



Helping Awareness Hold Under Pressure

A Guide for Practitioners & Collaborators

*Understanding the gap between
self-awareness and what remains
available when emotional
pressure rises.*



Lisa DePamphilis

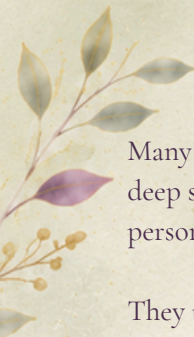
CREATOR OF THE
EMBODIED PRESENCE FRAMEWORK™

EMBODIED PRESENCE
TEACHER & MENTOR





WELCOME



Many of the women I work with have already spent years developing deep self-awareness through therapy, coaching, spiritual practice, or personal growth.

They understand themselves.

They recognize their patterns.

And still, when emotional pressure rises, they may temporarily lose access to the very awareness and wisdom they've worked so hard to develop.

This is where Embodied Presence fits.

My work complements the insight and healing a woman may already have by helping her build the capacity to stay connected to herself while ordinary life is actually unfolding.

Not by asking her to know more.

But by helping her practice remaining connected to what she already knows, and returning to herself more gently when she loses access.

Because awareness matters.

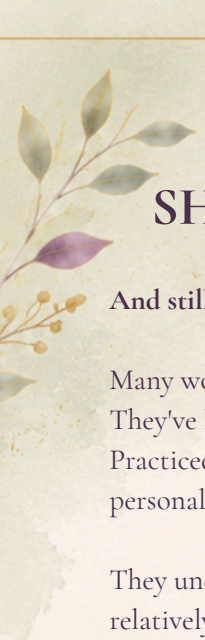
And so does our capacity to access it when life gets hard.

I created this guide to help you understand where Embodied Presence may complement the work you're already doing and recognize when a woman you support might benefit from this kind of practice.

Lisa DePamphilis

Creator of the Embodied Presence Framework™

Embodied Presence Teacher & Mentor



SHE KNOWS HERSELF DEEPLY.

And still, there are moments when she loses access to what she knows.

Many women have spent years developing remarkable self-awareness. They've been to therapy. Read the books. Learned about their patterns. Practiced mindfulness or meditation. Done meaningful healing and personal growth work.

They understand why they react the way they do, and when life is relatively calm, that awareness can feel deeply available.

Then emotional pressure rises. A difficult conversation, criticism, uncertainty, a boundary that needs to be spoken, someone they love upset with them, feeling misunderstood. Life suddenly asks more of them than they expected.

And something changes. Words disappear. Defensiveness rises. They appease, withdraw, try to control what's happening, or simply don't feel like themselves anymore.

Their awareness hasn't disappeared.

They've temporarily lost access to it.

This is the territory of Embodied Presence.





THE PRESENCE GAP™

The gap between what we know and what we can access when life gets hard.

A woman can understand herself deeply and still have moments when that understanding becomes difficult to access.

She can know what a healthy boundary sounds like and be unable to say it.
She can know she is safe and still feel threatened.

She can know what she wants and suddenly begin second-guessing herself.
She can recognize a protection pattern clearly afterward and wonder:
"Why couldn't I see that while it was happening?"

I call this The Presence Gap™.

It is the gap between the awareness we have developed and our capacity to remain connected to that awareness when emotional pressure rises.

And this distinction matters.

Because when we mistake losing **access** for losing **awareness**, we often conclude that we need more insight, more healing, or more information.

Sometimes we don't.

Sometimes we need greater capacity to stay connected to what we already know.



THE PRESENCE GAP™

The gap between what you know and
what you can access when emotional pressure rises.



WHEN LIFE FEELS CALM

*Awareness is available.
Insight is clear.*



EMOTIONAL PRESSURE RISES

*The nervous system may shift toward protection.
Awareness becomes harder to access.
Automatic protection patterns can take over.*



THE PRESENCE GAP™

*You haven't lost your awareness.
You've temporarily lost access to it.*



WHEN PROTECTION TAKES OVER

*Words may disappear.
Defensiveness may rise.
You may appease, withdraw, control,
shut down, or second-guess yourself.*

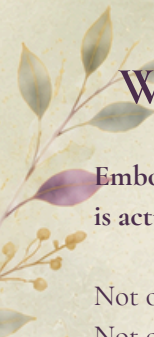


THE WORK OF EMBODIED PRESENCE

*Not to eliminate protection.
Not to become perfectly regulated.
But to build the capacity to stay connected
to yourself when you can...
and return more gently when you lose access.*

*Notice sooner.
Stay a little longer.
Return a little more gently.*





WHAT IS EMBODIED PRESENCE?

Embodied Presence is the capacity to stay connected to yourself while life is actually happening.

Not only when you're alone.

Not only while reflecting afterward.

Not only when everything feels calm.

But in the conversation.

In the uncertainty.

In the disappointment.

In the moment your body tightens and you feel the pull to defend, appease, control, disappear, or shut down.

This doesn't mean remaining calm all the time.

And it doesn't mean never losing access to yourself again.

It means developing a different relationship with those moments.

Recognizing protection sooner.

Staying connected a little longer when you can.

Noticing when you've lost access.

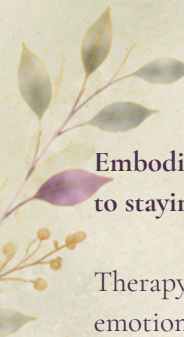
And learning how to return to yourself without turning the experience into another reason to judge yourself.

Over time, something begins to change.

You discover that difficult moments don't have to mean abandoning yourself.

And little by little, self-trust grows from lived experience.





WHERE THIS WORK FITS

Embodied Presence supports the movement from understanding ourselves to staying connected to ourselves.

Therapy may help a woman understand her history, relationships, emotions, beliefs, attachment patterns, or trauma.

Coaching may help her clarify what she wants and make changes in her life.

Mindfulness and spiritual practices may deepen awareness.

Nervous system education may help her understand activation, protection, and regulation.

All of this can be profoundly valuable.

Embodied Presence asks a slightly different question:

What happens to everything she already knows when emotional pressure rises?

Can she still hear herself?

Can she recognize protection while it is happening?

Can she remain connected to what she knows, feels, needs, and values?

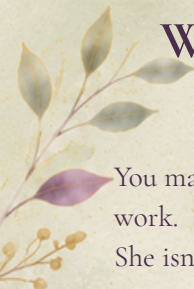
And when she can't, can she recognize what happened and find her way back?

Embodied Presence gives women a place to **practice this in the context of ordinary life.**

It is not a replacement for therapy, coaching, healthcare, or other professional support.

It can sit alongside those forms of work, helping awareness become increasingly available where it matters most:

Inside the life she is actually living.



WHO MAY BENEFIT FROM A REFERRAL?

You may recognize a woman who has already done considerable inner work.

She isn't necessarily lacking insight.

In fact, she may be remarkably self-aware.

But she keeps encountering a frustrating gap between what she knows and *what she can access in emotionally charged moments.*

She may tell you:

"I understand my pattern, but I still do it."

"I completely lose my words during conflict."

"I know what my boundary is until I'm standing in front of that person."

"I feel so clear afterward. Why couldn't I see it then?"

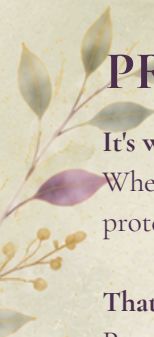
"I don't trust myself when I'm emotional."

"I feel like a different person when I'm upset."

You may also notice that she:

- feels deeply connected to herself when alone but loses that connection in relationship.
- becomes defensive, controlling, appeasing, withdrawn, overly accommodating, or emotionally quiet under pressure.
- second-guesses her perceptions or needs when someone else is upset
- understands her protection patterns intellectually but struggles to recognize them in real time.
- keeps seeking more understanding even though she already understands herself deeply.

This is often where Embodied Presence work can be especially supportive.



PROTECTION ISN'T THE PROBLEM.

It's what happens to our access when protection takes over that matters. When emotional pressure rises, the nervous system may shift toward protection.

That protection can look like:

People-pleasing.

Defensiveness.

Withdrawal.

Control.

Overexplaining.

Working harder.

Staying busy.

Shutting down.

Trying to make everything okay.

These responses aren't evidence that a woman has failed to heal or isn't self-aware enough.

They're attempts to protect something that feels vulnerable in that moment.

Embodied Presence isn't about eliminating protection.

We become curious about it.

What is my nervous system trying to protect right now?

And then we practice creating enough space for something else to remain available alongside it:

Awareness.

Choice.

Discernment.

Our own voice.

Our connection to ourselves.



PROTECTION RESPONSE MAP™

INTELLIGENT SURVIVAL STRATEGIES
YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM USES
WHEN IT PERCEIVES THREAT.



FIGHT
I will protect.

ACTIVATES WHEN YOU FEEL
attacked, challenged,
criticized, or invaded.

LOOKS LIKE

- Irritable or angry
- Argumentative or defensive
- Critical or judgmental
- Need to be right
- Pushes back or confronts
- Can lead to conflict or burnout



FLIGHT
I will escape.

ACTIVATES WHEN YOU FEEL
overwhelmed, pressured,
or unsafe.

LOOKS LIKE

- Anxious or worried
- Racing thoughts
- Restless or scattered
- Overthinking or rushing
- Seeks distance or distraction
- Can lead to avoidance or exhaustion



FREEZE
I will numb.

ACTIVATES WHEN YOU FEEL
overwhelmed, powerless,
or unsafe.

LOOKS LIKE

- Numbness or shutdown
- Zoned out or disconnected
- Heavy, exhausted, or stuck
- Difficulty thinking or speaking
- Pauses until the threat passes
- Can lead to shutdown or disconnection



FAWN
I will please.

ACTIVATES WHEN YOU FEEL
fear, rejection, or need
to belong.

LOOKS LIKE

- People-pleasing
- Over-accommodating
- Suppresses needs or boundaries
- Adapts to keep connection
- Hard to say no
- Can lead to self-abandonment or resentment



These responses are not flaws.
They are intelligent protection strategies.
*The goal is not to get rid of them,
but to build the capacity to recognize them
and return to presence.*



EMBODIED PRESENCE FRAMEWORK™
LISA DEPAMPHILIS



PRESENCE UNDER PRESSURE™

A practice for staying connected when protection begins to rise.

NOTICE

Something in me has shifted.

ORIENT

What is actually happening right now?

SLOW

Can I create even a little more space before I react?

STAY CONNECTED

What do I know, feel, need, or notice beneath the protective response?

RESPOND

What becomes possible when I respond from connection rather than protection alone?

This isn't a formula for getting every difficult moment “right.”

Sometimes we notice early.

Sometimes halfway through.

Sometimes we don't recognize what happened until hours later.

All of it is practice.

Notice sooner.

Stay a little longer.

Recover more gently.

Return again.



Presence Under Pressure™

THE PRACTICE OF RETURNING TO YOURSELF
WHEN EMOTIONAL PRESSURE RISES.

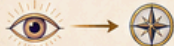
*Presence isn't the absence of pressure.
It's your ability to return to yourself in the middle of it.*



Returning matters more than getting it right.

THE PRACTICE LAYERS

AWARENESS
Notice → Orient



"See what is happening."

RETURNING
Return → Stay



"Create enough safety to stay present."

EMBODIED ACTION
Choose → Respond



"Let presence make the decision."

*Notice sooner.
Stay a little longer.
Return a little more gently.*



FROM AWARENESS TO SELF-TRUST

Self-trust isn't something we simply decide to have.
And it doesn't necessarily come from understanding ourselves better.

It grows through experience.

Every time a woman notices herself beginning to disappear and stays connected a little longer...

Every time she hears her own knowing even while someone else disagrees...

Every time she catches a protection story before automatically believing it...

Every time she loses access and discovers she can return...
she gathers evidence.

I can stay with myself.

I can listen to myself.

I can lose connection without losing who I am.

I can come back.

This is one of the deeper possibilities of Embodied Presence.

Not becoming someone new.

Learning, through ordinary lived experience, that you can trust yourself to remain in relationship with yourself.



WHAT THIS WORK IS NOT

Embodied Presence is not psychotherapy, mental health treatment, crisis care, or medical treatment.

It does not diagnose or treat trauma or mental health conditions and is not a substitute for appropriate clinical care.

It also isn't about teaching women to remain perfectly regulated.

The goal isn't perpetual calm.

Anger, fear, grief, disappointment, hurt, excitement, uncertainty, and vulnerability are part of being human.

A woman can be activated and still connected to herself.

She can feel deeply and still have access to awareness.

And sometimes she will lose that access.

Embodied Presence is about increasing the capacity for connection, not eliminating the full range of human experience.

When a woman's needs fall outside the scope of this work, appropriate therapeutic, medical, or other professional support is encouraged.





WAYS TO EXPERIENCE THE WORK

THE MISSING PIECE IN PERSONAL GROWTH

Free Training + Practice Companion

An introduction to why self-awareness, healing, and even embodiment don't always hold up under pressure, and what helps our deeper wisdom remain available instead.

A simple place to begin for women who recognize the gap between what they know and what happens when life gets hard.

FROM PROTECTION TO PRESENCE™

A Guided Embodied Presence Experience

A deeper opportunity to recognize protection patterns and practice staying connected to yourself when emotional pressure rises.

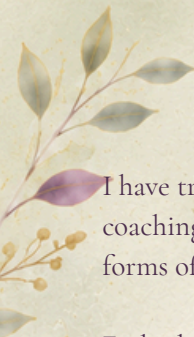
Women begin moving beyond understanding protection intellectually and practice Embodied Presence in the middle of ordinary life.

PRIVATE EMBODIED PRESENCE MENTORSHIP

Individual support for women who want a more personal space to build their capacity to remain connected to themselves and gradually trust themselves again.

The work takes place in relationship with the situations, patterns, transitions, and ordinary moments that are actually happening in their lives.





A NOTE TO FELLOW PRACTITIONERS

I have tremendous respect for the work that happens in therapy, coaching, healthcare, body-based practices, spiritual practice, and other forms of meaningful support.

Embodied Presence grew from something I kept noticing across decades of working with women and, eventually, something I could no longer ignore in my own life.

We can understand ourselves deeply and still lose access to that understanding when life gets hard.

For a long time, I thought the answer was more awareness.
More personal growth.
Better communication.
More understanding of myself.

What I eventually realized was that I hadn't lost my awareness.
I'd lost access to it.

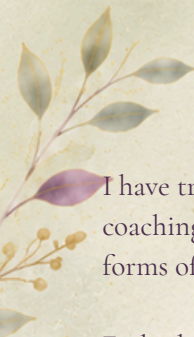
That distinction changed the direction of my work.

Sometimes a woman doesn't need another explanation of herself.
She needs opportunities to practice staying connected to herself while life is actually unfolding.

And when she does lose that connection, she needs to discover that she can return.

That's where my work lives.

I welcome relationships with practitioners whose work supports other pieces of the same woman.



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LET'S CONNECT

Referrals • Collaboration • Professional Conversation

If you're supporting a woman who recognizes herself in these pages, the easiest place for her to begin is with my free training:

The Missing Piece in Personal Growth

Why self-awareness, healing, and even embodiment don't always hold up under pressure... and what helps your deepest wisdom remain available instead.

START WITH THE FREE TRAINING

If you'd like to learn more about the Embodied Presence Framework™, discuss whether this work may complement the support you're already providing, or simply connect professionally, I'd be glad to hear from you.

SCHEDULE A PROFESSIONAL CONNECTION CONVERSATION

Lisa DePamphilis

Creator of the Embodied Presence Framework™

Embodied Presence Teacher & Mentor



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Helping self-aware women stay connected to themselves in ordinary life.

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