

Question 2:

"As I continue to establish "Right Relationship" within myself, my intention is to BE in relationship with "memory" by bringing truth to it. For example, my anxiety around abandonment will most likely never "go away," but by being in relationship to it, I can re-parent that part of me that is often afraid when feelings of abandonment are triggered. Will the feelings of abandonment subside as I continue to reassure my little girl that I am here for her and that we are safe or will it continue to re-surface depending on the awareness I have around it at any given moment?"

To want, or intend our experiences to "go away," or "subside," or "be resolved," or whatever other language we wish to use to indicate a split, is inaccurate and not good practice. It is like saying, "Will this frightened child ever grow up and be different because I don't want to be in relationship with her any longer." Why would we want to get rid of any aspect of our memory, experience, and life. Furthermore it cannot be done. You cannot get rid of one ring of a tree and expect the tree to live. It might have had a bad year in a fire during year three and the scarring is in the make-up of the tree. It is this very scarring that makes the wood very beautiful for furniture one day.

The practice is to meet our memories of suffering with full acceptance, deep compassion and firm limit setting. Like saying to the tree, "Yes, there was a fire when you were three. There is no fire now. The fire does not mean anything about you, nor does the scarring it left."

The practice is furthermore to grow in your knowing of yourself as the witness/parent/infinite - and as this knowing grows bigger and bigger in your awareness, the less identification there will be with the scar left at age three. You are not the scar left at age three - you are the one who KNOWS and is AWARE of this. In Zen we might say, "Can you taste a teaspoon of salt in a Lake?" You cannot, but that does not mean that is not there, nor that we wish to get rid of it, or identify with it. You are the lake, not the teaspoon of salt.

So yes, the more you practice knowing yourself as loving presence, the less you will taste the bitterness of abandonment at age 3. But this is not the goal. The goal is to know yourself as Loving Presence.