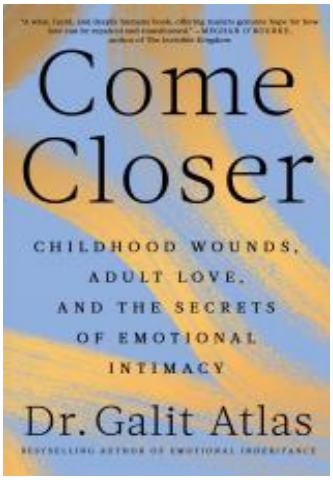
Come Closer: Childhood Wounds, Adult Love, and the Secrets of Emotional Intimacy

by Dr. Galit Atlas



About the Book

For readers of Irvin D. Yalom, Esther Perel and Oliver Sacks, COME CLOSER is a profound and ?deeply humane? (Meghan O?Rourke, bestselling author of THE INVISIBLE KINGDOM) book by Dr. Galit Atlas, a psychoanalyst and the internationally bestselling author of EMOTIONAL INHERITANCE, that reveals how our childhood wounds hold the key to understanding our adult relationships.

What is the secret of emotional intimacy? How can understanding our childhood experiences give us the insights we need to be close to others in a truly satisfying, longer-lasting and more meaningful way?

In COME CLOSER, Galit Atlas invites us inside the private lives of her patients --- and into her own --- to offer new, life-changing answers to these important questions. Atlas has identified six child archetypes --- the frightened child, the melancholic child, the ashamed child, the invisible child, the guilty child, and the chosen child --- and in these pages, she shows how each childhood wound plays out in our adult relationships.

In remarkably compelling and dramatic stories of both therapist and patient, Atlas illustrates how the child within us drives our love lives, forming patterns we repeat without awareness. Each narrative will have you on the edge of your seat, living the mystery alongside Atlas and her patients, uncovering roots, drawing parallels, and reaching insights and revelations just as they do.

No one who reads this eye-opening and ?stunning? (Ramani Durvasula, psychologist and *New York Times* bestselling author of IT'S NOT YOU) book will ever see their relationships --- or themselves --- the same way again.

Discussion Guide

1. Throughout the book, Dr. Atlas urges her patients to identify and embrace their childhood wounds. Is there one patient you think was the most successful in accepting their archetype?

2. Which child archetype(s) do you most identify with? Was there a passage or anecdote that made you feel particularly seen?

3. In the introduction, Dr. Atlas says, ?Our emotional work is filled with the deep desire to know ourselves and others, and often an even deeper dread of knowing.? Why do you think we fear self-discovery?

4. Zoe, the frightened child, is in a safe, stable relationship but finds herself longing for a relationship from her past, one that was quite volatile. In what way is this internal conflict the result of a childhood spent in distress?

5. The melancholic child, an archetype concerned with abandonment, tries so hard to prevent loss that she inadvertently drives others away. Discuss this predicament.

6. If more people understood the link between childhood experience and adult romantic relationships, do you think dating would be different?

7. The ashamed child is terrified that there is something wrong with them. What tactics does a grown adult like David use to protect himself from this fear?

8. How does the invisible child use their sexuality to feel noticed and desired but not truly known or loved?

9. A guilty child, like Marco, struggles to prioritize his own needs in favor of pleasing others. Are there elements of this archetype that are rewarded in our culture? Do you think that makes it difficult to recognize a pattern?

10. The chosen child often has a very strong connection to a loving and admiring caregiver. How does this bond affect their intimacy with a romantic partner later in life?

11. Before reading COME CLOSER, did you believe your childhood could impact your adult romantic relationships? Do you now believe you had some misconceptions about this association?

Author Bio

Dr. Galit Atlas is an internationally renowned psychoanalyst recognized for her rethinking of the place of sexuality and desire in contemporary theory and practice. She is on the faculty of the New York University postdoctoral program in psychotherapy and psychoanalysis, and teaches at the Columbia University Center for Psychoanalytic Training and Research. A leader in the field of relational psychoanalysis, Atlas teaches and lectures throughout the United States and internationally and is a recipient of the Gradiva Award, the Nautilus Book Award, and the NADTA Research Award. She is the author of EMOTIONAL INHERITANCE --- an international bestseller --- and COME CLOSER. Her work has been translated into 29 languages.

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Publication Date: September 29, 2026
Genres: Nonfiction, Personal Growth, Psychology
Hardcover: 320 pages
Publisher: Avid Reader Press/Simon & Schuster
ISBN-10: 1668067145
ISBN-13: 9781668067147