

# UN-ENMESHING

Handpicked Resources to  
Help Guide Your Journey  
Back to Yourself



Un-Enmesh

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# **Recommended Reading List for Those Wanting Understanding, Autonomy, Happiness, and Inner Peace After Toxic Entanglements**

## **Toxic Relationships**

### ***It's Not You: Identifying and Healing from Narcissistic People* by Ramani Durvasula**

This book is a helpful and sympathetic manual for anyone coping with narcissistic relationships. Dr. Durvasula, who has more than 20 years of clinical expertise, offers valuable insights into how narcissists can manipulate and devalue others around them, frequently making others doubt their own value. Along with recovery techniques like setting firm boundaries and finding one's identity, the book gives readers the tools to recognize narcissistic actions like emotional abuse and gaslighting. Dr. Durvasula emphasizes that realizing the sufferer is not at fault is the first step toward rehabilitation. People can break free from destructive cycles and start over with confidence and self-compassion by understanding the dynamics of narcissism and implementing self-care techniques.

### ***Why Does He Do That? Inside the Minds of Angry and Controlling* by Lundy Bancroft**

*Why Does He Do That? Inside the Minds of Angry and Controlling Men* by Lundy Bancroft offers an in-depth exploration of abusive behavior in intimate relationships. With more than twenty years of experience advising abusive men, Bancroft explores the mindset behind their behavior, uncovering that the motivation for abuse frequently stems from a quest for power and control rather than simply being overwhelmed by anger or outside pressures. The book categorizes ten types of abusive personalities, each employing distinct tactics such as gaslighting, intimidation, and emotional manipulation to dominate their partners. Bancroft debunks common myths about abusers—such as the belief that they are merely insecure or that substance abuse is the primary cause—and emphasizes that many abusers are aware of their behavior and choose to act abusively. He also discusses the cyclical nature of abuse, where periods of calm are followed by tension and outbursts, creating confusion and hope for change in the victim. Importantly, Bancroft advises against couples therapy with abusers, as it can reinforce their control, and instead recommends specialized programs designed to address abusive behaviors.

***Codependent No More: How to Stop Controlling Others and Start Caring for Yourself*** by Melody Beattie

This book is a foundational self-help book that explores the patterns and behaviors of codependency—particularly among those in relationships with addicts or individuals with dysfunctional behaviors. Beattie defines codependency as a reliance on the approval or well-being of others for one's self-worth, often leading to controlling, enabling, and self-neglectful behavior. Using personal stories, actionable guidance, and therapeutic techniques, she helps readers identify these patterns, establish healthy boundaries, and restore their sense of self using personal stories, actionable guidance, and therapeutic techniques. The book promotes emotional healing by emphasizing self-care, personal accountability, and emotional independence over the need to fix others.

**Toxic Parents and Reparenting Yourself**

***Parenting from the Inside Out*** by Daniel J. Siegel

In "Parenting from the Inside Out," Daniel J. Siegel and Mary Hartzell merge insights from neuroscience and attachment theory to assist parents in understanding how their childhood experiences influence their parenting styles. The authors highlight the concept of "mindsight," which is the ability to reflect on one's internal state, urging parents to process their past to respond to their children with greater consciousness and empathy. Siegel and Hartzell offer wonderful guidance to parents with clear explanations and practical advice. They foster stable attachments, promote healthy brain development in kids, and help them form stronger emotional bonds. The key idea is that more self-aware parents can better nurture and engage in parenting.

***Understanding the Borderline Mother*** by Christine Ann Lawson

Understanding the Borderline Mother by Christine Ann Lawson explores the complex and often painful dynamics between mothers with borderline personality disorder (BPD) and their children. Lawson categorizes borderline mothers into four archetypes—waif, hermit, queen, and witch—each representing different manifestations of BPD behaviors, ranging from helplessness to control and rage. This book presents captivating case studies along with thoughtful psychological insights and genuine guidance for adult children of borderline mothers seeking to understand the emotional effects of their upbringing. It also provides practical strategies for setting healthy boundaries, healing from trauma, and nurturing positive relationships with emotionally volatile parents.



***Mean Mothers: Overcoming the Legacy of Hurt*** by Peg Streep

This book examines the often-overlooked subject of maternal emotional neglect and abuse. Drawing on psychological research, personal stories, and interviews, Streep challenges the cultural ideal that all mothers are naturally nurturing. The book explores how daughters of emotionally unavailable, critical, or cruel mothers carry lasting emotional scars, including low self-esteem, difficulty in relationships, and unresolved anger or guilt. Streep offers validation for those experiences, explains the psychological roots of maternal unkindness, and guides healing, setting boundaries, and building healthier emotional lives.

***Buy Yourself the Fucking Lillies: And Other Rituals to Fix Your Life, from Someone Who's Been There*** by Tara Schuster

This touching and funny memoir chronicles Schuster's positive journey from self-loathing to self-acceptance. Former Comedy Central executive Schuster candidly discusses her struggles with anxiety, sadness, and the difficulties of having a very uninspiring background. She talks about how her journey to re-parent herself began when she reached her lowest point—dialing her therapist while intoxicated on her 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. By implementing everyday practices such as journaling, thank-you notes, and developing thankfulness, Schuster skillfully changed her perspective and life. While maintaining a light and sincere tone, the book is full of helpful tips on how to stop self-criticism, set personal boundaries, and create a supportive group.

## **Healing the Body and Mind**

***Complex PTSD: From Surviving to Thriving*** by Pete Walker

This book is a practical and compassionate guide for individuals suffering from complex post-traumatic stress disorder (C-PTSD), typically caused by prolonged childhood trauma or abuse. Drawing from his experience as both a therapist and a survivor, Walker explains how repeated emotional wounds can lead to deep-seated patterns of fear, shame, and self-abandonment. He outlines the key symptoms of C-PTSD—such as emotional flashbacks, toxic inner criticism, and difficulty with self-regulation—and offers tools for healing, including self-compassion, boundary-setting, and emotional processing. The book empowers survivors to move beyond survival and build lives rooted in authenticity, self-acceptance, and emotional safety.

***No Bad Parts: Healing Trauma and Restoring Wholeness with the Internal Family Systems Model*** by Richard Schwartz

*No Bad Parts: Healing Trauma and Restoring Wholeness with the Internal Family Systems Model* by Dr. Richard Schwartz introduces the Internal Family Systems (IFS) model. This therapeutic approach views the mind as composed of multiple sub-personalities or "parts." Schwartz posits that every part, regardless of its behavior, has a positive intention and is not inherently bad. The book categorizes these parts into three main types: Exiles (wounded parts holding pain from past trauma), Managers (protective parts aiming to maintain control and prevent pain), and Firefighters (reactive parts that seek to distract or numb emotional distress). Central to IFS is the "Self," an individual's essence characterized by calmness, curiosity, compassion, and clarity. Relieving some of the effects of past traumas, cultivating self-compassion, and interacting with the Self to direct and align the internal system are all components of healing. Schwartz emphasizes that people can achieve greater self-awareness, emotional stability, and personal growth by accepting and integrating all of their aspects.

***Learned Optimism*** by Martin Seligman

*Learned Optimism* by Martin Seligman explores how individuals can shift from a pessimistic mindset to a more optimistic one through cognitive restructuring. Grounded in the principles of positive psychology, Seligman presents the idea that optimism is not just an innate trait but a learned skill that can significantly enhance mental health, resilience, and overall life satisfaction. He introduces the concept of explanatory styles—the way people explain events to themselves—and shows how pessimistic patterns (viewing setbacks as personal, permanent, and pervasive) contribute to depression and helplessness. The book empowers readers to develop a more hopeful and proactive approach to life's challenges through practical techniques like disputing negative self-talk and reframing thoughts.

***The Body Keeps the Score*** by Bessel van der Kolk

This book explores how trauma affects the brain, body, and mind. Drawing from decades of clinical experience and neuroscience research, van der Kolk explains how traumatic experiences—whether from childhood abuse, combat, or accidents—can reshape the brain's wiring and manifest as physical symptoms, emotional dysregulation, and mental health disorders. This book highlights that conventional talk therapy might not be sufficient to address rehabilitative goals, while also examining amazing alternative treatments such as body-based therapies, yoga, neurofeedback, and EMDR.

In the end, it supports a humane and comprehensive method of trauma healing, assisting people in rediscovering their identity and reestablishing a connection with their body.

### ***BPD Specific Entanglements***

***Stop Walking on Eggshells*** by Paul T. Mason and Randi Kreger

This book is a practical guide for those in relationships with someone who has borderline personality disorder (BPD). The book explains the core traits of BPD—such as emotional volatility, fear of abandonment, and impulsive behavior—and how these can create confusion, guilt, and emotional exhaustion for loved ones. It gives readers practical methods to protect their mental health, improve communication, and set good boundaries without condoning harmful conduct. The writers gently encourage readers to regain control of their lives while maintaining empathy for those dealing with BPD through a blend of lucidity and compassion.

# Organizations that Offer Additional Support

## 1. Adult Children of Alcoholics & Dysfunctional Families (ACA)

**Summary:** ACA is a Twelve Step program for individuals who grew up in dysfunctional households. It helps members process childhood trauma and develop healthier relationships.

- **Cost:** Free to attend; voluntary donations are encouraged.
- **Contact:**
  - **Website:** <https://adultchildren.org/>
  - **Phone:** +1 (562) 595-7831
  - **Email:** [info@acawso.org](mailto:info@acawso.org)
- **Details:** ACA provides a variety of meeting formats, including in-person, online via Zoom, and phone meetings. You can search for meetings by type and location on their official website.
  - **In-Person:** Yes
  - **Online (Video):** Yes
  - **Phone:** Yes
- **Mission Insight:** ACA aims to support individuals who grew up in dysfunctional homes, helping them share experiences and find healing from childhood abuse, neglect, and trauma.

## 2. Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA)

**Summary:** CoDA is a Twelve Step fellowship for individuals seeking to develop healthy, functional relationships. It provides a supportive environment to address patterns of codependency.

- **Cost:** Free to attend; voluntary contributions are accepted.
- **Contact:**
  - **Website:** <https://coda.org/>
  - **Phone:** +1 (602) 277-7991
  - **Toll-Free:** +1 (888) 444-2359
  - **Email:** <https://coda.org/contact-us/>
- **Details:** CoDA offers meetings in various formats, including in-person, online, and phone meetings. Meeting details and formats can be found on their website.
  - **In-Person:** Yes
  - **Online (Video):** Yes
  - **Phone:** Yes



- **Mission Insight:** CoDA offers a program of recovery from codependence, encouraging members to share their experiences, strength, and hope to find freedom and peace in their relationships.

### 3. National Association for Children of Addiction (NACoA)

**Summary:** NACoA provides education and support for individuals affected by a parent's addiction, offering resources for both children and adults.

- **Cost:** Free
- **Contact:**
  - **Website:** <https://nacoa.org/>
  - **Phone:** +1 (301) 468-0985
  - **Toll-Free:** +1 (888) 554-2627
  - **Email:** [nacoa@nacoa.org](mailto:nacoa@nacoa.org)
- **Details:** NACoA offers educational resources and professional training programs, both online and in-person, but does not provide regular support group meetings.
  - **In-Person:** Yes (for events and training)
  - **Online (Video):** Yes (for events and training)
  - **Phone:** No regular support meetings
- **Mission Insight:** NACoA's mission is to eliminate the adverse impact of alcohol and drug use on children and families, envisioning a world where no child affected by family addiction is left unsupported.

### 4. Al-Anon Family Groups

**Summary:** Al-Anon offers support for individuals affected by someone else's drinking, providing a community for sharing experiences and learning coping strategies.

- **Cost:** Free to attend; voluntary donations are accepted.
- **Contact:**
  - **Website:** <https://al-anon.org/>
  - **Phone:** +1 (757) 563-1600
  - **Toll-Free:** +1 (888) 425-2666
  - **Email:** [wso@al-anon.org](mailto:wso@al-anon.org)
- **Details:** Al-Anon offers a variety of meeting formats, including in-person, online, and phone meetings. You can find meetings by format and location on their website.
  - **In-Person:** Yes
  - **Online (Video):** Yes
  - **Phone:** Yes

- **Mission Insight:** Al-Anon is a spiritually based organization that helps families and friends of alcoholics connect and support each other through meetings, information, and shared experiences.

## 5. SMART Recovery Family & Friends

**Summary:** SMART Recovery offers a science-based, secular approach to recovery for individuals affected by a loved one's addiction. The Family & Friends program provides tools for effective communication and self-care.

- **Cost:** Free to attend; donations are welcome.
- **Contact:**
  - **Website:** <https://smartrecovery.org/family>
  - **Phone:** +1 (440) 951-5357
  - **Address:** 7304 Mentor Ave., Ste. F, Mentor, OH 44060
- **Details:** SMART Recovery offers both in-person and online meetings for family and friends. Meeting schedules and formats are available on their website.
  - **In-Person:** Yes
  - **Online (Video):** Yes
  - **Phone:** No
- **Mission Insight:** SMART Recovery's Family & Friends program provides tools rooted in cognitive therapy to help individuals support their loved ones while maintaining their well-being.

## 6. Celebrate Recovery

**Summary:** Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered recovery program addressing a wide range of hurts, habits, and hang-ups, including codependency and relational issues.

- **Cost:** Free; some events may have associated costs.
- **Contact:**
  - **Website:** <https://celebraterecovery.com/>
  - **Find a Meeting:** <https://celebraterecovery.com/find-help-2/>
- **Details:** Celebrate Recovery primarily conducts in-person meetings. Some locations may offer online meetings; it's best to check with local chapters for specific formats.
  - **In-Person:** Yes
  - **Online (Video):** Varies by location
  - **Phone:** No

- **Mission Insight:** Celebrate Recovery aims to bring the ministry of recovery to the world, helping individuals find healing and hope through God's power and community.

## 7. The Meadows Outpatient Center

**Summary:** The Meadows offers intensive outpatient programs for individuals dealing with trauma, addiction, and mental health issues, utilizing evidence-based therapies.

- **Cost:** Varies; insurance may cover some or all of the services.
- **Contact:**
  - **Website:** <https://meadowsoutpatient.com/>
  - **Phone:** +1 (833) 755-7570
  - **Address:** 19820 N 7th St. #205, Phoenix, AZ 85024
- **Details:** The Meadows offers in-person outpatient programs and some online services. Specific formats vary by program; please contact them directly for more information.
  - **In-Person:** Yes
  - **Online (Video):** Yes (for specific programs)
  - **Phone:** No
- **Mission Insight:** The Meadows provides patients with tools to overcome challenges related to trauma, addictions, and mental health conditions, promoting sustained personal recovery.

## 8. Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

**Summary:** Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation provides comprehensive treatment for substance use and mental health disorders, offering both inpatient and outpatient services.

- **Cost:** Varies; accepts many insurance plans.
- **Contact:**
  - **Website:** <https://www.hazeldenbettyford.org/>
  - **Phone:** +1 (866) 831-5700
- **Details:** Hazelden Betty Ford offers both in-person and online meetings, including programs for alumni and their families. Meeting information is available on their website.
  - **In-Person:** Yes
  - **Online (Video):** Yes
  - **Phone:** No

- **Mission Insight:** Harnessing science, love, and the wisdom of lived experience, Hazelden Betty Ford is a force of healing and hope for individuals, families, and communities affected by substance use and mental health conditions.

## 9. The Bridge to Recovery

**Summary:** The Bridge to Recovery offers residential programs focusing on healing from codependency, trauma, and relational issues through intensive therapy.

- **Cost:** Varies; contact for details.
- **Contact:**
  - **Website:** <https://www.thebridgetorecovery.com/>
  - **Phone:** 1 (877) 866-8661
  - **Email:** [info@thebridgetorecovery.com](mailto:info@thebridgetorecovery.com)
- **Details:** The Bridge to Recovery offers residential programs with in-person sessions. Online offerings are limited; contact them directly for more information.
  - **In-Person:** Yes
  - **Online (Video):** Limited
  - **Phone:** No
- **Mission Insight:** The Bridge to Recovery is a transformational residential program helping heal the lives of individuals suffering from trauma and codependency by addressing the core causes of their emotional pain.

## 10. Center for Relationship Abuse Awareness & Action

**Summary:** This organization focuses on preventing and addressing relationship abuse through education, advocacy, and resources for individuals and communities.

- **Cost:** Free resources are available online.
- **Contact:**
  - **Website:** <https://stoprelationshipabuse.org/>
  - **Phone:** +1 (800) 799-7233 (National Relationship Abuse Hotline)
- **Details:** This center focuses on providing educational resources and advocacy. It does not offer support group meetings but provides information and tools online.
  - **In-Person:** No
  - **Online (Video):** No
  - **Phone:** No
- **Mission Insight:** The Center's mission is to educate communities, institutions, and young leaders on taking collective action against gender-based violence.

# Self-help Apps

## Mindfulness & Meditation

### 1. Calm

- **Focus:** Sleep, meditation, relaxation, breathing exercises
- **Best for:** Reducing anxiety, better sleep, and emotional well-being
- **Platform:** iOS, Android
- **Link:** <https://www.calm.com/>
- **Price:** Free with optional subscription (\$14.99/month or \$69.99/year)
- **Average Rating:** 4.8 stars (iOS), 4.4 stars (Android)
- **Reviews:** 1.9M (iOS), 500K+ (Android)

### 2. Headspace

- **Focus:** Guided meditations, mindfulness courses, stress relief
- **Best for:** Beginners to meditation, workplace stress
- **Platform:** iOS, Android
- **Link:** <https://www.headspace.com/>
- **Price:** Free with optional subscription (\$12.99/month or \$69.99/year)
- **Average Rating:** 4.8 stars (iOS), 4.6 stars (Android)
- **Reviews:** 1M (iOS), 300K+ (Android)

### 3. Insight Timer

- **Focus:** Meditation, sleep, mindfulness courses
- **Best for:** Free access to a massive library of meditations
- **Platform:** iOS, Android
- **Link:** <https://insighttimer.com/>
- **Price:** Free, Premium at \$9.99/month or \$59.99/year
- **Average Rating:** 4.9 stars (iOS), 4.7 stars (Android)
- **Reviews:** 420K (iOS), 250K+ (Android)



## Journaling & Gratitude

### 4. Prompted Journal

- **Focus:** Daily prompts for reflection, mental clarity
- **Best for:** Building a journaling habit with minimal effort
- **Platform:** iOS
- **Link:** <https://promptedjournal.com/>
- **Price:** Free with limited prompts; \$39.99/year for full access
- **Average Rating:** 4.8 stars (iOS)
- **Reviews:** 20K (iOS)

### 5. Gratitude: Self-Care Journal

- **Focus:** Daily gratitude entries, affirmations, mood tracking
- **Best for:** Cultivating positivity and thankfulness
- **Platform:** iOS, Android
- **Link:** <https://gratefulness.me/>
- **Price:** Free with premium (\$4.99/month or \$29.99/year)
- **Average Rating:** 4.9 stars (iOS), 4.8 stars (Android)
- **Reviews:** 30K (iOS), 70K+ (Android)

### 6. Journey

- **Focus:** Digital journaling with mood tracking and prompts
- **Best for:** Emotional processing and growth tracking
- **Platform:** iOS, Android
- **Link:** <https://journey.cloud/>
- **Price:** Free with in-app purchases; \$39.99/year premium
- **Average Rating:** 4.8 stars (iOS), 4.5 stars (Android)
- **Reviews:** 20K (iOS), 100K+ (Android)

## Gamified Wellness & Mood Support

### 7. Finch: Self-Care Pet

- **Focus:** Gamified wellness, daily check-ins, goals
- **Best for:** People who like accountability and lighthearted interaction
- **Platform:** iOS, Android
- **Link:** <https://www.finchcare.com/>
- **Price:** Free with optional subscription (\$5.99/month or \$39.99/year)
- **Average Rating:** 4.9 stars (iOS), 4.8 stars (Android)
- **Reviews:** 500K+ combined

### 8. Moodfit

- **Focus:** Mood tracking, CBT tools, breathing exercises
- **Best for:** Those who want to track emotional health over time
- **Platform:** iOS, Android
- **Link:** <https://www.getmoodfit.com/>
- **Price:** Free with optional premium (\$9.99/month or \$59.99/year)
- **Average Rating:** 4.7 stars (iOS), 4.4 stars (Android)
- **Reviews:** 15K (iOS), 25K (Android)

### 9. Sanvello

- **Focus:** CBT-based tools for anxiety, stress, and depression
- **Best for:** Clinical-grade help that's still user-friendly
- **Platform:** iOS, Android
- **Link:** <https://www.sanvello.com/>
- **Price:** Free basic access; Premium via insurance or \$8.99/month
- **Average Rating:** 4.8 stars (iOS), 4.3 stars (Android)
- **Reviews:** 45K (iOS), 20K (Android)

## Positive Psychology & Motivation

### 10. I Am – Daily Affirmations

- **Focus:** Affirmation reminders for positivity and confidence
- **Best for:** Boosting self-esteem and reframing thoughts
- **Platform:** iOS, Android
- **Link:** <https://www.thinkup.me/>
- **Price:** Free with premium (\$19.99/year)
- **Average Rating:** 4.9 stars (iOS), 4.8 stars (Android)
- **Reviews:** 250K+ combined

### 11. Happify

- **Focus:** Science-based games and activities for happiness
- **Best for:** Learning habits that improve well-being
- **Platform:** iOS, Android
- **Link:** <https://www.happify.com/>
- **Price:** Free with limited access; Premium \$14.99/month
- **Average Rating:** 4.5 stars (iOS), 4.1 stars (Android)
- **Reviews:** 25K (iOS), 15K (Android)