

# Serenity Now

## FOUNDATIONS

*Healing Adult Victims of Childhood Abuse  
- Survivor to Thriver*

# Speak Up Without Shutting Down

**A Nervous System-Aware Scriptbook for Conflict-  
Ready Communication**



# Speak Up Without Shutting Down

## A Nervous System-Aware Scriptbook for Conflict-Ready Communication

by Serenity Now Foundations

*For trauma survivors learning to stay present, speak clearly, and protect peace—even in the hardest moments.*

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### If You've Ever Thought...

**"I go blank when I try to express myself..."**

**"I think of the perfect response—hours later."**

**"I freeze when things get tense."**

**"I hate conflict, so I shut down instead of speaking up."**

**This guide is for you.**

**Because if you've experienced trauma—especially in childhood—your nervous system likely equates conflict with danger. So instead of fighting or fleeing, you may:**

- **Go numb**
- **Zone out**
- **Over-accommodate**
- **Fawn or freeze**
- **Lose your words completely**

**This is not a communication problem.**

**It's a nervous system response.  
And it can be gently rewired.**

**This scriptbook will help you learn to speak with safety, self-trust, and clarity—even when your body wants to disappear.**

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## **What Really Happens When You Shut Down**

**Shutdown is a biological response—not a flaw.**

**When your brain perceives conflict as danger (even if it's not), it may:**

- **Cut off verbal access**
- **Flatten your affect (monotone, blank)**
- **Create a “foggy” or dissociative sensation**
- **Silence you completely**

**You may tell yourself:**

- **“It's not worth it.”**
- **“I'll just make it worse.”**
- **“I don't even know what I feel.”**

**But here's the truth:**

**Your nervous system isn't broken.  
It's protecting you the way it once had to.  
And now, it's safe to speak a new truth.**

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## **How This Scriptbook Helps**

**You'll learn:**

- **Scripts that keep you regulated during conflict**

- Reframes to name your experience *without shame*
- Language that keeps you connected—even if your voice shakes
- Nervous system tools to prevent shutdown while speaking

Each script is designed to feel doable—not perfect.

You can whisper it, write it, or text it.

You can use it now or return later.

The goal: Get your voice back. Safely.

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### Self-Awareness First: What’s Behind the Shutdown?

Reflect before we begin:

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When conflict arises, my body usually...

- Shuts down
- Freezes
- Fawns
- Disassociates
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

The message I learned about conflict growing up was...

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When I try to speak during conflict, I fear...

- Rejection
- Being misunderstood
- Being too much
- Hurting someone
- Not making sense

What I want to believe instead:

“I can speak clearly and still be safe.”

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## **Script Library: Speak Without Shutting Down**

**Each section includes scripts + a somatic support suggestion.**

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### **1. Scripts for When You Start to Freeze**

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**“I’m noticing I’m starting to shut down. Can we take a pause?”**

**“I want to respond, but I need a moment to come back into my body.”**

**“This conversation matters to me. I’m working on staying present.”**

***Somatic Support:***

**Rub your fingers together or hold a warm object while you speak.**

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### **2. Scripts for Re-Entering the Conversation After Shutdown**

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**“I froze earlier, but I’d like to come back and share how I feel now.”**

**“What I wanted to say in that moment—but couldn’t—was...”**

**“It was hard to speak then. I want to try again now.”**

***Somatic Support:***

**Take a deep breath. Speak while exhaling slowly.**

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### **3. Scripts for Expressing Boundaries Without Collapse**

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**“I care about you, and I need to pause this conversation for now.”**

**“It’s hard for me to say this, but I need some space.”**

**“I can’t continue this right now, but I’ll circle back when I’m ready.”**

***Somatic Support:***

**Place one hand over your heart and the other on your belly as you speak.**

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#### **4. Scripts for Fawn Recovery (When You Over-Accommodated)**

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**“I said yes earlier to avoid conflict, but I’ve realized that isn’t true for me.”**

**“I went into people-pleasing mode. Here’s what I actually need.”**

**“I’m trying to unlearn the habit of saying what I think you want to hear.  
Here’s what’s real for me.”**

***Somatic Support:***

**Sway gently side to side while speaking. This counters immobilization.**

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#### **5. Scripts to Name the Pattern (Without Blame)**

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**“This kind of conversation is hard for me. I tend to shut down, but I’m trying to stay present.”**

**“I’m not trying to avoid you. I freeze sometimes when things feel intense.”**

**“This is new for me—to speak up instead of disappear. Thanks for bearing with me.”**

***Somatic Support:***

**Use a grounding phrase: “I’m here. This is now. I’m safe enough to speak.”**

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#### **Self-Reconnection Prompts**

**Use these after a shutdown to process and prepare for repair.**

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**What was I feeling that I didn't get to say?**

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**What did my body need in that moment?**

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**What would I say now, from a calmer place?**

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**What can I try differently next time?**

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**Reminder: Progress ≠ Perfection**

**You won't always speak perfectly.**

**You'll still freeze sometimes.**

**You might fawn, shut down, or withdraw.**

**But every time you:**

- **Pause and breathe**
- **Name your needs**
- **Return to the conversation**
- **Say *something* true**
- **Practice without perfection**

**You're rewiring.**

**You're proving to your body:**

**"I don't have to disappear to be safe."**

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**Want More Support?**

**Join our trauma recovery course: 7 Steps to Turn Your Demons Into Puppies**

**→ Learn how to deactivate your survival responses using neuroplasticity**

**👉 Explore the course at <https://serenitynowfoundations.com/>**

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