it's no easy task. It's a journey that you choose to undertake because what's on the other side has got to be better than this.

When I started to excavate and found the unconscious mantra, *I just want to be liked/loved*, it opened a whole new navigation system on my map of life. I began to look back on my life through this lens. These mantras created my blueprint of looking externally for love and validation.

How did this unconscious mantra weave through my life? The Refusal of the Call, on the large scale of the Heroine, is long and arduous when you start to reflect back on your life experiences. The first half of our life is busy figuring out who we are, what we stand for, what we believe in, exploring ourselves through relationships, what we like, what we don't like, who we like, who we don't like, questioning our societal and familial upbringing and what we want to carry on and what we choose not to.

That unconscious mantra is like a thread that you start to pull that will unknit the blanket of your life, leave you with a ball of yarn, but in time and with grace and patience, you will create a beautiful new creation.

CORE WOUNDS

Core wounds and trauma create the mantra. They create beliefs that help you navigate your life. We've all heard of mantras before and how helpful they are to get you through life, but how about those unconscious ones created by your core wounds? There are a number of core wounds, but I will be discussing three universal ones, and often these can and will blend into each other.

Belonging: Is it safe to be me?

I don't belong

I'm not loveable

No one loves me

When we yearn to belong, we have to ask ourselves, what is underneath this longing? Often times there is a fear of abandonment that reaches back all the way into childhood. In what way were you abandoned? Emotionally? Physically? Psychologically? Somewhere along the line you learned that it wasn't safe to be you.

As family lore goes, I was repeatedly told that when I was a newborn, my one-year-old brother came over to me and hit me over the head with his bottle. While, I don't remember this story, it landed into my subconscious and then got exacerbated by the complicated relationship that I had with my brother throughout my childhood. I learned that it wasn't safe to be me, one minute everything was great, the next, it was not. I never knew when the tides would change and I grew up walking on eggshells. The fear of abandonment stemmed from the lack of protection I felt my parents never gave me.

This core wound didn't just show up in my family, it reared its ugly head in friendships as well as intimate relationships as I got older, leading up to the ultimate abandonment, with my son dying.

One of the pivotal childhood points was when I was thirteen years old and a pretty shy kid. I had two close friends and that was about it. Sitting in my bedroom one night, I got a call from Lisa. *"Jenna is really mad at you. She doesn't want to be your friend*

anymore.” “What? What do you mean? I’m going to call her and talk to her.” Lisa added, *“No. Don’t do that. She doesn’t want to speak with you. She doesn’t like you anymore and doesn’t want to be your friend.”* My heart plummeted into my stomach and I was numb throughout my body. *What did I do wrong? Why doesn’t she like me anymore?* I never called. My 13-year-old felt annihilated. I was too scared to find out the truth. I was dumped by my friends the summer before high school.

I am abandoned. I am alone. I don’t belong. People don’t like me. I am not loveable.

I circumnavigated this map with these negative thought mantras throughout high school, climbing the social ladder, desperately hooking up with boys so they’d like me. Waiting, yearning, and hoping for a boyfriend to rescue me so I can belong, feel loved, and know that I’m not alone.

This is where my Needy Girl Syndrome began. It’s also where chameleon-like behaviors of *who I thought they want me to be* overtook my life. The Cheerleader to the jocks in high school. The hippie to the Dead Head in my early 20s. The pseudo-socialite to the European heir.

If friends got together without me, I felt abandoned, instantly activating my inner 13-year-old, telling myself that I didn’t belong and creating the mantra that it’s not safe to be me.

Every relationship I had stemmed from a profound core wound of not belonging and a deep seeded fear of abandonment.

Worthiness: Is it safe to have?

I’m not worthy

I’m not good enough

I’m not enough

This negative thought mantra keeps us on the hamster wheel of over doing, over working, over giving, and putting everyone’s needs before our own. It’s the part of you

that strives to be accomplished and successful, yet when you ‘get there’, you’re still unfulfilled. With every achievement, you think, *This is it. I will be worthy when...* and yet, it’s like trying to reach the horizon, you’ll never get there.

Societal conditioning plays a big role in external validation, add in family of origin issues, personal life experiences, and cultural conditioning, we’ve got a map for unhealthy relationships, including detours from over-giving and getting lost with people-pleasing.

As women, many of us are taught to seek answers from the outside world. We’re told at a young age to “be nice”, even when your internal navigation system has turned on alarm bells. During our teen years, we’re dissecting relationships and asking for advice from our equally inexperienced friends. As we continue down our life path, we become more and more conditioned by what others think and how we compare to others at similar points in life.

The Worthiness Wound keeps us comparing and competing. Comparison is a dead-end on the roadmap. Have you ever compared yourself to someone and felt good about yourself afterward? Even if in that comparison, you came out on top? It still leaves an icky, energetic residue that separates us and creates a better than/less than experience.

We are so busy looking externally for the answers, racing from one experience to the next, seeking ‘happiness’ instead of looking internally, which you leave you fulfilled.

I just want to be happy...

Have you heard yourself say that? Of course you have, we’ve all said it at least a million times in life. But here’s the deal. We can’t be happy all of the time. In fact, I’m going to discourage you from seeking happiness! Here’s why – happiness is a *mood*, just like anger, sadness, fear, guilt, and joy. Moods are like the weather, they’re transient. Some days it’s grey and rainy, some days there’s sunshine. When your unconscious mantra is *I just want to be happy*, it will only lead to discontent. Seeking happiness is fleeting and keeps you on the human hamster wheel.

I’ll be happy when...

I move out of my parents house and go to college

When I'm in a relationship

When I get straight A's

When I get my first job

When I get my first apartment

When I get engaged

When I get married

When I have kids

When I climb the ladder of success

When I 'have it all'

And yet, inside, you're still not fulfilled. You're not alone, this was my journey and many of my clients too. You "have it all" and are still not "happy" and then feel guilty that you're even feeling this way. We're taught that we should be grateful for what we have and not complain. But that angst tugs at our soul. What are we missing? What are we not getting? We've followed the societal map to a tee. But not your soul map. The key is to heal our core wounds. We have *Refused the Call* to go inside of ourselves. Our map is not 'out there', it is internal.

When we feel unworthy, it's all about lack. *What am I lacking and if I can be like that person, or attain what they have, or be in a relationship like them, I will be worthy. One day, I will be enough.* When we compare ourselves to others, we rob ourselves of true connection. It keeps us people-pleasing in relationships and keeps us feeling bad about ourselves. That constant striving for perfection keeps us locked in to control. It keeps us manipulating relationships and situations. When we are controlling every aspect of our lives, we miss out on spontaneity, joy, and our connection with our soul.

In every relationship I had in my teens and in my twenties, I realized I was being needy. In those dark, crevasses of my mind, I knew that my neediness was actually pushing my relationships away. I wasn't worthy enough to be in a relationship, yet I showed up big,

dropping everything to be with the one I loved. Even when I knew the relationship wasn't right for me, I was scared to be alone. So, I subconsciously pushed them away by my neediness, manipulating them to break up with me so I can be the victim and self-fulfill the prophecy of being abandoned and unworthy of love.

This was a hard lesson that I had to learn over and over. Why did I so desperately want to be with someone, anyone, and then when they were there, I sabotaged it? I was lost, my navigation system broken, my inner compass buried beneath all the patterns and experiences I was creating.

Expression: Is it safe to express myself?

It's not safe to express myself

No one wants to hear from me

I'm broken

I stay quiet

No one will like me if I'm my true self

This core wound shows up predominantly in women. We are taught from a young age to not speak up. Eons of women have been burned at the stake or stoned to death because they expressed themselves and spoke up. We learned to repress ourselves, stay quiet, don't make waves and be the *good girl*. When we are speaking up, it's not for ourselves and it usually looks like saying yes to everyone, which takes its toll.

In my family of origin, I learned very quickly to keep my mouth shut, so I can steer clear of chaos around me.

As we move through life, and we learn who we are as women, our goal is to fully express ourselves. When look at expression through the lens of the mind/body connection, we will see that there are millions of women in our society with thyroid issues. The thyroid gland is at the base of the neck, right by the throat chakra, which is the energy center for

true expression of oneself. When we repress ourselves and our soul, the energy manifests physically in your body and creates dis-ease.

Expression can take many forms, not just speaking up for yourself. You can express yourself through art, dance, music, writing, journaling, movement. Our journey is to find out who we are, deconditioned from society, and express ourselves fully. When we are able to do this, we are connecting with ourselves and others authentically and fully.

RELATIONSHIP PATTERNS

As women, our world is built on connections and relationships. We learn how to tend and befriend from an early age. We are the ‘gatherers’ who innately understand the deep need for relationships as a form of safety and survival. But what happens when these relationships are not healthy? What if these relationships are inhibiting our soul growth? Can you have strong relationships in one area of your life and not in others? Can you be a strong, kick-ass woman and still have unhealthy relationships? You bet. Let’s take a deeper look.

THE DRAMA TRIANGLE

According to Stephen Karpman, there are three ways that you can show up in unhealthy relationships. The Victim, The Persecutor, and The Rescuer.

No one’s family is perfect, everyone has issues and challenges that create generational patterns and trauma. Our family of origin is set up on a soul level, so we can break free from this and heal not only individually but generationally and collectively. As you read through these types, think back on your family of origin as well as your current relationships and see how the Drama Triangle shows up.

All three of these types represent The Victim that show up in different ways. They all represent the disempowered self.

The Victim:

Everything happens TO the Victim, she is always complaining about everything going wrong in her life, jobs are passing her up, she's always getting broken up with and doesn't know why. She is like Eeyore from Winnie the Pooh. The Victim screams *Wah, wah! Poor Me, Why is everything so hard? Woah is me! Why is everything happening TO me?* She is the ultimate Debbie Downer and unconsciously sucks the life blood out of you with all the things wrong in her life. She stewes in her life and complains about everything, and does nothing to change. On some level, the Victim has a secondary gain in being this way. She gets something out of being a Victim. What she gets is an unhealthy relationship pattern.

The Persecutor:

The persecutor shows up differently. They use shame, blame, anger, rage, and control in her life. When she persecutes others, on a subconscious level she feels more in power. The persecutor is also a victim.

The Rescuer:

The Rescuer is the ultimate martyr. The helper of all helpers, even when you didn't ask for help. The rescuer will offer unsolicited opinions and feedback, do everything for everyone, and suffer while taking on too many tasks. The Rescuer is also the enabler who overlooks and excuses others' unhealthy behaviors, discounts herself and her needs, avoids her true feelings, and is ultimately overly stressed.

The Rescuer has good intentions! All they want to do is caretake, but what happens is that it becomes compulsive and defeating.

The Rescuer often take on a martyr's role and rescues a person in need. The problem is that these repeated rescue attempts keep the person in need to continue on as the victim and then becomes even more dependent on the unhealthy caretaking of the rescuer.

As this reliance increases, the rescuer develops a sense of reward and satisfaction from “being needed.”

When the caretaking becomes compulsive, the victim feels like they don’t have a choice and feels helpless in the relationship, but is unable to break away from the cycle. At some point the victim lashes out and persecutes the rescuer. And that’s the CYCLE.

Whether it’s the Victim, the Persecutor, or the Rescuer, the bottom line here is that the victim is at the root of these relationship patterns and no matter how the Victim shows up it’s about trying to gain a false sense of power and control.

The beauty of this triangle is that you can do this dance all by yourself too! When we begin to look inside, we notice when we’re being a victim, when we’re rescuing, and when we’re persecuting.

When we are locked into these unhealthy relationships, we are looking for anything outside of ourselves to make us feel better. We are looking to numb out.

The goal is to redirect the external focus on others to internally focusing on yourself to feel internally empowered. When we do this, the Victim becomes the Hero, the Persecutor becomes the Challenger, and the Rescuer becomes the Cheerleader.

WOUNDED PEOPLE ATTRACT WOUNDED PEOPLE

Out of the Frying Pan and Into the Fire

At 22, I was footloose and fancy free while backpacking through Europe, living my best life when I stumbled into my next relationship. I was three months out of my abusive relationship with my high school boyfriend, Glen when I met Sean.

Sean was the opposite of Glen in every way. He was a Californian, hippie, surfer dude and we met while staying at the same hostel in the Greek islands. It was the last week of my travels and I was conflicted. I didn’t want to go home, I wanted to continue to explore...myself, the world, and potentially, this relationship.

I decided to play it safe, go home and “do the right thing”. I found myself back in the house I grew up in, back in my same old hometown, surrounded by the same people, and close to my ex...which I couldn't get far enough away from. I returned to my status quo.

When I realized this, I knew I had to go. I told my mom I wanted to go back out and travel. “*Just settle in, your jet lagged*” was her response. I felt the familiar tug in my soul. *I was NOT supposed to be here.* Now, this was the early 1990's, where there was no internet or cell phone. Through sheer determination, I found the phone number of the hostel, got Sean on the phone and said “*Wait for me! I'm coming back in a week!*” I took the rest of my savings and was on a plane back out to Greece.

From there, we headed to Israel and then back to the states, where we drove cross country. He dropped me back off in my comfort zone of a hometown and headed to DC. Through these months together, I had more tugs from my soul telling me he wasn't the one, but I chose not to listen. I remember thinking to myself in the car somewhere between Yellowstone and the Badlands, “*I can't wait to get out of this car and end my relationship with this guy.*”

But when he dropped me off at my home in New York, he headed to DC, there I was again, in my old life. Not where I wanted to be. I didn't break up with Sean when he dropped me off. In fact, I did the opposite. Three weeks later, I was living with him in DC.

It was my first time really living on my own. We had an apartment and I got a job as a receptionist. I knew, in my heart of hearts, that this was all a transitional period in my life. A means to an end. It was my way for me to not be back in my old life. While on one side, it took courage to move in with a guy after only a few months of knowing him, extricating myself from my old life, I heard my mom's voice “*I just don't want you to jump out of the frying pan into the fire...* don't jump from one relationship to the next. This decision was also fear-based. I was still so new at being on my own, that it felt safer to be in a relationship. Sean could *rescue* me from my life!

I had a lot of fun that year in DC, mainly seeing Grateful Dead shows across the country, but in my soul, I knew that Sean and I were always meant to be friends, and not more. I was also continuing my career soul-searching. I always liked fashion, so I enrolled into the Fashion Institute of Technology back in NYC. Still unable to break up with Steve, I decided on a long-distance relationship.

Here's what was happening. I didn't like breaking up with people. Glenn was different and it was EASY. When you get shoved up against a wall and have a literal VISION of your future, the choice became very clear. Being an empath, someone who feels others' emotions deeply, I didn't want to hurt another person. It was easier for me to sacrifice myself than hurt someone else. I created issues, becoming needier, so he could ultimately break up with me and I can be the victim. This makes me want to cringe. It was much easier for me to be the victim rather than the persecutor.

A few years later, I ended up in Boston, going back to school for psychology (woo hoo! A piece of the soul pie was happening!). It was also during this time that I stumbled upon my next relationship which ultimately ended with *The World's Worst Break Up...*

As I sat in my Psychology class, I noticed him and my stomach flipped. *Ooh. A cute guy in class. Always a nice bonus in school.* The next week, he was sitting next to me, and so began our friendship. He was European, quiet, creative, and mysterious. I was also winding down my years of swearing off guys so I can find myself.

We were friends and study buddies and there was always an attraction. One night, we went to listen to his friend's band play and we kissed. After that he told me he had a girlfriend. That should have been the first red flag. And it was, but I didn't listen. We stay friends, but I longed for him. Eventually he and his girlfriend broke up and we were inseparable (should have been my second red flag).

After a year of being friends and sleeping in the same bed we finally, FINALLY took our relationship to the next level and were intimate. By this time, I was in it. I thought *This could be it. He could be the one. The base of our relationship is friendship...* I dove in head first.

We were both in our twenties. He was four years younger than me and an heir to a German car company. He was my Prince Charming and he was going to rescue me and we'd live happily ever after!

We dated for three years and I was swept off my feet. We traveled through Europe, we whisked off to the Hamptons on the weekends, traveled to the film festivals, and hob-knobbed with the elite at museum parties. It was a dream. Looking back, it was more of an *illusion*.

You see, I fell in love with the fantasy of what this relationship was. The Needy Girl was in full effect, looking for someone to rescue me. The relationship had problems, lots of them. We didn't communicate, and the needier I got, the more he shut down.

We moved back to New York, for his career and grad school for me. I moved in with him temporarily (and hoping permanently), but he encouraged me to find a place of my own. In retrospect, he was trying to get out of the relationship and couldn't communicate that with me. I chose not to see it. It felt like I was forcing the relationship on him, which even to this day, makes my stomach turn. I didn't want it to end. This was the life I wanted!

It was at the end of my first semester of my second and final year of grad school when I found a letter on my bed. *Aww, how sweet, a letter from James.* I open the letter and my body goes numb. This isn't a letter but a break up. He couldn't tell me, so he wrote me. Letter in hand, I go into my roommate's room. She was on the phone and I said "*James just broke up with me*" and handed the letter over. She hung up the phone and we went to the closest bar around the corner. I was in shock. I tried to call him. Over and

over, and he didn't answer. The next morning, I was hungover (and a huge lesson to not drink when going through something awful because you'll still be dealing with it the next day...with a hangover!), and I was angry. I still hadn't heard from him, so I left him a voice mail telling him that I'll be over with his key and to pick up all of my stuff from his apartment.

I get to his apartment and there he is not saying a word. I'm angrily putting all of my stuff into a bag and he's still saying nothing. He's about to leave the room and I go off on him. *"How can you do this? After all this time you're going to leave a note on my f*%ing bed? How dare you?"*

These words turned him around and we began to talk and that talk turned out to be 36 hours long. If I'm being totally honest, it was my lowest point of being a Needy Girl. I pulled out all the stops, every manipulation tactic I could think of, including sex. It only left me feeling worse. I was in the gutter and he wasn't changing his mind. I couldn't detach from this outcome which led to full blown depression. I was the victim and he was supposed to rescue me.

I mourned, I grieved, and every week, he'd call. And every week, I'd hope for a better outcome, that he'd change his mind and that we'd live happily ever after. Every week after we got off the phone, I'd fall deeper into a depression. The holidays were approaching and so were my final papers. How was I possibly going to get through this semester?

I allowed myself to feel all of my feelings and one day after a good cry, I said to myself *Screw him. He may have broken my heart but he's NOT going to interfere with me passing my classes and finishing grad school!* It was in this moment that the Victim turned into the Hero. I was heading the call and crossing the threshold.

I allowed myself to feel everything AND also learned when to compartmentalize. We have to learn how to go deep, feel our feelings, no matter how scary their intensity, so that you can "wring out" your emotions, and get on with your day. It was my first experience going deep within The Cave and allowing myself to be there.

This breakup also showed me how deep my well of feelings were. At one point, I was crying in bed at my parents' house. I was lying under the covers, going between being catatonic and sobbing. My mom came in to check on me. *"I'm worried about you, you have to get over this"*, she said. I looked at her and said *"I know your worried, but don't be. I have to feel every feeling. I have to walk through the fire to get to the other end. I don't want to leave any emotional stone unturned. I know this is hard for you to witness, but I know that the only way through is through. I will be OK."*

It was the hardest and longest I had ever felt this overwhelming sadness, yet those deep, painful feelings were hard to lift. I had exhausted my friends and family, and yet, I couldn't untangle them. I was under the fluorescent lights in CVS one day and I reached for a spiral notebook. I got home and just started writing. I wrote to my ex in the notebook, I purged all of my feelings, the sadness, the hurt, the perceived betrayal, the

anger and rage...and I kept going and kept writing until every ounce of feeling and emotion were out of my body. And I felt better. The feelings lifted. I had created some breathing space and was no longer drowning in my emotions.

That's when I realized the importance of journaling my feelings out. That journal came with me everywhere. Anytime major feelings surfaced, they came up and out and on a piece of paper. Today, I coin my journal, my *Therapist in my Pocket*.

Go to therapy, use your support systems, AND get a journal. The beauty of journaling is that once all of those emotions are out of your body, keep writing, because that's when all of the Aha's come. That's when the insights come, that's when you connect to your higher self and creativity flows through. That's when you connect with yourself.

When we are clogged with our own emotional and psychological 'gunk', our higher self can't get through. When we journal and release our emotions, whether through writing or emoting, we are opening the channel to allow our higher self to come through and give us guidance. It's like spiritual Drano. The more you clear out your vessel, the more light and guidance you will receive because your higher self can get through.

Looking back, I never realized that The World's Worst Breakup was preparing me for the soul shattering experience of losing my son. In the depths of my grief, one of my major life lines was my journal. Every morning, I would sit in my son's room and cry, purge my emotions, and journal. It's what saved me and kept me afloat. And for that, I can thank my ex for the World's Worst Breakup.

These courageous steps to heal help you move forward, allowing the Heroine to trust the wisdom inside of her, heed the call, and step into her true power.