

# **Chasing the Rush**

## **A Self-Exploration Guide for Risk-Seeking Behavior and Childhood Emotional Neglect (CEN)**

*"You're not addicted to intensity. You're trying to feel alive in a world that once made you feel invisible."*

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### **1. Gentle Self-Check: Are You Using Risk to Regulate Emotion?**

You might be using thrill-seeking as an unconscious form of emotional regulation if you:

- Feel *bored, numb, or disconnected* when life is calm
- Seek out danger, speed, or chaos to feel more present
- Feel most alive when doing something risky or dramatic
- Constantly plan trips, projects, or challenges—then crash when they're over
- Stir up emotional intensity in relationships (conflict, drama, big moves)
- Find it hard to simply *be alone* without needing stimulation
- Sense a strange "relief" in crises or emergencies
- Feel empty or irritable in stillness—even if you long for peace

☒ Use this list not as a diagnosis, but as a **mirror**. If you see yourself here, you're not broken—you're protecting something tender within.

## 2. What Risk-Seeking Might Be Trying to Give You

When early emotional needs go unmet, the nervous system adapts.

Risk and thrill can act as **survival strategies** to help you:

### **Emotionally Neglected Need**

Emotional numbness

Lack of attunement

No co-regulation

Avoided inner experience

Inability to rest

Lack of comfort or safety

Shame or unworthiness

### **What Risk or Thrill Offers**

A sense of aliveness, body activation

Temporary feelings of “being real” or visible

Solo control over intense feelings

External chaos to mask internal discomfort

Movement as distraction from stillness

Predictable unpredictability (“at least I know this”)

Proving yourself through danger or edge-pushing

 **Thrill is not the problem. The problem is what it's standing in for.**

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### 3. Healthier Alternatives: Practices That Reignite Real Aliveness

Here are ways to **gently redirect the urge for intensity** toward practices that are emotionally nourishing, body-based, and trauma-sensitive.



#### Sensory-Aliveness Practices

These provide stimulation *without overwhelm*:

- Cold water exposure (cold shower, plunge, or natural dip)
- Barefoot walking or rock climbing
- Dynamic yoga, dance, or martial arts (with presence, not performance)
- Primal play or intuitive movement outdoors
- Fasting from digital input for a few hours, then reconnecting intentionally



#### Emotional Integration Tools

These help access emotion that the thrill-seeking was avoiding:

- Journaling: “What would I feel if I stopped moving?”
- Guided somatic meditations (Safe touch, grounding)
- IFS part dialogues (see below)
- Creative expression: poetry, wild art, unscripted painting
- Breathwork with gentle intensity (e.g. 4-7-8 or conscious connected breath)



#### Nervous System Soothing (Post-Thrill Crash Support)

These ease the transition from chaos to calm:


- Weighted blankets, heat packs, or slow rocking
  - Herbal nervines: oatstraw, chamomile, lemon balm
  - Audio input: nature sounds, slow rhythm music, binaural beats
  - Co-regulation: safe eye contact, support group, warm presence
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## 4. Journal Prompts for Inner Exploration

Choose one or two prompts. Don't rush. Let yourself feel before you analyze.


1. **“What does stillness feel like in my body?”**
2. **“What do I fear will happen if I stop chasing?”**
3. **“When I crave a thrill, what might I be trying not to feel?”**
4. **“What did I need as a child that I never received in calm moments?”**
5. **“What part of me believes I only exist when things are intense?”**
6. **“What would life look like if I could feel alive in softness?”**

## 5. Meet the Part of You That Seeks Risk (IFS-Based Exercise)

 Find a quiet place. Breathe into your body. Set the intention to meet the part of you that wants the thrill. Then ask inside:

- Where do I feel this part in my body? What does it look like?
- How old does this part feel?
- What is it afraid would happen if it *didn't* chase stimulation?
- What job has it been doing for me? What is it protecting me from?
- What does this part *wish* I had instead?

Pause, listen. You might hear words, feel images, or simply get a sense. Thank the part. Let it know you see why it's doing what it's doing—and that it doesn't have to be alone.

 *Healing doesn't mean silencing this part. It means letting it finally rest.*

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## Final Words

You don't have to stop wanting aliveness.

You simply deserve to feel it *without burning yourself to get there*.

There is no shame in how you've coped.

This is the beginning of coming home to yourself—slowly, fully, with care.

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This free resource was created with care. If you found it helpful, please support my work here: <https://healingthevoid.kit.com/products/help-this-grow-pay-what-you-can>

Thank you!