



Article

THE OFFLOAD ROOM

The cost of silence

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Sometimes a dam looks immovable, holding everything back with quiet strength. Yet even the strongest dams are built with sluices — deliberate openings to release pressure before it becomes destructive. Our inner lives work the same way. If feelings are never expressed, the build-up eventually forces its own escape. Releasing them in smaller, intentional ways prevents the break.

I once worked alongside someone who seemed calm, composed, and unshaken. Only later did I learn about the turmoil he carried in silence — the health issues, the stress leave, the burnout. His body broke before his words ever did. That image has stayed with me. Silence can cost more than speech.

What the science shows

Research confirms it. Individuals who chronically inhibit their emotions exhibit physiological stress reactions that do not match their calm exterior. Over time, this mismatch increases vulnerability to illness, depression, and even cardiovascular disease.

By contrast, expressive writing for just fifteen minutes a day has been shown to lower anxiety, strengthen immune function, and create a fresh perspective. Expression does not erase the problem, but it releases the pressure — shifting the load from the body into language.

Why release matters

Silence is heavy because it has nowhere to go. That is why structured, symbolic release practices are so powerful. They create a container where unspoken weight can be expressed and then set down — without judgment, performance, or the need for perfect words.

The principle is simple: what is never said still speaks inside you. Naming it, writing it, or externalising it reduces its grip. If you are carrying something in silence today, give it a name. Write it down. Let it out.

Because silence is not neutral, it is a form of pressure. And pressure always demands release.