

"Permission slips to end self-sabotage, procrastination,
perfectionism, and shame."

THE UNDENIABLE POWER OF PERMISSION

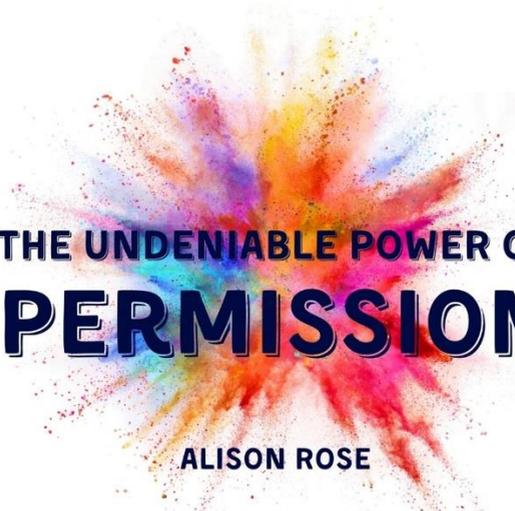
ALISON ROSE

"You'll realise you're not looking for love and
approval; you're looking for permission."

"If you're suffering from painful memories these are
the permission slips you've been waiting for."

"How to accelerate emotional healing in a shame-
filled, angry world."

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PERMISSION**



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The Good Enough Revolution exists to help us understand why we are the way we are, do the things we do, & think the way we think. Founder members & contributors have learned their lessons the hard way but have discovered effective, workable, affordable ways to heal, flourish, & find meaning & purpose in their lives. All our videos, books, blogs, gifts, social media posts, & therapies have been tried & evaluated by us; if it doesn't work it doesn't get shared. Our mission is for everyone to be inspired to create, learn, & share sustainable ways to transform emotional suffering & to benefit from emotional support.

One day, or day one? You decide.

“Quiet the noise around you; soften its pitch. Our deepest stories are our best teachers. Let the weapons of the weak — the poison, the nagging, the gossip — burn themselves to ash. Cast them to the wind. Take back the permission to succeed. Make it yours.”

Elissa Altman

Permission is a game changer. When we unwrap and embrace permission, we can achieve anything we set our mind to. With Permission we can start and finish our heart-centred projects, have those difficult conversations, rise-up from despair, depression, and anxiety, and finally fulfil our unique purpose and potential. But without it we spin around in endless circles of procrastination, self-doubt, and indecision endlessly ruminating on the shame and guilt we carry from the past. Without permission we can't forgive and continue to punish ourselves and others for what's been done to us or said to us frozen in time by the people who broke our heart and silenced our spirit. Without Permission to heal emotional wounds we're rendered powerless to shame, criticism, and the judgements that rule our lives. We're unable to walk away from old loyalties and commitments that no longer light us up. Without permission we believe that *this* is the best we can expect. We stay in harmful situations painfully detached from new emotional pathways unable to turn our resistance into acceptance.

I needed so many permissions to write this book. I really struggled to put my needs first and invest time and resources into a project of my own. What was I missing? In therapy I advise anyone who's stuck and lacking motivation to unravel emotional blocks by writing their thoughts down on paper - even if their thoughts consist of just one word written down over and over again. So, I walked my talk, grabbed paper, pen, and a cup of tea, and wrote down my thoughts. After several messy pages of moaning and blaming I tore up the paper, took it outside, and set it alight. As I watched the fluttering shreds of my flame-edged thoughts float out into the Universe I asked whoever was listening to tell me what I needed to know. Later that night, hours after watching my flaming thoughts lift and twirl in the breezy night sky, I felt deflated. Ready to give up on my highfalutin idea of writing a book I googled 'inspirational thoughts'. Yawning I scrolled aimlessly. Oprah, Jung, Lincoln, the Dalai Lama, Oscar Wilde, Gandhi, Churchill, Shakespeare, until sandwiched between Einstein and Angelou, I read this quote from Elissa Altman:

“Take back the permission to succeed. Make it yours.”

'Permission to succeed'. Three little words that would end up changing the trajectory of my entire life. They sounded simple in theory, but in practice?

Creative writing tutors tell you to write the book you want to read, so I did. A book about Permission; *how* to get it, *where* to get it, and more importantly the reason *why* we don't already own it. I needed to understand what it really *meant* to take back permission, what it looked like, felt like, and the difference it would make to my emotional blocks. Look up the word 'Permission' in a thesaurus and you'll see replacement words like 'consent,' 'approval,' 'blessing,' and 'agreement'. Growing up I'd never been given approval, blessings, or agreement. How many times had my permission been sought before things were done and changes were made that affected me? Never. I wrote down the times I'd given up and walked away because I couldn't give myself Permission to commit and work through challenges - it made an ugly, shameful, list. I didn't have Permission to receive good things or good people into my life, so I rejected both and lived with the painful

consequences. If I was to start and finish writing this book, I knew I'd need shedloads of Permission to stop my people-pleasing-confrontation-denying personality from caving into the demands of the stronger personalities around me. I'd need Permission to reject all accusations of selfishness (I'd need another shed), Permission to believe I was genuine and not flaky, Permission to know I was trustworthy and not up to no good. Next, I'd need Permission to believe I deserved to write a book (who *did* I think I was?), Permission to feel safe about vocalising my experiences, Permission to give volume to my opinions and speak up, and I *definitely* needed Permission to feel comfortable with any criticism and judgement I'd receive as well as plenty of Permission to allow it to happen without defending or justifying any of it. But the biggest one of all, the one that threatened to capsize my dreams and drown them for good was non-negotiable limitless Permission to put my needs first before anyone else's. My Needs. It was like rolling a big fat lie around on my tongue. My. Needs.

I learned early on in life that getting my needs met didn't seem to matter; in fact, it was clearly a shameful, selfish,

greedy, and ungrateful expectation to have. I remember the day, aged around 5, when I'd asked my mother for a snack. She had her back to me at the kitchen worktop, the radio was on, I tapped her arm, requested my orange squash and biscuit and then I remember how she gripped the edge of the worktop and swayed slightly. About 5 seconds passed, I tapped again, and she continued to completely ignore me. Keeping her back to me, she left the kitchen silently on a cloud of sadness clearly wishing she was anywhere else but near me. From that moment, it began to feel unsafe to express any requirement, preference, like, or dislike. I had no voice, I didn't matter. Even those silly things that *do* matter so much when you're a kid went by unnoticed by the people I was encoded to trust to look after me. My family home was frightening and chaotic full of secrets and lies; there was no 'Safe Haven' where I could go and feel protected and relaxed. There was no consideration or sensitivity shown, just humiliation and embarrassment. I kept things to myself, secrets of my own, so as not to upset or offend anyone. There was no encouragement to speak up, no space for my needs or my feelings and in those long days of denial, rejection, dismissal, emotional and physical

abuse, the blueprint for my life was formed: I was to be a people-pleaser, perfectionist, procrastinator - a pattern that would shape my life, shatter my confidence, and dissolve my self-worth in the decades that followed. A little girl conditioned to forget her needs and put everyone else's feelings first.

After thinking about all the Emotional Permissions I'd need, I uncovered a load more that although not focussed on feeling or emotion needed to be fixed in place if, this time, I was to finish what I'd started. I'd need Permission to literally shut the door between me and the rest of the house - no more 'leaving the door ajar in case you need me.' I'd need Permission to work in peace and quiet, to finish my train of thought and round-off a sentence. I'd need Permission *not* to go to the supermarket, *not* to do the laundry, *not* to surf the net. Permission to claim blocks of uninterrupted time and ignore distractions; Permission to put myself first for hours every day and commit to my project. I'd need Permission to start early and work late refusing to feel pressured by the '4-hour-work week' brigade. I reminded myself that achievement on any

significant level takes time and consistent effort – the 4-hour-work week would have to wait. I would need Permission to ignore distractions, to deprioritise long breaks for coffee & lunch, and to begin my working day with focussed intentions like any other conscientious person. I'd need Permission to clear my mind, to stop ruminating on problems that were out of my control, Permission to remain in my chair at my laptop and not under the duvet watching Netflix and eating cake. I'd need Permission to change habits and 'learned behaviours' that kept everyone but me happy, and Permission to setup and keep my boundaries - regardless of the consequences. I'd need Permission to feel good about saying: 'sorry, not today,' and Permission to refuse temptation to negotiate and compromise when I set a deadline I intended to keep. Permission to remember 'no' means 'no' and, again, Permission to 'never-mind' the consequences.

I finally started writing this book during the *first* lockdown - remember that? On a moment-by-moment basis I continued to reward myself with Permission to keep meeting both my emotional and practical needs, to ignore

grumbles and sighs from elsewhere in the house. Doors left to slam shut, loose floorboards groaning under unusually heavy footfall, spilt cups of coffee followed by loud expletives, metal cutlery swirled against metal sink. I point-blank refused to trade badly timed interruptions for typing a well thought out sentence that would otherwise vanish like mist from my mind.

Despite the stress headaches, I continued to give myself Permission to sit tight, Permission not to rescue, Permission not to react, Permission to allow new habits to create new patterns. If I was to see this project through to completion what had always been profoundly unfamiliar *had* to become my ‘new familiar’. Old ways of being and doing had to make way for progress, fulfilment, and growth. I continually reassured myself that I was not a bad person for wanting this - it was a normal expectation to have. Undeniably, claiming Permission to prioritise my needs above the needs of other people gave me so much more than I ever expected.

Giving myself Permission to write this book, to slow down and get more done, to leave others to their perfectly capable

ways of doing things in my absence began to transform deep-rooted beliefs I held about not deserving to put myself first. Old habits were finally dying albeit with a little resistance. My heart would still race and my stomach churn as my hypervigilant radar tuned in to external mutterings, resentments and frustrations echoing beyond the small writing space I'd created for myself in the least inconvenient way I could manage. Intrusive noises always left me wondering: is confrontation looming? Maybe, but it would pass, I was safe to continue for now. My ever-protective brain reminded me to be careful not to upset people as I ventured into fresh territory and continued to carve out time for my own projects. I was delighted to find my new patterns opened-up ways to help me transform old painful wounds. My brain also reminded me to be careful, that some people don't like to see others flourish if it means they'll end up unseen and unheard. Is that, I wondered, the outcome when someone assumes they'll get every need met? Is resentment the upshot when they're *not* the centre of the Universe? They're simply not capable of understanding that someone else's needs matter. Is that the beginning of narcissism? Sociopathy? That's a whole other book but if

you can relate to what I'm saying then please think about who it is that manipulates and overpowers you, who pushes their needs ahead of your own? When someone's energy is overpowering and controlling it sucks the air from around us and we can't breathe. It's why we hold our breath in stressful situations; it feels emotionally violent and safer to deeply repress (depression) our needs. I see you; I *was* you - here's your permission slip to stop pleasing others and start pleasing yourself instead.

Look at it this way: when we reclaim permission to meet our needs, we're modelling something empowering and life-changing for other people. They begin to give *themselves* Permission to grow and evolve, Permission to fulfil their purpose and potential. When we stay on our game and leave them to theirs, they adjust. With time they feel comfortable with their 'new familiar' just as we have with ours.

Permission is powerful. We understand Permission. We know we need it, what it does, what it's for. We've looked for it since birth. It's the fuel that drives our right to decide what's best for us, it's the force behind achievements, it

determines how free we feel, it's the 'secret sauce' poured lovingly over accomplishments. Permission delivers the courage we need to believe we are capable of incredible things. So, what stops us owning it? I needed countless permissions to write this book, in fact the book you're reading wasn't the book I'd intended to write. My original book has since taken on a life of its own as an online course but not before I was able to own the 'Permission to Let Go'. In this book you'll discover how to get the Permission you need to stretch your wings and fly, Permission to heal from the shame and guilt that's forced you to 'be good,' Permission to rise-up and allow your most powerful self to emerge from underneath the layers of criticism, judgement, and disapproval. Permission to surrender everything you're emotionally attached *to* but profoundly detached *from*. You'll find Permission to comfortably reject who and what doesn't fit you anymore even when shame and guilt threaten to drag you back in.

I'm not a 'celebrity therapist' or a social media influencer. I haven't been to business school; I don't speak another language or have any idea how to walk into a party and be

the life and soul of it. Nor am I proficient in cooking, painting, baking, or planting a garden. In none of these am I an expert. But when it comes to healing and transforming the roots of emotional suffering, I am pretty good, I know what I'm talking about, because I've done it many times. From 50,000 feet below rock bottom, time after time, I've wandered off, got lost, come back, started over, fallen again, and climbed back up – again and again, rinse and repeat. Nowadays, I stay above ground - no more hiding, no more denying.

In my twenty-plus years as a coach and therapist I've learned that healing and transformation both begin with Permission to meet our needs, to feel emotionally safe, to know we're meant to be here, and that we matter. With Permission prominent in our emotional toolbox, we can stand up and speak up, pursue our passions, take ourselves seriously, be sincere, be flawed, feel OK about failure and mistakes, be amazing, funny, clever, different, be the 'us' that matters, and be who we were born to be without the fear of judgement and criticism stopping us. When we give ourselves Permission we get to live with dignity and self-

respect regardless of our dimly lit past, our lack of education, our race, religion, gender, our crimes, our misdemeanours, our trials and tribulations, the successes we long for, and the failures we're embarrassed about. And the gifts and talents we've kept in the shadows and away from the light? Thanks to permission, they can finally bloom.

“Who were you before, someone shaped you to be, who and what *they* needed? Where did you go?”

Did you learn too early to change who you were to stay safe? Did you compromise, strategize, sit down, stay quiet, leave yourself behind and lose your identity to suit the needs of others? With Permission you can transform your history, you can emerge from underneath layers of compromise, procrastination, and perfectionism. You have Permission to reclaim the dancing, singing, unique version of yourself; the version of you who's already healed.

You've spent too long waiting for Permission to do the things you want. My wish for this book is that it opens your heart and mind to the Power of Permission, that it supports you to fulfil your potential, and shows you how to

compassionately reclaim Permission to stop doing things that no longer light you up. My hope is that it helps you understand why and how you surrendered your Permission in the first place.

Take back Permission to succeed. If I can do it, you can too.