

The Primary School Years: 6-11

DEBRIEFING

By now you have probably become pretty good at personal history writing. By the way, if you are working on a given stage and suddenly remember something from a previous stage, that's great. Write it out and share it as soon as you can. Once you've begun this kind of work, it is very common to have memories pop up from time to time. The more you get in touch with your inner child, the more you enter the altered state that was your childhood. As you re-enter that state of consciousness, you start remembering more things.

Beginning with our Primary school age self, the memories are usually much more vivid. Now, write down your inner Primary school-age child's history. Remember, this period covers your life from about age 6 to early puberty, which generally occurs at about 11 years of age, just as we are about to hit puberty. With puberty a whole new sophisticated mental ability will emerge.

Significant Adult Figures

In addition to parents, this includes your teachers, your clergyman or rabbi, and older kids. Include any significant Adult figures and comment on whether they were nurturing or spiritually wounding. Nurturing means that they were truly there for you and valued you for yourself. They promoted your wholeness and growth. The people who were spiritually wounding were the ones who toxically shamed you.

Traumatic Events

These were the experiences in your life that caused the greatest spiritual wounding. For example, when I was 9 years old, my dad began the first of several physical separations from my mom. These became more and more prolonged as the years went on. Note any of these down

As a *guideline*, you might take your school age year by year. Use the following headings if they seem appropriate for you.

Milestones

Write about the three most important events of each year. For example, I wrote:

6 years old:

1. Started year 2.
2. Peed in my pants one day and was humiliated in front of the class.
3. Daddy was home more than any other time.

7 years old:

1. Started year 3.
2. Got a record player for Christmas.
3. Dad lost our car. Had a wreck in grandfather's car.

Continue with this list until about age 11. You'll notice that ages 6 and 7 were not particularly traumatic for me. Let yourself include whatever memories come up, pleasant and unpleasant. Feel free to use whatever method works for you.

FEELING THE FEELINGS

If you can, get several pictures of yourself as an early school-age child. Ideally, get one for each year. You might have class pictures from your Primary school days. Match your pictures with the various things you've written about that age. For example, I noticed how my facial expressions changed in different pictures. You can often see the hurt and sadness on your face from a certain period of your life. Your pictures may help you connect with your repressed emotional pain, or you may often see your face as emotionless and blank. By 7 or 8 you had started to develop your more sophisticated ego defences. You had learned how to get into your head and block out your emotions, both past and present.