

# *P A T H:*

## *Programmed Approach To Happiness*



*A Handbook for Self-Leadership  
and Inner Transformation*



## DEDICATION

In the loving memory of a cherished friend, Melissa L. Good, whose laughter still echoes in my heart. Your light shines on, motivating me to guide others through the darkness that eventually consumed you. After all these years, you still inspire me to live fully and love deeply. Though gone from sight, your spirit remains forever cherished and deeply missed.

*“Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.” ~ Desmond Tutu*



# Disclaimer

Welcome to "PATH: Programmed Approach To Happiness." Before you embark on your journey through this handbook, it's important to understand the purpose and limitations of the content provided.

## **Purpose of the Handbook:**

"PATH" is designed to offer practical guidance, tools, and strategies to support individuals in their journey of healing, self-discovery, and personal growth. The content is intended to empower readers to explore their inner worlds, address childhood trauma and neglect, navigate addiction, and cultivate a sense of happiness and fulfillment in their lives.

## **Limitations of the Content:**

While "PATH" provides valuable insights and resources, it is not a substitute for professional medical or psychological advice, diagnosis, or treatment. The techniques and strategies outlined in this handbook are based on general principles of personal development and may not be suitable for everyone. Individual outcomes may vary, and readers are encouraged to use their own judgment and seek appropriate professional support as needed.

## **Encouragement to Engage:**

Despite these limitations, I encourage you to engage the content of "PATH" with an open mind and a willingness to explore new possibilities. The journey of soul-searching and self-guided

improvement is unique to each individual, and this handbook offers a roadmap to help you navigate your unique path. By applying the principles and practices outlined in "PATH" with dedication and persistence, you can create positive change in your life and move towards a brighter future.

### **Final Note:**

As you progress into the pages of "PATH," remember that you are not alone on this journey. Others who have gone before are here to support you every step of the way, and I believe in your ability to overcome challenges, discover your inner strength, and create a life that brings you joy and fulfillment.

*“Two roads diverged in a wood and I – I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.”*

~ Robert Frost

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# INTRODUCTION

*"You can't wait until life isn't hard anymore  
before you decide to be happy." ~ Nightbirde*

[Jane Kristen Marczewski]

1990 – 2022

Feeling overwhelmed? Does it feel like you're going through the motions, just trying to get through another day? Has your life become dependent on bad behaviors, gambling, binge eating, drugs, or alcohol just to feel normal and find relief? Have you lost control over the direction of your life? Whatever your struggle may be, I am here to offer support through guidance. I know a way through this darkness and back out to a world that makes sense.

Addiction comes in many forms, often not even recognized for what it is... a human response in an attempt to escape suffering.

Not an inherited disease of the brain, a moral failure, or a weakness of character. As trauma expert and physician, Dr. Gabor Maté explains it, “Addiction is any behavior that gives temporary relief and pleasure, but has negative consequences, and yet the person cannot stop.” It’s possible you don’t even see there is a problem, just the awareness that you are battling with a deep recurring pain; but if these three elements exist then it qualifies as an addiction:

Any Behavior That...

- Gives temporary relief/pleasure,
- Has negative consequences,
- And you cannot stop yourself.

To live is to suffer; to find meaning in that suffering is survival. Let’s do more than just find meaning, let’s find a purpose to life and rise above the suffering. Personal recovery from trauma and/or addiction is a process of growth and self-discovery, listening to your ‘shadow self’ while learning the source of the pain. I promote in this book behavioral transformation by redirecting the damage of pain to a force of positive growth and adopting new attitudes and reactions to life. I have provided the tools and professional experience to guide you into this light, helping you see beauty again.

## What is Needed

Research suggests that there is a significant overlap between complex trauma and addiction. Individuals who have

experienced complex trauma, such as childhood abuse or neglect, are at a higher risk of developing substance use disorders later in life. According to some estimates, up to two-thirds of individuals seeking treatment for substance use disorders have a history of trauma. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Kaiser Permanente, found a strong association between adverse childhood experiences (including trauma) and the development of addictions.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) studies focusing on childhood abuse and neglect have revealed significant correlations between these traumatic experiences and the development of substance use disorders (SUDs). Research consistently demonstrates that individuals who have experienced childhood abuse or neglect are at a heightened risk of developing SUDs later in life. This association persists into adulthood, indicating the long-lasting impact of childhood trauma on substance use patterns. Furthermore, SAMHSA's findings suggest that the severity and duration of childhood abuse or neglect can influence the likelihood of developing SUDs, with more severe or prolonged trauma increasing the risk.

Additionally, SAMHSA emphasizes the importance of addressing childhood trauma in substance abuse treatment programs, advocating for trauma-informed care that recognizes and responds to the unique needs of individuals with a history of

childhood abuse or neglect. This involves recognizing the role of trauma in the development of addiction and providing comprehensive care that addresses both the underlying trauma and the substance use disorder.

It now becomes easier to understand the benefits some individuals are achieving by embracing the lifestyle promoted in 12-step programs; whether Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Celebrate Recovery (CR), or Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART), life-changing events are happening despite relapses occurring and are even anticipated. Without knowing it, the progression through the 12 steps (or the alternative program SMART) is assisting people to heal some of their childhood traumas. What is needed now, is a strategy for individuals to heal their wounds, adjacent but separate to the 12 steps found in these programs; especially during times when no professional help is available.

Dr. Carl Jung, a famous Swiss psychiatrist, former protégé of Sigmund Freud, and Father of Analytical Psychology, took a keen interest in alcoholism during the 1920s. In the early 1930s, 13% of Dr. Jung's admissions to the hospital were for treating alcoholism. A conversation with one of those patients during discharge after receiving a year of treatment and unsuccessfully curing the disorder played a key role in the development of AA.

The patient was Rowland H. — or Rowland Hazard, “investment banker and former state senator from Rhode Island” who came to Jung in desperation. Dr. Jung bluntly told him his recovery

from alcoholism was not possible, and that modern psychology has done all that it can do to help him.

Rowland then asked, "Is there no exceptions?" "Yes," replied Dr. Jung, "there is. Exceptions to cases such as yours have been occurring since early times. Here and there, once in a while, alcoholics have had what are called vital spiritual experiences." He went on to describe a spiritual experience as "To me these occurrences are phenomena. They appear to be in the nature of huge emotional displacements and rearrangements. Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them" (pages 26/27 in the "Big Book" Alcoholics Anonymous).

Dr. Jung replied that there were exceptions and that alcoholics have had what are called "vital spiritual experiences." He described these experiences as "phenomena" that involve huge emotional displacements and rearrangements. Dr. Jung noted that these experiences result in a complete shift in the guiding forces of a person's life, with a new set of conceptions and motives dominating them.

What Dr. Jung was referring to is the idea that some individuals who struggle with addiction or other psychological issues may have a transformative experience that leads to significant and

lasting changes in their behavior and outlook on life. This experience is often described as a spiritual awakening, and it may involve a profound sense of connection to something greater than oneself.

Dr. Jung's observation that these experiences have occurred since early times suggests that he believed they were not limited to any particular religious or cultural tradition but rather were a universal human experience. The idea of a spiritual awakening or transformation is still a common theme in many approaches to addiction recovery today. This was the beginning of the AA concept of needing a "higher power".

You will find I have combined physical behavior controls and psychological techniques for addressing trauma, and incorporated a rational approach to spiritual awakening, that when applied will transform your life. Understand this handbook is about the "journey" and not the "destination". I'm presenting a "way of life" and not an "achievement". An example of this can be seen with weight loss; you don't just lose the weight, but you have to keep it off and stay healthy. No surgery or liposuction can achieve this process; it must be learned and lived. You can't attend weight loss meetings and your issues go away; same with AA/NA/CR/SMART meetings or going to group therapy. It doesn't fix you; you fix you.

This leads us to a key question you need to ask yourself, "Are you ready to dedicate to a programmed approach and do what is necessary, no matter how uncomfortable, to affect real change?"

Some call it “hitting rock-bottom”, others a “crisis experience”, and still some refer to it as the “gift of desperation”; yet all of these are terms used to describe a crisis moment or a turning point in an individual's life, particularly in the context of addiction and personal struggles, where this commitment to improving begins.

This moment of crisis will lead to an "Ego Implosion", essentially breaking down the self-centered and defensive aspects of a person's identity. This in turn allows for paving the way to a transformative process which will include the development of "Intellectual Humility" (acceptance that your beliefs and opinions could be wrong) and the emergence of "Truthful Curiosity" (an honest desire to find the truth), both of which can be instrumental in a "Conversion Recovery" process.

Here's how this progression might unfold:

- **Implosion of the Ego:** Hitting rock bottom can shatter the illusions and defenses that individuals often use to protect their ego and deny their problems. It can bring a stark realization of the consequences of their actions and their own limitations. This breakdown of the ego can be a humbling experience that opens the door to change.
- **Development of Intellectual Humility:** With the ego shattered, individuals will become more willing to admit their mistakes, acknowledge their vulnerabilities, and recognize that they don't have all the answers. This newfound humility creates space for self-reflection and an honest assessment of their situation.

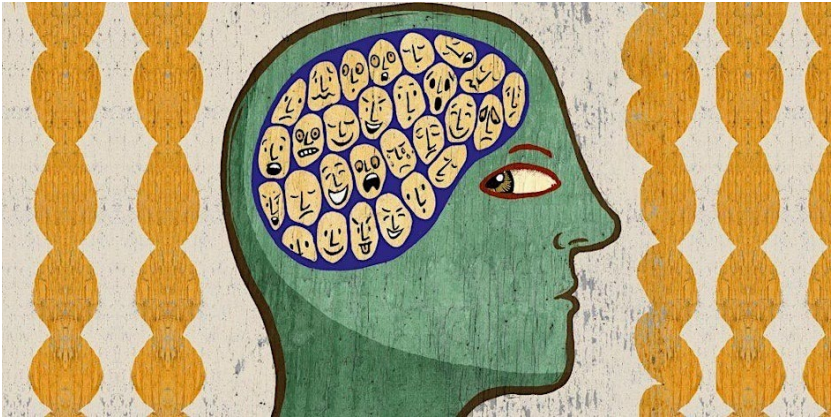
- **Truthful Curiosity:** As individuals let go of their previous assumptions and defenses, it's important to become genuinely curious about their condition, the reasons behind their struggles, and the possibilities for recovery. This will lead to the start of asking questions, seeking knowledge, and exploring different avenues for change.
- **Healing and Recovery:** Intellectual humility and truthful curiosity create a foundation for healing from past traumas and facilitate a sustainable recovery from addictive behaviors. Individuals are more likely to engage in therapeutic practices, seek support from others, and learn about healthier coping mechanisms. They become open to new perspectives, embrace personal growth, and actively work toward a better life.

If you are not at this level of desperation in your current situation, this handbook may still offer some usable insight and additional techniques for healing the traumas of your past. Without reaching the 'bottom crisis of desperation', you will not be open to changing beliefs that were wrongfully established by your abuse/neglect and now have become the governing rules your entire life-existence is based upon; changing a belief is an incredibly hard task, and why so many people chose to just survive another day, rather than facing the reality that the source of your pain comes from you.



## Chapter 1

# UNDERSTANDING INNER PERSONALITY



*Self-talk, self-doubt, and self-judgment shape our relationship with ourselves. By recognizing and naming these distinct aspects of our minds, we can better understand, respect, and balance them.*

~ Internal Family Systems

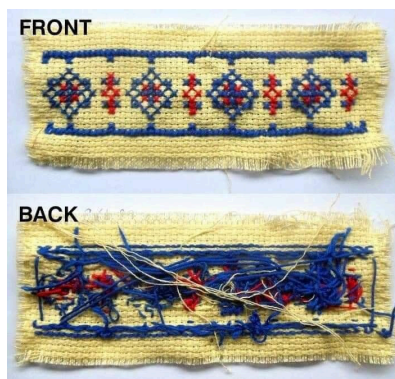
Have you ever stopped to think about what makes you who you are? Beyond the surface-level traits and behaviors that people see, there's a complex interplay of thoughts, emotions, and motivations that shape your personality. In psychology, researchers have long sought to unravel the mysteries of human personality, exploring the intricacies of the mind and how it influences our behavior.

One fascinating framework for understanding personality is the concept of subpersonalities. These are like different facets of your personality, each with its own distinct characteristics and tendencies. Picture it as a diverse cast of characters residing within your mind, each vying for attention and influence over your thoughts and actions.

In this chapter, we'll investigate the concept of subpersonalities, examining how they interact and shape your behavior. From the dominant persona that guides your everyday actions to the shadow-self lurking in the depths of your psyche, we'll uncover the complexities of your inner world, revealing the intricate threads that make you uniquely you.

Imagine your personality as a complex tapestry embroidered from different threads, each representing a unique aspect of who you are. These threads, or subpersonalities, form the intricate pattern of your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

At the front stands your dominant persona, the face you present to the world. This persona reflects your core values, beliefs, and aspirations, shaping how you interact with others and navigate the world around you. It's the persona that people recognize most



readily, the one that guides your actions in most situations.

Yet in back, beneath the surface lurks the shadow self and the super-ego subpersonalities, hidden in the depths of your psyche. The shadow self, in particular, represents the sub-parts of your personality that embody the aspects of yourself you may prefer to keep concealed — the fears, insecurities, and vulnerabilities you'd rather not acknowledge. It's the parts of you that whisper doubts in the silence of the night, casting shadows on your confidence and self-assurance, or insult and belittle you for all the mistakes you have ever made.

Meanwhile, the persona changes based on the setting and needs of the different roles you play in life: father/mother, husband/wife, worker, neighbor, friend, son/daughter, etc. All of these personas are being pressured by an inner judge and critic known as the super-ego. In response, the persona shifts and morphs to fit the contours of different social landscapes and every present demand being made by the super-ego. It's the chameleon within you, adept at adjusting its colors to blend seamlessly into various environments. The super-ego-driven persona enables you

to navigate the complexities of social interactions, but it also raises questions of authenticity and identity.

The dynamics between these subpersonalities are intricate and nuanced, often playing out like a silent symphony within your mind. At times, harmony reigns as your dominant persona leads the ensemble, orchestrating your thoughts, emotions, and actions in alignment with your deepest values. But discord can arise when the shadow self seeks to assert itself, casting shadows of doubt and conflict across your inner landscape. And when the adaptive persona takes center stage, the melody of your identity may falter, leaving you questioning where your true self resides. In reaction to this, the super-ego begins to harshly criticize you for not living up to its required standards.

The consequences of these inner battles are profound. Conflict and turmoil brew beneath the surface, threatening to unravel the fabric of your being. Inconsistencies in behavior emerge, leaving others puzzled by the shifting shades of your personality. And decision-making becomes fraught with uncertainty as conflicting subpersonalities vie for control, pulling you in different directions.

Yet, amidst the chaos, there is an opportunity for growth and self-discovery. By unraveling the threads of your personality tapestry, you can gain insight into the intricate workings of your psyche. Through introspection and reflection, you can untangle the knots of inner conflict and forge a path toward greater self-awareness and authenticity. For it is in embracing the complexity of your

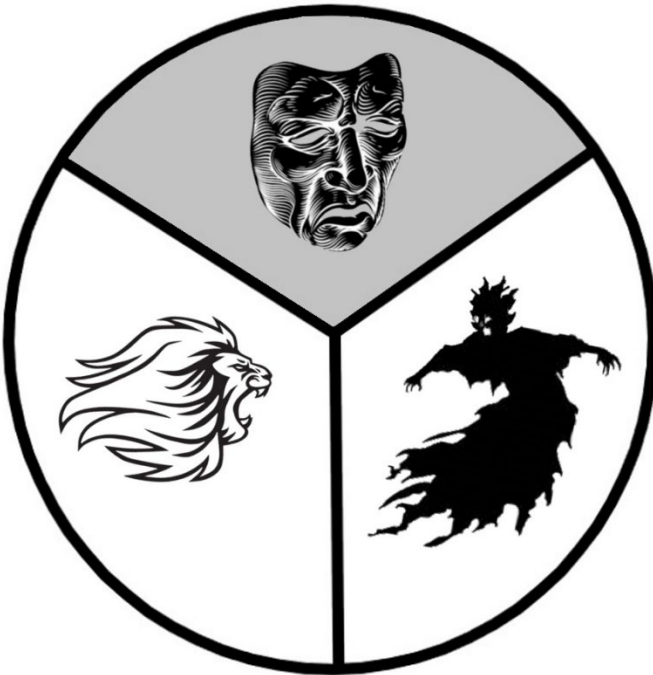
inner world that you truly begin to understand the richness of your human experience.

### 3-PARTS of PERSONALITY

1. **PERSONA** – (*social masks*) The persona is the mask we wear, in order to conform to society. We could describe it as the societal roles we “wear” in order to “fit in”, based on norms and ethics. An example is the definition of masculinity and femininity: what does it mean to be a man or a woman? Most cultures and subcultures propose certain criteria for this, and the persona is the product of us meeting these criteria to fit into society. The persona is nothing more than a superficial construct of how we wish to be perceived by our world.
2. **SUPER-EGO** – (*harsh critic*) The Super-ego is an internalized critical voice that can be harsh and punitive, leading to feelings of guilt, shame, and self-blame. It can develop from a variety of sources, including childhood experiences, cultural and societal norms, and trauma. The Super-ego represents an internalized moral and ethical standard that can become unrealistic, perfectionistic, or unattainable, leading to significant emotional distress and mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, perfectionism, or addiction.
3. **SHADOW** – (*childhood trauma*) The shadow lies in the unconscious and consists of undesirable characteristics that we have repressed and want to keep in the dark. This happens consciously as well as unconsciously. Jung stated that the less

the shadow is embodied in the individual's conscious life, the blacker and denser it becomes.

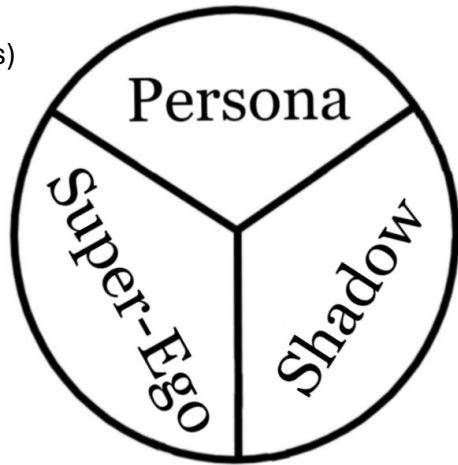
*"If the repressed tendencies, the shadow as I call them, were obviously evil, there would be no problem whatever. But the shadow is merely somewhat inferior, primitive, unadapted, and awkward; not wholly bad. It even contains childish or primitive qualities which would in a way vitalize and embellish human existence, but—convention forbids!" ~ Carl Gustav Jung, Psychology and Religion: West and East (1938), Psychology and Religion, p 134.*



Many people aren't even aware that they have a shadow. When parts of it inevitably come to the surface, they tend to brush this off as something outside themselves.

## Ego State of Functioning

- **Persona** - social personalities
- **Super-Ego** - critical inner voice
- **Shadow** - painful past  
(and primal desires)



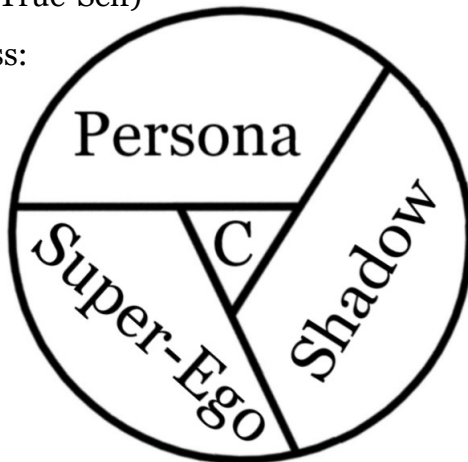
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## Emergence of Intellectual Humility

**C** = \***Consciousness** (True-Self)

**HOPE** of \*Consciousness:

Honest  
Open  
Peaceful  
Empathy



**\*Consciousness** [*Inner Leader and Self-Counselor*] It serves to mediate between the Persona, Super-Ego, and Shadow, fostering balance and reconciliation of internal conflicts.

## RECOGNIZING CONSCIOUSNESS IN YOURSELF

The Consciousness role in your personality is Self-Leadership, guiding and mediating conflicts that arise from the different parts of your personality.

**HOPE:** for recognizing your Consciousness/Psyche (Your Higher-Self, Consciousness of Spirit)

**H – Honest:** You will feel your inward thoughts as being honest and truthful; no deceptions or excuses being made about thoughts.

**O – Open:** You will experience a sense of openness when examining your traumatic memories or the feelings they evoke.

**P – Peaceful:** This may take longer to identify due to the current situations you are experiencing. In the beginning, it may be a passing moment when sitting quietly that you feel “okay”, not happy or sad, angry or love..., just “okay” with the world. As you process through your Shadow Work, this sense of Peace will be easier to recognize and know that it’s your true-authentic Self.

**E – Empathy:** This will be the hardest of them all for you to identify in yourself, especially if you do not normally feel empathy for others. This is not Sympathy, like feeling bad for another person; it is understanding another’s situation without experiencing it yourself. The best way to think about it is when you “feel the willingness to help” without being asked because “you know what they are going through”.



## PURPOSE FOR UNDERSTANDING PARTS

The approach used in PATH is Integrated Self-Realization which is based on a combination of Internal Family Systems (IFS) therapy and Carl Jung's Individuation process of analytical psychology.

Richard Schwartz's IFS uses the concept of the "internal family," which refers to the various sub-personalities or "parts" that make up a person's psyche. According to IFS theory, these parts are organized in a hierarchical system, with some parts serving as protectors or managers that help us navigate the world, and other parts serving as exiles or wounded inner children that carry emotional pain and trauma.

The goal of IFS therapy is to help individuals identify and get to



know these different parts of themselves and to facilitate communication between them to resolve internal conflicts through collaboration and promote healing. Utilizing self-leadership serving as a guide, helps you to access and work

with different parts in a compassionate and non-judgmental frame of mind.

In Jungian psychology, the shadow refers to the unconscious parts of our personality that we repress or deny because they do

not align with our conscious self-image or values. The shadow is a natural and necessary part of the personality, but it can also contain aspects that are considered negative, destructive, or "dark."

The dark aspect of the shadow refers to the parts of ourselves that we find unacceptable or shameful, such as our aggressive impulses, sexual desires, envy, greed, or other taboo emotions. These aspects can be seen as negative because they go against our conscious beliefs or societal norms, and we may feel ashamed or guilty for having them. It is the 'monster' we are capable of becoming, but bury these thoughts in the hope of preventing the creation of this beast from happening.

When we repress or deny these dark aspects of our shadow, they can manifest unconsciously in harmful ways, such as through projection, where we see our negative traits in others, or through destructive behaviors such as addiction, self-harm, or aggression towards others.

To understand the concept of the shadow, it is important to first grasp the idea of persona, or what I refer to as your mask. Persona, or mask, is the version of yourself (as discussed before) that you present to others when you want them to accept and like you. For example, if you go to a party and try to impress the people there, you might go along with their jokes and laugh even if you don't find them funny. Later, you might feel bitter and resentful about being "put down" at the party, leading to aggressive and vengeful thoughts.

The problem here is that you were too much in persona at the party, keeping your “social mask” on and sacrificing your true self to gain acceptance. Later, you refuse to acknowledge the existence of the parts of you that could have protected you from doing so. The bitterness and resentment you feel at home reveal the aggressive shadow part of you that you actually need. If you had successfully integrated that part of yourself into your personality, you would have presented a more assertive and determined face and stance, which would have prevented people from putting you down in the first place.

However, you may have adopted a moral code that emphasizes being likable, avoiding conflict, and never hurting anyone's feelings. This causes you to present yourself as a punching bag, which doesn't lead to the integration of the shadow. Ultimately, being a good person doesn't mean sacrificing yourself or denying parts of yourself. It means integrating all aspects of yourself, including the shadow, into a cohesive whole (united self).

The pathway to completion as a human being is through the embodiment of the monster, the realization of the shadow. Jung did not believe that you could be a good person until you comprehend your capacity for evil. He does not intend for you to act it out in the world, but to understand that it is possible. Then, not only to understand it is possible but then bring it under your control. In essence, you need to become a “Civilized Monster.” The morality comes when you are a monster, and you can control it, and that is the union encounter with the shadow.

## PATH TO HAPPINESS

Achieving happiness through PATH typically involves a process of self-exploration and growth. Here are four key steps in the process:

1. **Self-awareness:** Developing a deep understanding of yourself is a crucial first step towards integrated self-realization. This may involve exploring one's personality traits, values, beliefs, emotions, and life experiences. Self-awareness is achieved through various practices such as journaling, meditation, therapy, or self-reflection.
2. **Self-acceptance:** Accepting yourself (flaws and all) is a critical step towards integrated self-realization. This involves embracing all aspects of yourself, including the shadow self, and acknowledging that every experience and trait has contributed to your unique identity. Self-acceptance will be accomplished through practices such as self-compassion, forgiveness, and reframing negative self-talk.
3. **Integration:** Integrating all aspects of yourself, including the unconscious and shadow aspects, is a crucial step towards achieving wholeness and completeness. This may involve working through past traumas, healing emotional wounds, and developing new ways of relating to yourself and others. Integration can be supported through

practices such as therapy, Shadow Work, and spiritual practices.

4. **Authentic living:** Living in alignment with your true self is a key aspect of integrated self-realization. This involves expressing your unique talents, values, and life purpose in all aspects of life, including work, relationships, and personal pursuits. Authentic living can be fostered through practices such as goal setting, mindfulness, and creative expression.

The process of achieving integrated self-realization is unique to each individual and may involve a combination of these and other steps. It is an ongoing process that requires commitment, self-compassion, and a willingness to embrace change and growth.



*“You are blind to your own weaknesses, but you are also blind to your own strengths” ~ Jordan Peterson*



## Chapter 2

# Source of Emotional Pain



*"He who learns must suffer. And even in our sleep pain that cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart, and in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom to us by the awful grace of God."*

~ Aeschylus

# Childhood Trauma & Neglect

## (and the damage it causes)

### THE LASTING IMPACT

Childhood is supposed to be a time of growth, exploration, and learning. It is a time when children are supposed to feel safe, loved, and supported by the adults in their lives. Unfortunately, for many children, childhood is a time of trauma and neglect. According to the National Survey of Children's Health, nearly 1 in 4 children in the United States has experienced some form of trauma or neglect in their lifetime. Childhood trauma is often described as serious Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACEs, which have profound and lasting effects on a person's physical, emotional, and mental health.

The effects of adverse experiences during childhood can appear in various forms. One notable repercussion of such experiences is the potential impact on an individual's physical well-being. Adverse childhood experiences heighten the likelihood of various physical health complications, encompassing heart disease, diabetes, and autoimmune disorders. This can be attributed, at least in part, to how trauma influences the body's stress response mechanism. When an individual undergoes a traumatic event, their stress response system becomes hyperactive, releasing stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline. Over an extended period, this may result in persistent inflammation and other medical conditions.



Childhood trauma can also have a significant impact on mental health. Trauma can increase the risk of mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and substance abuse. Children who experience trauma may also have difficulty forming and maintaining healthy relationships, leading to social isolation and further mental health problems. Trauma can also impact cognitive functioning and academic achievement. Children who experience trauma may have difficulty focusing, learning, and remembering information, which can lead to academic struggles and difficulties in other areas of life.

Affective self-control can also be affected by ACEs. This refers to a person's ability to manage and govern their emotions. Children who experience trauma may have difficulty with self-soothing, emotional regulation, and attachment, which can lead to long-term difficulties with relationships and other aspects of life. Trauma during early childhood can also cause developmental delays and problems with disruptive outbursts. Children who experience trauma may have difficulty with attachment, control over emotions, and cognitive functioning, which can lead to long-term difficulties throughout their lives.

Another potential outcome of adverse childhood experiences is the development of challenges related to conduct and actions, which arise as a result of neglect and trauma. Children who undergo such experiences might display behavioral difficulties, including aggression, hyperactivity, and impulsiveness.

Additionally, they may be prone to engaging in risky behaviors such as substance abuse or self-inflicted harm. These challenges in conduct can profoundly influence an individual's life, impacting their relationships, academic and professional achievements, and overall state of well-being.

The impact of childhood trauma and neglect can be devastating, but it is not inevitable. With the right support and treatment, individuals who have experienced trauma and neglect can heal and move forward in a healthy and positive way. Support groups, such as those offered by organizations like the National Association of Adult Survivors of Child Abuse (NAASCA), can provide a sense of community and validation for survivors. It is also one of the goals of this book, using the processes offered in the following chapters, to show you the way through these dark and painful experiences. You may not have ever known that you really weren't a "bad kid", you just didn't get a healthy world to "properly wire" your personality for success.

It is important for our society as a whole to recognize how addiction is predominately the manifestation of childhood trauma and neglect. There needs to be an increasing awareness of the impact this also has on homelessness, broken families, and the prevalence of crime. As a community, we should provide more resources and support for those who have been affected.

# Psycho-Social Stages of Development

## 8 – STAGES

Erik Erikson was a developmental psychologist who in 1950 proposed a theory describing how our social skills and personality develop together as we grow and age. His theory suggests we progress through a predetermined order of eight stages, starting at birth and continuing until death, each with its own unique psychosocial challenges or crises that must be resolved to successfully move on to the next stage. The eight stages of Erikson's theory are as follows: [Pay close attention to stages 1 – 5; they are critical to the way your personality has developed.]

1. **Trust vs. Mistrust** (birth to 1 year): The first stage is characterized by a child's developing sense of trust in their caregivers. If the child's needs are consistently met and they feel safe and secure, they will develop a sense of trust. If not, they will develop a sense of mistrust and anxiety that will continue throughout life.
2. **Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt** (1 to 3 years): The second stage is marked by a child's growing sense of independence and desire for control. If the child is allowed to make choices and explore their environment, they will develop a sense of autonomy. If not, they develop a sense of shame and doubt in their abilities.
3. **Initiative vs. Guilt** (3 to 6 years): The third stage is characterized by a child's increasing desire to take on new

challenges and explore their environment. If the child is encouraged and supported in their endeavors, they will develop a sense of initiative. If not, they develop a sense of guilt or anxiety about their actions.

4. **Industry vs. Inferiority** (6 to 11 years): The fourth stage is marked by a child's desire to master new skills and achieve success. If the child can do so and receives positive feedback, they will develop a sense of industry. If not, they may develop a sense of inferiority or low self-esteem.
5. **Identity vs. Role Confusion** (Adolescence): The fifth stage is characterized by a teenager's search for a sense of self and their place in the world. If they can successfully explore different identities and roles, they will develop a strong sense of identity. If not, they may become confused and struggle with their sense of self.
6. **Intimacy vs. Isolation** (Young Adulthood): The sixth stage is marked by a person's desire for intimacy and close relationships. If they can form meaningful connections with others, they will develop a sense of intimacy. If not, they may become isolated and struggle with feelings of loneliness.
7. **Generativity vs. Stagnation** (Middle Adulthood): The seventh stage is characterized by a person's desire to make a positive impact on the world and future generations. If they can do so and feel a sense of purpose, they will develop a sense of generativity. If not, they may become stagnant and feel unfulfilled.

8. **Integrity vs. Despair** (Late Adulthood): The final stage is marked by a person's reflection on their life and legacy. If they can accept their past and find meaning in their life, they will develop a sense of integrity. If not, they may experience feelings of despair and regret.

## DEVELOPMENTAL ASSESSMENT

I feel the need to start this discussion about personality development with a disclaimer; determining whether someone has successfully achieved a particular stage of psychosocial development requires a nuanced approach. It's important to remember that psychosocial development is a complex and ongoing process, and individuals may progress through the stages at different rates and with different levels of success. It's also important to consider the context in which the individual existed during their development. Factors such as culture, upbringing, and life experiences can all influence their level of success and may impact their ability to achieve a particular stage of development. Ultimately, the best way to truly know answers about your psycho-social development is to be assessed by a counselor in the field of psychology or sociology.

With that said, I wish to use this eight-stage model to gain insight into how the hard-wiring of neurons in your brain formed the person you are today. A personality disorder is not a mental illness, like depression or bipolar, but it can co-exist. Your personality is “hard-wired” in your brain, while mental illness is a chemical imbalance that requires medical treatment. Think of

personality disorders like different climates in the world; Florida is hot and humid, while Alaska is cold and dry. Mental illness are the storms that develop in those climates; Florida experiences hurricanes while Alaska has blizzards. Mental illness such as depression or bipolar will manifest (appear) differently based on your personality traits (disorders).

For a long time following the development of Erikson's theory, it was believed that if you formed an unsuccessful psycho-social personality in your youth, then that is who you will be for the rest of your life. That is until science discovered "Neuroplasticity". The concept of neuroplasticity has been studied and discussed by neuroscientists for many decades, but it wasn't until the 1990s that it became widely accepted as a scientific principle. This was due in part to the development of new technologies, such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), that allowed researchers to directly observe changes in the brain's structure and function in response to experiences.

Researchers observed that the brain could reorganize and compensate for damage caused by injury or disease. For example, studies of stroke patients found that other areas of the brain could take over functions that had been lost due to damage in specific regions. That is why a person who is blind develops an amazing ability to hear sounds; the area of the brain used for sight is repurposed to increase other sensations such as sound or touch. The brain rewires itself when the demand for change is placed on it. In other words, you can change who you are today.

## ISSUES

I have put together a brief series of questions that should help you gain a greater understanding of how your progression has gone and increase insight into possible root causes of issues with your own personality. Here are five yes/no questions for each of Erikson's stages of psychosocial development. If you answer 3 or more “**No**” in a given stage, then you may be struggling with this issue.

### Trust vs. Mistrust:

- Do you feel like you can trust others to meet your needs? (Yes/No)
- Have you kept away from any major disruptions to your sense of safety or security? (Yes/No)
- Are you comfortable asking for help when you need it? (Yes/No)
- Do you trust others easily without suspicion? (Yes/No)
- Have you had positive experiences with others that have strengthened your trust in them? (Yes/No)

### Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt:

- Do you feel comfortable making decisions for yourself? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to express your needs and desires? (Yes/No)
- Do you handle criticism or negative feedback very well? (Yes/No)

- Do you accept responsibility for your actions and refrain from blaming others? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to learn from your mistakes and move forward? (Yes/No)

#### Initiative vs. Guilt:

- Are you comfortable trying new things and taking risks? (Yes/No)
- Do you feel like you have a sense of purpose or direction in life? (Yes/No)
- Do you handle failure or setbacks very well? (Yes/No)
- Do you take responsibility for your actions, and avoid blaming others? (Yes/No)
- Do you try again even when you repeatedly fail? (Yes/No)

#### Industry vs. Inferiority:

- Do you feel a sense of pride or accomplishment when you complete a task? (Yes/No)
- Do you handle competition or comparison with others in a positive manner? (Yes/No)
- Have you avoided having any major setbacks or failures in your pursuits? (Yes/No)
- Do you feel confident in your abilities? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to take on challenges and persevere through difficult times? (Yes/No)



### Identity vs. Role Confusion:

- Do you have a clear understanding of your values and beliefs? (Yes/No)
- Do you avoid comparing yourself with others? (Yes/No)
- Have you remained confident about who you are even when faced with major changes in your life? (Yes/No)
- Are you comfortable expressing your true self to others? (Yes/No)
- Are you secure in who you are and what you stand for? (Yes/No)

### Intimacy vs. Isolation:

- Are you comfortable being vulnerable and open with others? (Yes/No)
- Do you have stress-free romantic relationships? (Yes/No)
- Have you avoided any major losses or separations in your relationships? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to maintain close relationships with others? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to balance your own needs and desires with those of your partner or loved ones? (Yes/No)

### Generativity vs. Stagnation:

- Do you have goals and aspirations for the future? (Yes/No)
- Do you contribute to your community or society at large? (Yes/No)

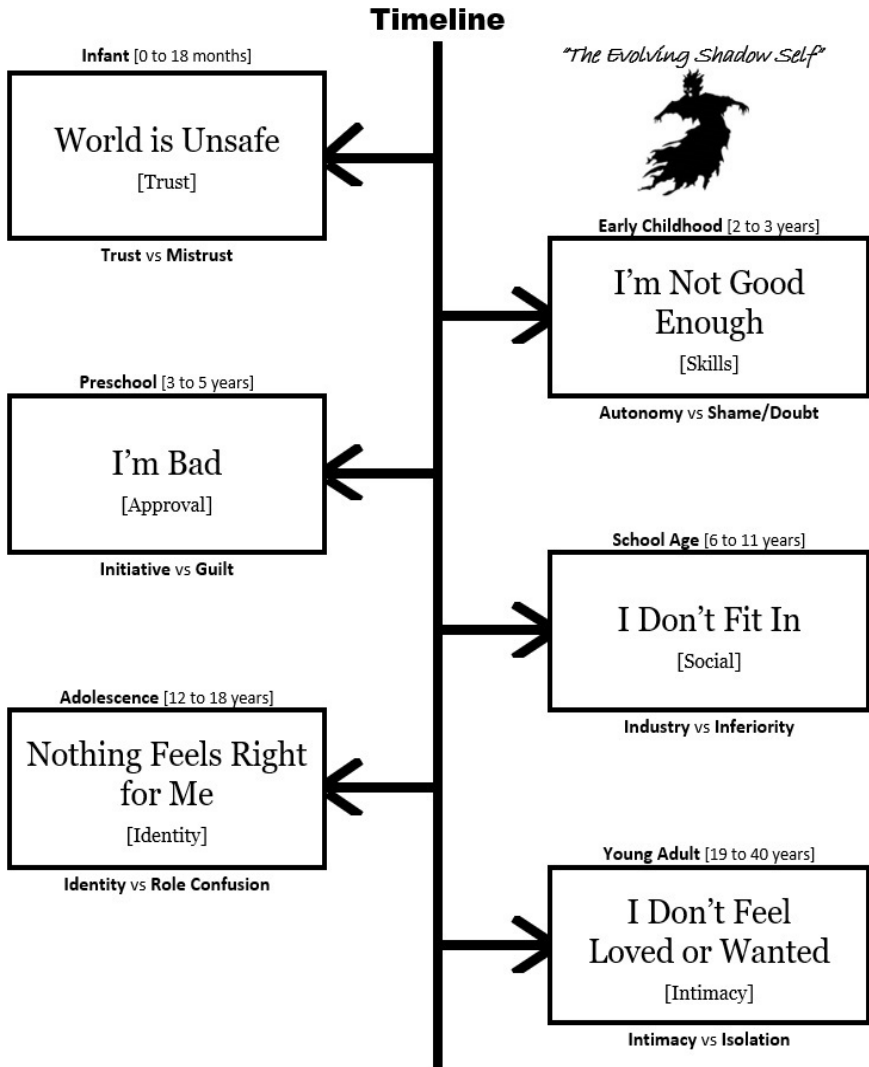
- Do you feel a sense of purpose or fulfillment in your work or personal life? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to balance your own needs and desires with those of your family, career, or other obligations? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to adapt to change and new challenges? (Yes/No)

#### Integrity vs. Despair:

- Do you feel satisfied with the life you've lived so far? (Yes/No)
- Are free from any unresolved issues or regrets from your past that continue to bother you? (Yes/No)
- Do you feel like you've made a meaningful contribution to the world? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to find meaning or purpose in your life, despite any challenges or setbacks? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to accept the inevitability of death and dying? (Yes/No)

# Psycho-Social Development - scoring feedback

[Circle Issues of Struggle from Scoring]



## CAUSES

If areas of concern were found, you can explore further the possible source of the problem when developing through those psycho-social stages. There are a variety of environmental or life events that can contribute to a failure in achieving any particular phase. Here are some situations covering each stage that often strongly impact the outcome of personality development, and that will help your self-examination into the past.

### Trust vs. Mistrust:

- Neglect or abuse by primary caregivers.
- Inconsistency in caregiving, such as frequent changes in caregivers or unpredictable responses to the child's needs.
- Traumatic experiences, such as hospitalization or a natural disaster.

### Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt:

- Overly restrictive or controlling parenting.
- Overly critical or punitive responses to the child's attempts to assert independence.
- Traumatic experiences, such as a serious accident or illness.

### Initiative vs. Guilt:

- Overly harsh punishment or criticism for mistakes or accidents.
- Lack of opportunities for exploration and play.
- Traumatic experiences, such as abuse or witnessing violence.

### Industry vs. Inferiority:

- Negative feedback or criticism from teachers or peers.
- Lack of opportunities for success or mastery in academic or extracurricular activities.
- Traumatic experiences, such as bullying or social rejection.

### Identity vs. Role Confusion:

- Pressure to conform to rigid gender, cultural, or societal expectations.
- Lack of support or opportunities for exploring different identities and roles.
- Traumatic experiences, such as sexual assault or bullying based on identity.

### Intimacy vs. Isolation:

- Traumatic experiences, such as rejection or abuse in past relationships.
- Difficulty establishing close relationships due to social or emotional barriers.
- Lack of opportunities for socializing and meeting new people.

### Generativity vs. Stagnation:

- Lack of opportunities for career or personal growth.
- Negative life events, such as job loss or divorce.
- Feelings of social isolation or lack of purpose.

## Integrity vs. Despair:

- Lack of opportunities for reflection or resolution of past conflicts.
- Chronic physical or mental illness that affects the quality of life.
- Fear or anxiety about death or dying, often related to a lack of acceptance, or meaning in life.

## Understanding Trauma Responses

During moments of extreme stress or trauma, the part of our brain that encodes memory is impaired such that when the trauma is recalled it feels like it is happening again. That is why when we are triggered, we can suddenly feel overwhelmed. We are having an emotional flashback. The good news is we can learn to step back from these experiences which allows us to return to the present.

We all have parts of ourselves that were wounded and never had a chance to heal. Aspects of our persona that are habitual will use such behaviors in an attempt to quiet the pain, usually in ways of trying to protect ourselves like drinking, overworking, spending money we don't have, or putting up emotional walls. When we unburden this part of our persona from these protecting behaviors, it gives us a chance to step back from our powerful reactive impulse to pain.

The Shadow has our wounded parts which hold the pain itself. This part is called our "shadow" because so often we try to push

the painful memories out of awareness and into the shadows of our mind. We bury them somewhere so deep that we aren't always even aware that they are there. Usually, the main job of our habitual persona is to protect us from being aware of our wounded parts.

But why do we bury them in this way? The wounded parts remember the ways we got hurt and still hold that pain. It is as if the event, though having occurred in childhood, is happening again; it is being relived in real-time, as though you are that child again. The shadow contains these inner children, who are the most vulnerable parts of ourselves that get triggered when we experience intense negative emotions such as fear, anxiety, or shame, leaving us trapped in the past.

While our inner children are often sweet, innocent, playful, and trusting, they are also highly sensitive and prone to being hurt. The shadow is the parts of ourselves that we are most likely to hide because we don't want to experience their hurt or shame. For example, imagine you were yelled at for crying when you were a young child. This might create a shadow part of you that feels shame anytime you cry in front of other people.

Inner child was first coined by psychologist Carl Jung, many therapists advocate for the importance of getting to know our own "inner child." For example, inner child work is a trauma-informed therapeutic approach that focuses exclusively on exploring the feelings, needs, and experiences of a younger and more vulnerable version of ourselves—our inner child. The goal

is to help individuals develop a more compassionate and accepting relationship with themselves and their past experiences. In PATH this technique is referred to as Shadow Work.

## DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL

Dr. Carl Jung, the Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, used the term "Dark Night of the Soul" to describe a period of intense psychological and spiritual turmoil that some individuals may experience during their lives.

According to Jung, the Dark Night of the Soul is a phase of spiritual transformation that can occur when a person's ego becomes disconnected from the collective unconscious or the deeper, universal aspects of the psyche. This can result in feelings of confusion, depression, and despair, as the individual struggles to find meaning and purpose in their life.

Jung believed that this experience is a necessary part of the individuation process or the process of becoming a fully integrated and self-aware individual. He saw it as a crucial stage in the journey toward wholeness and integration, and he encouraged individuals to embrace the challenges and difficulties they encountered during this period.

In Jungian psychology, crisis events are commonly associated with the archetype of the shadow or the repressed and disavowed aspects of the self. The process of confronting and integrating the



shadow can be painful and difficult, but it is essential for personal growth and spiritual development.

#### NAVIGATING THE DARKNESS:

When someone faces the Dark Night of the Soul, they frequently experience several of the following symptoms: pervasive sadness, difficulty with sleep, trouble concentrating, feelings of hopelessness, and even thoughts about death or suicide. Having negative intrusive thoughts of mistakes you've made in life, or bad memories of a traumatic experience, can undoubtedly lead to feelings of sadness and hopelessness. You may think you're "not good enough" or that you are a "failure." You may feel like, "What's the point in trying?" Or "Why do I keep doing this?" These thought patterns consistently result in a person making bad decisions or doing things they later regret. These painful events, or ongoing thought patterns, can lower your ability to make the necessary changes you need in life; changes needed to stop addiction.

#### SENTIRE EVENTUM - Experience the Experience

The inner strength required for facing such a profound crisis moment (and the bravery it demands) deserves a noble title. I have chosen the Latin term "Sentire Eventum" to express the required response of "Experience the Experience" (tilt into the feeling and not withdraw). The direct translation is "to feel the results of" which describes the reaction needed for this devastating episode of thought and emotion. You can't fight the

storm or the monstrous waves of sorrow you feel; but if you “heave to” you can survive until the dark storm has passed.

When a sailboat is caught in a violent squall, it will position the sails in a manner that the boat is no longer progressing forward “on course”, but it is also not fighting the storm; it has “heave to.” This technique is used by sailors to maintain a stable position



during stormy weather and not capsize the ship. Sailors achieve this by adjusting the sails and rudder in such a way that the boat remains stationary relative to the wind and waves. The concept of “heaving to” in

sailing can be analogous to how someone deals with a crisis in their life. When faced with a difficult situation, it can be tempting to try to fight against “the storm” or push through the crisis, like sailing directly into a strong wind or waves. However, just as it is in sailing, sometimes the best course of action is to pause and wait for the storm to pass.

In a crisis, “heaving to” can mean taking a step back, assessing the situation, and finding ways to maintain stability and balance, even if it means not making any significant progress for some time. This also means to ride the storm out. Just like in sailing, “heaving to” during a crisis can help prevent the situation from escalating further or causing more harm, while also giving the person time and space to gather their strength and resources

before moving forward. It can be a valuable strategy for maintaining stability and resilience during difficult times, and ultimately help to navigate through the crisis and emerge stronger on the other side.



## Amber Mourning

The Dark Night of the Soul, which is often a precursor to cognitive or spiritual awakening, manifests as a major depressive episode—a silent storm ravaging the mind and spirit, leaving those afflicted feeling isolated, overwhelmed, and desperate. In the darkest moments, when hopelessness becomes all-consuming, finding a way to cope can seem impossible. During one such time, Amber, a client who bravely shared her struggles, inspired the development of a technique designed to survive the death of the ego. This ego death dismantles an individual's old identity and belief systems, making way for a new, more integrated sense of self by providing solace and strength when it is most needed. Amber's words encapsulate the profound despair many individuals face:

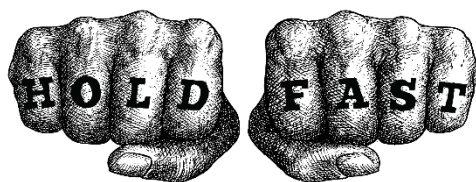
"I'm in complete meltdown and don't know what to do anymore. I want to escape my life; I wish I could get hypnosis and forget any of this life ever existed. But realistically, I want to go into my house and lay down and wait for death. If I didn't know my kids would hate me, I probably would eat a bullet, but they keep that thread cut so it's not a path. This doesn't feel temporary. I don't feel like this suffering will ever end until I am dead. I have no strength. I'm so done. I had one last shot at happiness and that was stolen from me. I never sleep good anymore unless I get 'shit face' drunk, which happens a lot less now than it did 2 months ago. My drinking was incredibly dangerous for someone who never really drank. I try not to drink anymore, but there are still overwhelming times when it's the only thing that numbs the hurt and 'shuts up' the voices in my brain. I get intrusive thoughts that turn so dark sometimes it puts me into a panic attack because it feels like it's really getting ready to happen (death). I feel like I'm going crazy."

In this section of the book, we have discussed the necessity of 'Heaving To' during a crisis to prevent situations from worsening by riding out the storm. But how do you handle the overwhelming despair? Sailing offers another useful insight... to "Hold Fast."

Historically, "hold fast" was a command given to sailors when approaching a storm, warning them to grip tight to the ship's

rigging to avoid being washed overboard by the waves and rain as the ship plunged through the sea. This method, when facing an emotional, ego-crushing storm, is crafted to help individuals navigate through the depths of despair, offering a lifeline when everything seems lost. It provides practical steps to take when alone and in the grip of a major depressive episode, helping to restore a sense of control and hope.

"Amber Mourning" is a testament to resilience and the human spirit's capacity to endure and find light even in the darkest times. This section will guide you through the steps of the "Hold Fast" method, empowering you to manage overwhelming emotions and regain a sense of stability and peace.



### **Brief Overview – 3 methods to grasp**

1. Grounding Techniques [Thought – Deep Breathing – Body Scan]
  - 5-4-3-2-1 Technique: This simple exercise can help distract from negative thoughts by focusing on the immediate environment. Identify 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.
  - Deep Breathing 4-7-8: Practice deep breathing exercises. Count slowly to FOUR as you breathe in (through your

nose), hold for SEVEN, and then exhale (blowing out the mouth) for EIGHT.

- **Body Scan Meditation Routine:** Sit comfortably. Take a deep breath in through your nose and out through your mouth. As you exhale, close your eyes. Notice how your body feels. Starting from the top of your head, gently scan down through your body. Observe any areas of comfort or discomfort without trying to change anything. Continue scanning evenly through each part of your body, all the way down to your toes.

## 2. Challenge Negative Thoughts

[Stop Thought – Switch Thought]

- **Interrupt Negative Thoughts:** When you catch yourself engaging in negative self-talk, use a thought-stopping technique. This could be saying "stop" out loud or visualizing a stop sign.
- **Redirect Attention:** Shift your focus to a more positive or neutral activity, like visual-mental imagery, listening to uplifting music, or engaging in a hobby.

## 3. Cognitive Restructuring [with Mirror Affirmations]

- **Identify Negative Thoughts:** Recognize the negative or distorted thoughts about yourself. These could be related to self-worth, abilities, appearance, or any other aspect of self-perception.
- **Create Positive Affirmations:** Develop positive, affirming statements that counteract these negative

thoughts. For example, if you often think, "I am not good enough," you might create an affirmation like, "I am capable and worthy of success."

- **Use the Mirror:** Stand in front of a mirror, make eye contact with yourself, and say the positive affirmations out loud. The act of looking at yourself while affirming positive beliefs can reinforce the message and make it more impactful.
- **Consistency:** Repeat this practice daily, ideally multiple times a day. Consistency helps reinforce the new, positive thoughts and beliefs.
- **Reflect and Adjust:** Reflect on how the affirmations make you feel over time. Adjust them as needed to ensure they remain relevant and powerful for you.

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## Performing **HOLD FAST** Methods

### #1. Grounding Techniques

#### **5-4-3-2-1 TECHNIQUE**

The 5-4-3-2-1 method is a grounding technique used to help individuals manage anxiety and bring their focus back to the present moment. It involves using the five senses to become aware of your surroundings. Here's how to do it:

- **5 Things You Can See:** Look around and identify five things you can see. They can be objects, people, colors, or

anything in your environment. Take your time to really notice these items.

- **4 Things You Can Touch:** Focus on four things you can touch. This could be the texture of your clothing, the surface of a table, your hair, or anything else you can physically feel. Pay attention to the sensations.
- **3 Things You Can Hear:** Listen carefully and identify three things you can hear. This might be the sound of traffic, birds chirping, the hum of a computer, or any other ambient noises. Concentrate on these sounds.
- **2 Things You Can Smell:** Find two things you can smell. If you're in a place where it's difficult to identify scents, you might carry a small item with a pleasant smell, like essential oils or a piece of fruit.
- **1 Thing You Can Taste:** Finally, focus on one thing you can taste. This could be the lingering taste in your mouth or you might take a sip of a drink, chew gum, or eat something.

### **Steps Recap**

- 5 Things You Can See
- 4 Things You Can Touch
- 3 Things You Can Hear
- 2 Things You Can Smell
- 1 Thing You Can Taste

This method offers several benefits, including reducing anxiety by focusing on the present moment and engaging the senses,



which helps decrease stress and tension. It also serves as a distraction, interrupting negative thoughts and overwhelming emotions, and encourages mindfulness by promoting awareness of the current environment. The technique can be used whenever you feel overwhelmed or disconnected from the present moment, and its adaptability allows it to be practiced anywhere and at any time, making it a versatile tool for grounding.

Incorporating the 5-4-3-2-1 method into your "heave-to" strategy will provide a practical and immediate way to regain control and reduce anxiety during emotional crises.

## **ANCHOR WITH BREATH TECHNIQUE**

The 4-7-8 breathing technique developed by Dr. Andrew Weil, also known as the "relaxing breath," is a simple and effective method to promote relaxation and reduce stress. The extended 'exhale' helps activate the parasympathetic nervous system, which can calm the body and mind. Here's how its performed:

1. **Exhale Completely:** Start by exhaling completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound.
2. **Inhale Quietly Through Your Nose:** Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose for a count of 4 seconds.
3. **Hold Your Breath:** Hold your breath for a count of 7 seconds.
4. **Exhale Completely:** Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound, for a count of 8 seconds.

## **Steps Recap**

1. Exhale: Through the mouth, completely (whoosh sound).
2. Inhale: Through the nose, quietly, for 4 seconds.
3. Hold: Hold your breath for 7 seconds.
4. Exhale: Through the mouth, completely (whoosh sound), for 8 seconds.

## **Tips for Practice**

- Posture: Sit or lie down in a comfortable position.
- Consistency: Practice this technique at least twice a day.
- Repetitions: Start with four breath cycles and gradually increase as you become more comfortable.

The 4-7-8 breathing technique is designed to help calm the nervous system, promote relaxation, and improve sleep. It's a useful tool for managing stress/anxiety, and can be incorporated into your "heave-to" strategy for emotional crises.

## **BODY SCAN**

Body scan meditation is a well-established mindfulness practice that can help increase awareness of physical sensations and reduce anxiety. It involves focusing attention on different parts of the body, noticing any sensations, and fostering a sense of relaxation and presence. Here is a simple routine you can follow to perform the Body Scan Meditation Routine:

### **Preparation:**

- Find a Comfortable Position: Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. You can sit on a chair with your feet

flat on the floor or lie on your back with your arms resting by your sides.

- **Close Your Eyes:** If you feel comfortable, close your eyes to minimize distractions.
- **Take a Few Deep Breaths:** Start with a few deep breaths to settle into the practice. Inhale deeply through your nose and exhale slowly through your mouth.

### **The Body Scan:**

1. **Focus on Your Breath:** Spend a few moments paying attention to your breath. Notice the sensation of air entering and leaving your body.
2. **Feet:** Direct your attention to your feet. Notice any sensations in your toes, the soles of your feet, and your heels. Observe any tension, warmth, coolness, or tingling. Allow your feet to relax.
3. **Legs:** Move your attention up to your ankles, calves, knees, and thighs. Observe the sensations in these areas without judgment. Notice if there is any tightness or relaxation. Allow your legs to relax.
4. **Pelvic Area and Lower Back:** Shift your focus to your pelvic area and lower back. Notice any sensations of pressure or discomfort. Breathe into these areas and allow them to soften and relax.
5. **Abdomen and Chest:** Move your attention to your abdomen and chest. Notice the rise and fall of your breath

in these areas. Observe any sensations of tightness or relaxation. Allow these areas to relax.

6. Upper Back and Shoulders: Direct your focus to your upper back and shoulders. Notice any tension or sensations. Allow your shoulders to drop and your upper back to relax.
7. Arms and Hands: Shift your attention to your arms, from your shoulders down to your fingers. Notice any sensations in your arms, hands, and fingers. Allow your arms and hands to relax.
8. Neck and Throat: Move your focus to your neck and throat. Notice any sensations or tension. Breathe into these areas and allow them to relax.
9. Face and Head: Finally, direct your attention to your face and head. Notice any tension in your jaw, cheeks, forehead, and scalp. Allow these areas to soften and relax.

## **Conclusion**

- Whole Body Awareness: Spend a few moments sensing your entire body as a whole. Notice the overall state of relaxation and presence.
- Gradual Reawakening: When you are ready, slowly bring your awareness back to your surroundings. Wiggle your fingers and toes, and gently open your eyes.

## **Tips for Practice**

To build mindfulness and reduce anxiety, practice body scan meditation regularly, ideally once a day. Approach the practice

with a non-judgmental attitude, simply observing sensations without trying to change them. If your mind wanders, gently bring your attention back to the part of the body you were focusing on.

Incorporating body scan meditation into your routine can help develop a deeper awareness of your physical sensations, which can be particularly beneficial during times of emotional distress. This practice can complement the "heave-to" strategy by providing a calming and centering activity to use during moments of crisis.

## #2. Challenge Negative Thoughts

### **STOP THOUGHT - SWITCH THOUGHT**

On Feb. 11, 1965, Lt. Cmdr. Bob Shumaker was shot down and taken prisoner over North Vietnam and spending the next 8 years at the infamous Hanoi Hilton. To survive the mental/physical torture, he would stop his negative thoughts by replacing them with a visualization. He imagined the house he wanted to build for his young wife and their infant son; having no paper or pencil, he built the house in his head, brick by brick. Over the next 8 years of his imprisonment, he would work out small design issues, like putting an intercom in every room, or a chute for the laundry. Over time, he worked out the mathematical equations for load bearing making the building structurally sound. He would imagine moving the fireplace from one part of the house to

another, and would have to recalculate everything all over again, storing a new set of parameters and equations in his memory.

I did a similar activity when battling my own intrusive unwanted thoughts, but mine was for building a boat. I determined building materials, cost, strength, weight, ballast, displacement, etc. Whenever I needed to stop a thought, I would tell myself, "It's time to get back to the boat", and I begin the mental imagery... whether driving my car or lying in bed, whatever the situation, I inwardly when "back to the boat".

The mental coping strategy you are referring to is known as **visualization** or **mental imagery**. This technique involves creating detailed mental images or scenarios to maintain mental focus, reduce stress, and cope with difficult situations. In the context of POWs in Vietnam, they used visualization to build a house in their mind, nail by nail and board by board, as a way to occupy their minds, stay mentally active, and endure the hardships of captivity.

Here are some types of imagery that the average person might find accessible and methodical for visualization:

1. Gardening: Visualize planting a garden, preparing the soil, planting seeds or plants, watering, and watching them grow.
2. Cooking or Baking: Imagine preparing a favorite recipe step-by-step, from gathering ingredients to mixing, cooking, and presenting the final dish.

3. Walking in Nature: Picture a detailed walk through a forest, along a beach, or in a park, noting the sights, sounds, and smells.
4. Building a Simple Structure: Visualize assembling a basic structure, such as a bookshelf or a birdhouse, even if you don't have detailed knowledge of construction.
5. Painting or Drawing: Imagine creating a piece of art, focusing on each brushstroke or pencil line and the development of the image.
6. Decorating a Room: Picture designing and decorating a room, choosing colors, arranging furniture, and adding personal touches.
7. Organizing a Space: Visualize tidying up and organizing a cluttered room, systematically sorting items, and putting them in place.
8. Crafting: Imagine engaging in a craft activity like knitting, crocheting, or making jewelry, step by step.
9. Playing an Instrument: Visualize playing a musical instrument, focusing on each note and the feel of the instrument.
10. Exercise Routine: Picture going through a favorite exercise routine, such as yoga, Pilates, or a gym workout, paying attention to each movement and breath.

These activities are relatively simple and can be methodically performed in one's mind, providing a constructive and calming focus for visualization.

By consistently applying these strategies, you can gradually change your thought patterns, reduce negative self-talk, and develop a healthier, more positive mindset.

## #3. Cognitive Restructuring

### **MIRROR AFFIRMATIONS**

When performing mirror affirmations, addressing yourself directly with "You are..." statements can often feel more personal and impactful, especially when looking in the mirror. This approach can create a sense of receiving encouragement and validation from a supportive and caring presence. Here are some recommended "You are..." mirror affirmations:

#### **Recommended "You Are..." Mirror Affirmations**

1. Self-Worth and Self-Compassion
  - "You are worthy of love and compassion."
  - "You accept yourself just as you are."
  - "You forgive yourself for past mistakes and embrace your imperfections."
2. Strength and Resilience
  - "You are stronger than you think."
  - "You have the power to overcome any challenge."
  - "Every day, you are becoming more resilient."
3. Hope and Positivity
  - "This too shall pass."
  - "You are capable of finding joy in the midst of pain."
  - "You trust that better days are ahead."



#### 4. Calm and Peace

- "You are calm and at peace."
- "You release all negative thoughts and welcome positivity."
- "You are a vessel of peace and tranquility."

#### 5. Empowerment and Control

- "You are in control of your thoughts and emotions."
- "You have the power to change your story."
- "You are the author of your life and can rewrite your path."

#### 6. Gratitude and Appreciation

- "You are grateful for the good in your life."
- "You appreciate the small moments of joy."
- "You find something to be thankful for every day."

#### 7. Growth and Learning

- "You are growing and evolving every day."
- "Each challenge is an opportunity for growth."
- "You learn from your experiences and become wiser."

#### 8. Love and Connection

- "You are connected to the love and support around you."
- "You are surrounded by people who care about you."
- "You are deserving of all the love and happiness life has to offer."

## **How to Use "You Are..." Mirror Affirmations**

1. **Choose a Quiet Time:** Find a quiet time in the morning or evening when you can stand in front of a mirror without distractions.
2. **Make Eye Contact:** Look into your own eyes in the mirror to create a deeper connection with yourself.
3. **Speak Clearly and Confidently:** Say each affirmation slowly, clearly, and with conviction. Believe in the words you are saying.
4. **Repeat Regularly:** Repeat each affirmation several times, ideally daily, to reinforce positive thinking patterns.
5. **Personalize Your Affirmations:** Customize these affirmations to fit your personal experiences and needs. The more they resonate with you, the more effective they will be.

## **Example Routine**

1. **Start with Breathing:** Take a few deep breaths to center yourself.
2. **Select a Few Affirmations:** Choose 3-5 affirmations that resonate most with you.
3. **Speak and Reflect:** Say each affirmation three times while maintaining eye contact with yourself.
4. **End with Gratitude:** Finish by expressing gratitude for the moment of self-care.

Using "You are..." statements can make affirmations feel more like a supportive dialogue with oneself, enhancing their effectiveness during times of emotional crisis.

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## **EXPOSURE AND RESPONSE PREVENTION**

(and the science behind it)

You might be surprised to learn that no matter how hard you try to stay upset during a 'situation' and resist letting yourself calm down, the intensity of emotions will ultimately subside on their own. Have you ever had a "good cry" and then felt better? This is not a challenge to try and make things worse, or suggest you "cry it out", rather this is an explanation of how the body responds to high levels of anxiety during the Dark Night of the Soul. The chemistry of the body plays a crucial role here, involving several hormones like cortisol, adrenaline, and noradrenaline. When anxiety hits, these hormones are released, preparing the body for a "fight or flight" response. Cortisol increases blood sugar levels and brain glucose availability, but prolonged high levels can harm physical and mental health so after a period of time the body works to decrease these quantities. Adrenaline and noradrenaline raise heart rate and blood pressure, but the body can only produce so much adrenaline at one time. As adrenaline levels decrease, so does your emotional response, helping you regain control over your psyche. This principle is foundational to Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP), a treatment for Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) that gradually exposes

individuals to anxiety triggers while preventing their usual compulsive behaviors, promoting habituation and reducing anxiety over time.

ERP and similar therapies leverage the body's limited capacity to sustain prolonged anxiety. Continuous exposure without avoidance or compulsive behaviors leads to autonomic nervous system fatigue and habituation, where repeated exposure diminishes the anxiety response. Neurochemical depletion also plays a role, as the brain's neurotransmitters, like norepinephrine and serotonin, temporarily deplete with prolonged anxiety exposure, reducing emotional intensity. Additionally, chronic activation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis results in adaptations that lessen its responsiveness over time.

Cognitive restructuring occurs as individuals realize feared outcomes are not as catastrophic as anticipated. Thus, the body's inability to maintain a prolonged state of heightened anxiety is why ERP is effective. Through repeated exposure without avoidance, the intense anxiety response diminishes, supported by both physiological mechanisms (neurochemical depletion, autonomic fatigue) and psychological processes (cognitive restructuring, habituation). This approach (and knowledge of the process) helps endure the overwhelming emotions experienced every time the Dark Night of the Soul happens until the calm returns, allowing a healthier, more positive recovery journey.

## Chapter 3

# Overcoming Addiction



*Illustration by Fr. Jason K. Dy*

*"Desire is a cruel master,  
it leads us down paths we never intended to travel,  
into traps we never saw coming."*

- Emily Thorne, "Revenge" (2012)

## Catch a Monkey

Have you ever heard of the trick for catching a monkey by using a narrow neck jar and some food? It's amazing that it actually works; fastening a jar to the ground (or a fixed post) and then placing fruit or nuts into the jar as a tempting treat. The monkey comes along sees the food, reaches his hand into the jar, and grabs hold. The monkey's hand was small enough to slip into the neck of the jar but by grabbing the food his fist was too large to pull out. The monkey is trapped. Yet, in reality, he is not; all he has to do is let go of the food and he can escape. But his brain won't let him. His desire to eat is as strong as his desire to escape. The hunter can simply walk up and seize the monkey, who is trying desperately to run away from the jar but is hopelessly stuck.

Addiction is a lot like this story; the answer seems so simple, just stop doing drugs. Or as the 1980s "War on Drugs" campaign explained, "Just say No." Here is the problem with that approach, it's not about the substance or behavior, it's about the desire. Remember the definition of addiction mentioned during the introduction of this book: Any behavior that gives temporary relief and pleasure, but has negative consequences, and you cannot stop doing it. Your desire to find relief from inner turmoil is as strong as your desire to stop the devastation caused by the addiction.

Breaking free from addiction is a challenging process that often requires external help, such as therapy or support groups. The individual must make difficult choices and sacrifices, such as cutting ties with people or situations that contribute to their addiction. Just like the monkey's desire to eat is as strong as its desire to escape, the addicted individual finds themselves unable to "let go" of their drug even if it means suffering a harmful outcome.

## Vicious Cycle

The specific phases of addiction vary depending on the source, yet they share common elements. Addiction's cycle stems from changes in brain chemistry caused by substance abuse. This cycle is sustained by physical, emotional, and psychological dependency.



It's also important to remember that while substance abuse certainly plays a significant role in addiction, we need to understand that addiction can extend beyond just substances like drugs and alcohol. Behavioral addictions, such as those to pornography, gambling, shopping, gaming, and others, can also involve changes in brain chemistry and function. These behavioral addictions can still trigger the reward pathways in the brain, leading to the release of neurotransmitters such as

dopamine, which is associated with pleasure and reinforcement. Over time, repeated engagement in these behaviors can lead to alterations in the brain's structure and function, similar to what is observed with substance abuse.

Typically, the cycle of addiction persists until some form of intervention takes place.

### The Cycle of Addiction: Emotional Trigger

- This is the first step in the cycle of addiction. It starts with feeling negative emotions such as anxiety, shame, guilt, sadness, or anger. To deal with these feelings, a person resorts to unhealthy coping mechanisms like drugs and alcohol, or other dopamine-releasing behaviors. While these substances may temporarily alleviate the discomfort, they don't provide a lasting solution.

### The Cycle of Addiction: Cravings

- After finding relief in drugs and alcohol or other addictive behaviors, the individual will start to crave this whenever they want similar emotional comfort and relief. This craving is a learned reaction influenced by social and environmental triggers. Consequently, the addict will become preoccupied with thoughts of these behaviors until it develop into an obsession.



## The Cycle of Addiction: Ritual

- The ritual part comes with repeating the same behavior every time a certain cue (trigger) occurs. For example, someone who has a stressful day drinks alcohol when they get home to relax (emotional trigger). They then start to desire alcohol whenever they are stressed (Cravings). The behavior of treating stress with alcohol repeats over and over (ritual) until it becomes an addiction. The ability to control the behavior begins to be lost.

## The Cycle of Addiction: Remorse

- At this point in the cycle of addiction, an addict will feel remorse, guilt, or shame often because they recognize the harm caused by their addiction, how it goes against their values, the damage to relationships, and the legal consequences being experienced. They may want to stop and make promises to themselves that they will stop, but are unable to follow through. The uncomfortable emotions just fuel the addiction, and they repeat the cycle.

## The Cycle of Addiction: Variances

- The cycle of addiction can vary based on a number of factors. Some addicts are able to stop for a period of time after they feel guilt about the addiction, but then the pain returns and the addict begins craving relief all over again.

# Breaking this Cycle

Breaking the cycle of addiction can come at any time after the addict or alcoholic makes a decision or is forced to get help. Sometimes, negative legal, financial, social, or medical issues force the addict or alcoholic to stop using, but in the absence of outside help, the addictive abuse is likely to return. The stages of recovery from the cycle of addiction are as follows:

1. **Pre-contemplation:** In this stage, the person is not aware or does not acknowledge that they have a problem with addiction. They may minimize the issue or blame others for their behavior.
2. **Contemplation:** In this stage, the person recognizes that they have a problem with addiction but may feel ambivalent about changing their behavior. They may weigh the pros and cons of continuing their addictive behavior versus making changes.
3. **Preparation:** In this stage, the person decides to make changes and takes initial steps towards recovery. They may seek out information or support, set goals, and make plans for change.
4. **Action:** In this stage, the person actively engages in changing their behavior and implementing their plan. They may participate in therapy or treatment programs, engage in self-help groups, and make lifestyle changes to support their recovery.

5. Maintenance: In this stage, the person works to sustain their recovery by continuing to practice the skills and behaviors they have learned. They may seek ongoing support and make adjustments to their plan as needed. This stage can last for an extended period and may involve setbacks or relapses, but the person remains committed to their recovery.

Between the stages of Contemplation and Preparation is where this book is targeted. This area centering in the middle of the two stages, which I refer to as the “Decision Point”, is usually characterized by the experience of a “bottom moment”; that pivotal event where you are ready for change.

## Changing Your World

During addiction recovery, it's essential to modify the environments, relationships, and objects associated with substance use, as these triggers can provoke cravings and relapse. Addiction can become closely intertwined with specific places, people, or things, and being exposed to them can trigger memories and cravings that threaten sobriety.

Several undeniable truths highlight the need to change People, Places, and Things when recovering from addiction. Here are several "rules" I strongly suggest you follow to the letter if you want to ensure success over addiction:

## ESSENTIALS FOR RECOVERY

- ✓ Know your TRIGGERS:
  - As you identify them – AVOID AT ALL COST!
- ✓ End ALL RELATIONSHIPS that promote your addiction:
  - Change phone numbers and social media accounts.
  - Be very guarded about who you let have this new information.
- ✓ ENVIRONMENTS must be safe from addiction triggers:
  - Drug/Gambling Free Cars.
  - Drug/Gambling Free Homes.
  - Even if it's family - DO NOT LET THEM IN IF DRUGS OR DRINKING!
- ✓ Have 3-Emergency Contacts for Relapse Prevention:
  - Stable Recovery-People willing to let you contact them Night or Day.
  - Have numbers and addresses.
  - If one is not available, reach out to the next on the list.

## FIND RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION

- ❖ Public transit, private car, bicycle, or walk:
  - Only look for housing where one of these means of transportation is available.
  - Make sure your transportation will get you from home and to work on time.

## GET A STEADY JOB

- One that takes income taxes out and pays in checks or direct deposit:
  - No “cash only” or “work on demand”.
- Have a “Generic” application filled out and carry with you:
  - This will be your resource information when applying for jobs.
  - You can get one from the unemployment office or just ask for one from any business.
  - Use the information to fill out applications around town.

## GET A HANDLE ON YOUR FINANCES

- Follow a simple basic budget:
  - Always take out ‘Housing Costs’ first.
  - Then transportation costs.
  - Followed by your need for groceries.
  - Ask for help if you are having difficulty making a budget.

## GET A PLACE TO LIVE

- Secure affordable housing away from old people-places-things:
  - No ‘couch surfing’.
  - No living out of your car, a tent, or someone's camper.
  - Preferably find a ‘Sober Living’ home for your first year of recovery.

## SET A SCHEDULE

- Schedule every minute of your day and night:
  - Follow your schedule religiously.
  - Plan activities for any ‘relaxation’ or ‘fun’ times.
  - No just scheduling “free time”; always have a plan.
  - Keep your schedule busy; no time for boredom.

## PLAN A YEARLY CALANDER

- Have addiction-free Holidays – plan activities for these times.
- Anticipate how to handle upcoming birthday parties or other celebrations.
- Prepare to grieve during anniversary days, comfort yourself without substances.

Ultimately, changing your people, places, and things can be a critical component of successfully recovering from addiction. By avoiding triggers and developing healthier habits and relationships, individuals can build a foundation for lasting sobriety and a fulfilling life in recovery.

Additionally, it is important to note that making changes to people, places, and things is not a guarantee of lasting sobriety. Recovery is a complex process, and many factors can influence an individual's success in maintaining sobriety. When in recovery you need to seek support and resources, such as therapy, support groups, and sober living communities, to help navigate the challenges of addiction and maintain your recovery.

# Replacing the Rituals

One of the hardest parts of battling addiction is the stopping of rituals. Certain things trigger the urge to use:

- getting up in the morning;
- getting into the car;
- coming home from work.

In psychology, the term ritual is sometimes used in a technical sense for a repetitive behavior systematically used by a person to neutralize or prevent anxiety. The definition of ritual is listed "as a form of compulsion involving a rigid or stereotyped act that is carried out repeatedly and is based on idiosyncratic rules that do not have a rational basis (e.g., having to perform a task in a certain way). Rituals may be performed to reduce distress and anxiety caused by an obsession." (American Psychological Association Dictionary of Psychology)

The rituals of addiction supersede everything. People do them without thinking. Maybe, at the end of the day, they always stop at a certain bar for a drink or a certain store to buy beer or wine. Maybe they visit their dealer on a certain day at a certain time. Our bodies know what they want and how to get it, despite our brains that might be telling us to stop, to wait, turn off. When it's over, we might stop for a moment and ask why. By then it's too late – the first step's been taken.

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR ADDICTION RITUALS

Here's how the story goes: when Danny\* gets home from work and his wife Lynn\* isn't there, he heads straight to the kitchen cabinet where he keeps his bag of accessories: rolling papers, a joint rolling machine, a magazine to collect stray bits of marijuana, tobacco and a lighter. He sits on the couch—the same spot every time. He begins what his wife calls his weed-projects: pours himself a glass of wine, rolls a tight joint along with some tobacco and a cardboard filter, smokes it on his back porch, plays a video game, watches a movie, and gets in bed by 10 p.m. Danny—a smoker for 15 years—is loyal to this routine, staying true to these exact steps four days per week.

The act of rolling a joint is important to Danny's marijuana usage, and the ritual itself fulfills a sort of creative urge for him. "Joints are more fun to smoke than a bowl," he said. "It's creating something with my hands; it's a small challenge to make a great joint." Using substances is often closely associated with deeply ingrained rituals. Time of day, location, and tools are often almost as important as the drug use itself, carrying significant symbolism and meaning. Some ritualized behavior is emotional; a drug or alcohol abuser may purposefully work him or herself into a state of anger or anxiety so that there is a reason to use. In most cases, ritualized behaviors are unconscious—that is, a substance abuser may have no idea why they do things a certain way, or that these patterns even exist. Mindfulness—a technique that is increasingly



being used in addiction treatment—works to bring these unconscious behaviors to light.

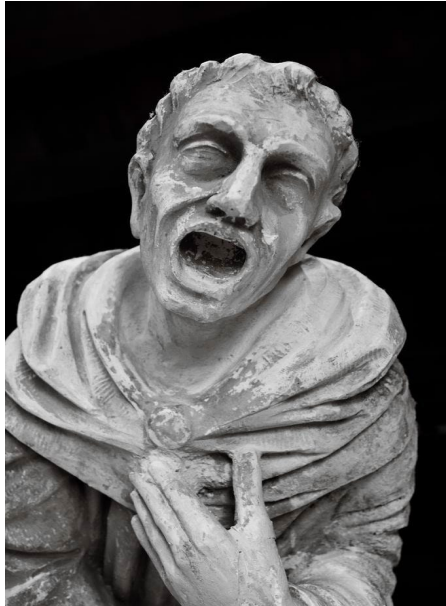
Rituals are not a bad thing – they simply exist. They provide structure, giving comfort and purpose. Rituals are a way to cope with stress. People seek the familiar, they want to know the rules of the situation. They get up at the same time for work and eat certain things on certain days of the week. Rituals can help in recovery – if we can turn those moments of unconscious action away from illness and into reinforcement for sobriety and recovery, they can be powerful tools.

Rather than eliminating the ritual, replace it. Instead of stopping at the bar after work, stop at the gym. Change the routine. Instead of stopping at the liquor store on the way home, go to a meeting. Find something supportive of your recovery to do. It's important to interrupt the process and replace it. Start small. Change one thing at a time. Don't take on too much. Making sweeping changes creates stress and when stress happens, people look for what they know. This is not to say that even small changes won't be stressful, but it is a matter of level. Big changes create big stress and choosing to recover is one of the biggest changes someone can make. That is why it is important to break it down into manageable pieces that can be tackled daily.



## Chapter 4

# Begin with Shadow Work



*"The shadow is a living part of the personality  
and therefore, wants to live with it in some form...  
...If it is not embodied consciously,  
it will be embodied unconsciously."*

~ Carl Gustav Jung

# Unlocking the Shadow

The key to unlocking this process is thinking with your Soul. Some call it your higher self, others refer to it as the true or authentic self, and still, some address it as the enlightened self, but they all describe what I am labeling as your Soul. The Swiss psychiatrist (founder of Shadow Work) Carl Jung stated,

*“...medicine discovered the psyche, and it can no longer  
honestly deny the psyche’s reality.”*

Psyche is the Greek word for Soul. This is the part of yourself, your consciousness, which survives bodily death; this is what lives on; it is separate yet a part of our human mind.

The Persona (or social personalities) in this model, is like a social mask that we wear to fit in with other people. We start developing it when we're young because we want to be accepted by society. However, sometimes people start thinking that their social mask is who they really are, and they forget about their true self, their actual soul. If you want to explore who you truly are, it's important to understand that your social mask is only a small part of who you are.

I'm attempting to keep this as realistic as possible, with grounded concepts that are easily understandable. According to information shared by the Near-Death Experience (NDE) community, they explain why our consciousness exists in human form: “we are spiritual beings having a human experience” and

the purpose we are here is to learn through our personal struggles, sometimes horrific ones. The lesson's ultimate goal is for us to achieve "unconditional altruism".

To encourage a deeper level of introspection, I purposely employ terminology that may not be commonly used. The aim is to stimulate a mode of thinking that transcends the limitations of the mind and taps into the depths of our soul. Altruism, in this context, refers to the voluntary act of providing assistance or resources to others, without expecting any personal benefit or gain. Sometimes, it may even involve self-sacrifice. It is those moments when we feel an innate sense of doing what is right, without any ulterior motives. Many people would equate altruism with the concept of love. However, I believe that the word "love" has become overused, as it encompasses a range of experiences. For instance, I may love my wife, love the serenity of a lake, and love the taste of pizza, yet these instances of "love" are not interchangeable or comparable in the same way.

Learning how to be altruistic requires the ability of empathy, which I list as the "E" in HOPE. You can begin to see how all this is interconnected and at the core of Shadow Work. The general population doesn't think about deep concepts of "why do I exist" or "what is my purpose in life"? Most will live out their lives on a more superficial level of the mind as demonstrated by 'feeling', 'speaking', and 'acting' in response to surroundings and people they encounter.

This state of mind is represented by the first model “Persona-Superego-Shadow”; your Soul/Consciousness is in there, just dormant while you live out your life. By bringing this aspect of yourself ‘forward’ and into your conscious world (the second Model), you can begin Shadow Work to heal the pain within and bring an end to addiction.

**COMMON SIGNS** that may indicate you have a repressed wounded/traumatized – shadow self:

Projection: (#1 sign of a repressed shadow)

- If you constantly blame and criticize others over different issues. Unconsciously blaming others for your own issues or flaws is a sign that you may be projecting elements of your shadow self onto them, which is a primary indication of struggling with your shadow.
- William Shakespeare gave a good example:
  - “The lady doth protest too much, methinks.”

Persistent negative emotions:

- If you're frequently plagued by negative emotions like anger, jealousy, fear, or shame, it may indicate that your shadow self is attempting to emerge.

Feeling stuck or stagnant:

- If you sense that you're not advancing in your personal or professional life, it could be a clue that your shadow self is impeding your progress.

### Lack of self-awareness:

- If you find it challenging to understand your thoughts, emotions, and actions, it could be a sign that you're suppressing your shadow self.

### Repetitive patterns in relationships:

- When you find yourself repeatedly experiencing the same relationship problems, like attracting partners who treat you poorly, it's a strong indicator that your shadow self is playing a role in your decision-making.

### Disconnection from your values:

- When you act in ways that contradict your moral beliefs, it could be your shadow self-attempting to manipulate your behavior.

### Impulsive behavior:

- Having a tendency to act without considering the consequences, it suggests that your shadow self is exerting an influence on your decision-making.

### Addiction:

- If you struggle with addiction or compulsive behavior, it is usually the result of your persona trying to avoid confronting issues of your shadow self and to silence the super-ego's critical inner voice.

### Physical symptoms:

- Physical symptoms like headaches, back pain, or digestive issues are often closely linked to the repression of shadow self emotions.

When you experience trauma, your shadow self can become particularly pronounced and exhibit problem behaviors.

### NEGATIVE TRAITS

#### Self-destructive behavior:

- Trauma can cause individuals to engage in behaviors that harm themselves physically, emotionally, or mentally. This could manifest as addiction, self-harm, or risky behavior.

#### Avoidance:

- Traumatized individuals may avoid situations or people that trigger memories or emotions associated with their trauma. This can lead to isolation, social withdrawal, and difficulties in forming relationships.

#### Aggression:

- Some people who have experienced trauma may exhibit aggressive behavior, either as a way to protect themselves or to release pent-up emotions.

#### Self-blame:

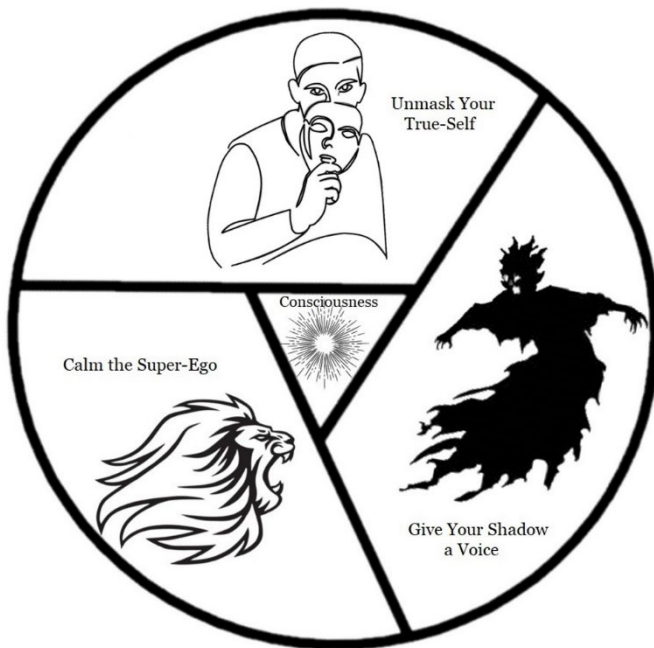
- Trauma survivors may blame themselves for what happened, even if they were not responsible. This can lead to feelings of guilt, shame, and low self-esteem.



Difficulty trusting others:

- Trauma can make it challenging for individuals to trust others, particularly if their trauma was caused by someone they trusted. This can make it difficult to form and maintain healthy relationships.

## THE PROCESS



Shadow Work is a process of exploring and integrating the unconscious or repressed aspects of the self. Here are the steps to perform Shadow Work as per Carl Jung's approach.

## SHADOW WORK

Here are simple ways to begin your Shadow Work:

### 1. Review your childhood

Reflect on your childhood experiences and ask yourself: "Was I fully accepted as a child? How did I typically feel growing up? What expectations were placed upon me, and which behaviors and emotions were deemed unacceptable by those around me?"

By exploring these questions, you can identify the shadow aspects of yourself that may have emerged as a result of the judgment you experienced in your past.

### 2. Become aware of your shadow

The shadow within us is like the darkness, invisible until we choose to shed light on it. To become conscious of our shadow aspects, we must first decide to acknowledge them. Once we do, we can reflect on these rejected parts of ourselves and determine whether they hold positive or negative traits.

If we discover negativity within the shadow, we must strive to find inner peace and release those aspects from their grip. On the other hand, if we recognize positivity within the shadow, we should strive to integrate these aspects into our lives and call forth our true power.

The crucial first step to successful Shadow Work is acknowledging its presence, which can be compared to shining a light on what was once hidden.

### 3. Don't shame the shadow

When you become conscious of your shadow self, it's important to approach it with compassion and acceptance, rather than shame or blame.

Remember that your shadow emerged as a result of non-acceptance and rejection, stemming from the moment you began pushing it away. Engaging in further conflict with the shadow only fuels its influence over you. Instead, recognize that the shadow is an integral part of who you are and view it through a lens of understanding.

By offering the shadow self-kindness and compassion, you can begin to transform it into a source of strength and healing, rather than a source of negativity and pain.

### 4. Use Your Triggers

Triggers can serve as messengers, inviting us to explore our unconscious emotions and beliefs. These messengers are often events that elicit an intense emotional response within us. However, labeling these experiences as triggers can shift our perspective and reduce their impact on us.

When we name our triggers by calling them messengers, we can take a step back from our emotional reactions and observe them from a more detached perspective. This allows us to gain insight into the deep-seated wounds and unresolved issues that are often the root cause of our reactions.

Rather than suppressing these emotions, triggers serve as reflections of our internal struggles, highlighting the areas that need attention and healing. By acknowledging and addressing our triggers, we can begin to move towards a more positive and fulfilling life.

## 5. Observe without judgment

When it comes to Shadow Work, one of the most common mistakes is to judge the shadow once we become aware of it. Allowing our inner critic to pass judgment on the shadow only serves to reject it once again, ultimately amplifying its hold on us.

Instead, when we recognize our shadow, it's important to acknowledge and observe it without judgment. By observing the shadow with a curious and open mind, we can begin to understand its origin and purpose.

Rather than rejecting the shadow, we must work towards integrating it into our lives. This process involves acknowledging the traits and beliefs that make up the shadow and finding ways to incorporate them into our daily lives in a healthy and constructive manner. By embracing and integrating the shadow, we can achieve a more complete and authentic version of ourselves.

## SHADOW WORK STRATEGIES

- Pay attention to your reactions:

Notice when you have a strong emotional reaction to someone or something. This could be a sign that you are projecting an

unconscious aspect of yourself onto others. Ask yourself, "What about this situation is triggering me? What am I feeling, and why?"

- Look for recurring patterns:

Identify recurring patterns or themes in your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. For example, do you find yourself repeatedly attracting emotionally unavailable partners? This could be a sign that you have an unconscious belief or pattern that is keeping you stuck.

- Explore your dreams:

Your dreams can offer valuable insights into your unconscious mind and shadow self (*I will have you keep a dream journal to write down your dreams each morning in the section Dream Work*). Look for recurring symbols or themes in your dreams that may indicate unconscious patterns or beliefs.

- Reflect on your childhood experiences:

Childhood experiences can shape our unconscious beliefs and patterns. Reflect on your childhood experiences and identify any significant events or patterns that may be contributing to your shadow self.

- Practice mindfulness:

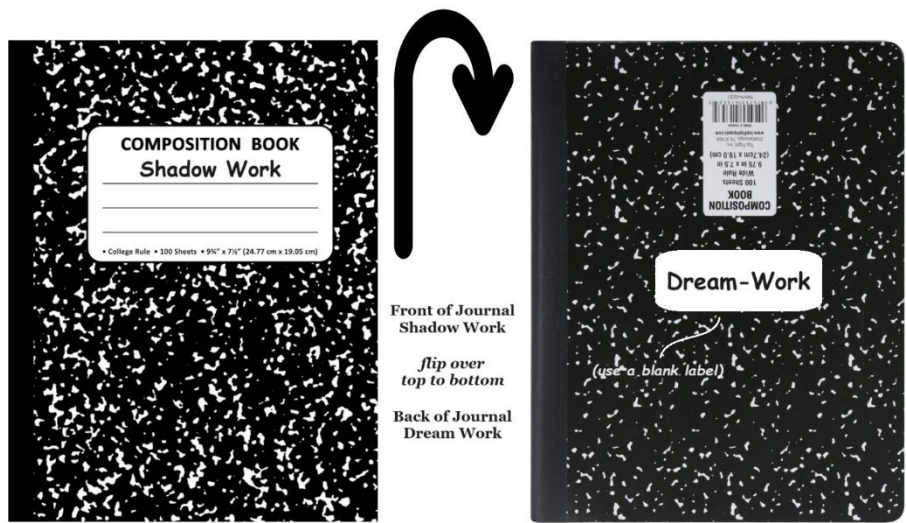
Mindfulness involves bringing non-judgmental awareness to your thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations in the present moment. By practicing mindfulness, you can become more

attuned to your inner experiences and begin to identify patterns and beliefs that may be hidden in your unconscious mind.

It's important to approach this process with self-compassion and curiosity, recognizing that it may take time and patience to fully identify and integrate your shadow self.

### THE METHOD: Journaling

Journaling will be the modality used for both Shadow Work and Dream Work since these two activities go hand in hand. My suggestion is to utilize one notebook/journal for both entries; just invert so you are working from both ends. The symbolism of using a journal in this manner for these specific modalities is intentional. A simple Composition Notebook is both inexpensive and easiest to use in this manner.



Journaling helps you learn about parts of yourself that you hide from the conscious self and the world. These parts are considered undesirable or shameful and may include internalized trauma, fears, or negative beliefs about yourself and the world. The goal of Shadow Work is to facilitate a conversation between your shadow self and your higher self.

This involves exploring a prompt or trigger by asking questions and giving advice from your best self. Essentially, you're uncovering the subconscious beliefs and experiences that shape your thoughts and behaviors. By asking yourself questions, you're able to understand why you behave the way you do. In a sense, you're acting as your therapist.

There is a basic structure for you to follow when journaling and it requires nothing more than paper to write on. It can be as elaborate as you desire, such as acquiring an actual journal or using different colors to write with; maybe even drawing illustrations to help express your thoughts. No matter the circumstance, each journal entry will be sectioned off into 4-headings:

- Situation
- Examine Emotions
- Realization
- Change

## JOURNAL FORMAT

- Situation:
  - A troubling thought or feeling you are currently experiencing.
  - Use a prompt supplied at the end of this section that causes strong emotions.
- Examine Emotions:
  - What am I feeling?
  - Why am I feeling this way?
  - Where did this feeling come from?
  - Have I felt this way before?
- Realization:
  - You see a similar situation in your past.
  - You ‘connect the dots’ to why you are reacting so strongly to this event.
- Change:
  - How can I take this understanding and improve myself?
  - What can I try to do next time this happens?

An example of a Journal entry might look as follows:

---

### Situation

What negative self-talk or beliefs do I still carry from my childhood?



## Examine Emotion

It's tough to think about, but I want to be honest with myself and try to work this out.

(What am I feeling?) One thing I always think about is that I'm not good enough.

(Why am I feeling this way?) I remember feeling like I wasn't as smart or talented as the other kids in school.

(Where did this feeling come from?) I got bad grades, but my older sisters always got straight "A's", my parents thought I wasn't trying hard enough. I thought I was just bad or not meant to be successful at anything.

(Have I felt this way before?) I thought I had to be perfect. I remember thinking that I had to be the best at everything - my grades, my looks, my behavior - so that the adults in my life would like me.

I get upset with myself even for small mistakes, thinking that it means I'm worthless.

## Realization

Writing these things down makes me feel upset. It's hard to admit that I still think this way after all these years. But I know that I have to face it if I want to feel better.

A list of how these thoughts have made my life hard -

- Opportunities I've missed out on
- Bad relationships its caused

- Feeling sad and depressed to the point I don't even get out of the bed
- Being scared to take chances because I know I'll fail

Seeing it written down helps me understand how much these thoughts have been hurting me.

## Change

I don't want to let these thoughts control me anymore. This list is to remind myself that I'm okay just as I am:

- "I'm good enough even if I'm not perfect."
- "Making mistakes is how I learn and grow."
- "I'm worth love and respect even if I don't do everything perfectly."

I will work on feeling grateful for this chance to become a better person.

---

In the beginning, your journal entries may not be as in-depth especially if you have never done anything like this before. Allow yourself to start small, no matter how brief, it is important to put your thoughts and feelings in writing. Do follow the same 'heading structure':

---

## Situation

- I was told to "mind my own damn business" and I was just trying to help.

## Examine Emotion

- I am pissed!!!
- I just want to kick his ass! Why am I so mad?

## Realization

- Growing up in my house, 'kids were to be seen, not heard!' and I was told to "shut up" and "don't talk about things I know nothing about!"
- I felt worthless like it didn't even matter that I existed.

## Change

- When it happens remember I'm not a little kid anymore.
  - I can choose not to be angry.
- 

The final step of your Journal entry is to name your 'parts' of this Shadow Work session. Literally, give a 'nickname' or title to identify all the aspects of your personality and to see reoccurring themes as you progress.

An example using this last entry would look like:

- Shadow - Worthless Kid
- Persona - Bad Ass
- SuperEgo - Anger

It's important to remember not to be judgmental towards these aspects of yourself; you are approaching these issues through HOPE. Be honest, open, at pease, and with empathy as you have this experience. The goal is to help yourself heal from the pain. The memories will never go away, but they will decrease in causing you to suffer.



*“One does not become enlightened  
by imagining figures of light,  
but by making the darkness conscious.”*

~ Carl Jung

## 50-Prompt Questions

1. What memories from my childhood and teenage years still affect me today?
2. What were some of the significant events in my childhood?
3. What were some of the things that I was not allowed to do or express when I was young?
4. What was the emotional climate of my household growing up?
5. How was conflict or stress handled at home growing up, and how did that affect me?
6. What parts of my personality or behaviors do I blame on my childhood or when I was a teenager?
7. What were some of the significant losses or traumas that I experienced when I was younger?
8. How did I cope with problems I faced in school or at home?
9. What impact did my childhood or teenage experiences have on my relationships?
10. What were some of the significant relationships I had growing up, and how did they affect me?
11. What did I feel I needed as a child or teenager that I did not receive?
12. What was my own sense of self or identity I had as a teenager?
13. What were some of the significant conflicts or struggles I faced when I was young?
14. What negative self-talk or beliefs do I still carry from my childhood and teenage years?

15. How did I learn to deal with difficult emotions as a child or teenager, and how has that affected me as an adult?
16. How did I learn to express or suppress my emotions?
17. How have my childhood and teenage experiences affected my self-worth and self-esteem?
18. What were some of the significant transitions or changes that I experienced, and how did they affect me?
19. How did my childhood and teenage experiences impact my relationship with authority figures?
20. What are some of the things that I wish I could tell my younger self?
21. What emotions do I still need to process from when I was younger?
22. How did my teenage experiences affect my sense of belonging and identity?
23. What are some of the things that I feel I missed out on or wish I had experienced?
24. When was the first time I felt like I didn't belong?
25. What were the unspoken rules in my family growing up?
26. What was my relationship with my parents like? How did that affect me?
27. What was my experience with love and relationships growing up? How has that affected my relationships now?
28. Did I ever feel like I had to hide or suppress parts of myself growing up? What were those parts?

29. How did I cope with difficult emotions as a child and teenager? Are those coping mechanisms still present in my life today?
30. What were some major milestones or turning points in my teenage years? How did those experiences shape me?
31. How did my experiences with bullying or peer pressure affect me growing up? Are there still lasting effects?
32. What were my dreams and desires growing up? How have they changed over time?
33. How have my experiences with childhood trauma and neglect affected my relationship with myself and others?
34. What are some of my earliest memories, and how do they make me feel?
35. What are some specific events or experiences from my childhood that still affect me today?
36. What was my relationship with my parents like growing up? How did that affect my sense of self?
37. How did my childhood experiences shape my current beliefs and values?
38. What was my experience with love and relationships growing up? How has that affected my relationships now?
39. Did I ever feel like I had to hide or suppress parts of myself growing up? What were those parts?
40. What emotions come up for me when I think about my childhood? How do I usually deal with these emotions?

41. What is one experience from my childhood that I have been avoiding thinking about? Why do I think that is?
42. How have my childhood experiences impacted the way I see myself and the world around me?
43. What parts of myself do I try to hide from others? Why do I feel the need to hide them?
44. How did my relationship with my siblings, if any, affect me growing up? Are there any unresolved issues or emotions related to those relationships?
45. How did my experiences with school shape my sense of who I am?
46. How did my childhood experiences with religion or spirituality shape my beliefs and values?
47. What was my experience with body image growing up?
48. What are some of the emotions that I tend to avoid feeling?  
How can I begin to work on feeling and processing those emotions?
49. How do I deal with failure or rejection? Are there any childhood experiences that have affected the way I handle those situations?
50. How did my childhood experiences shape my views on money and financial stability?



## Chapter 5

# Dream Work



*"Your vision will become clear only when you look  
into your heart. Who looks outside, dreams. Who  
looks inside, awakens."*

~ Carl Jung

# Purpose of Dream Work

Dream work is a powerful tool that allows us to explore the depths of our unconscious mind and gain insights into our inner world. It involves delving into the realm of dreams, those cryptic narratives and images that emerge during our sleep, allowing us to better understand ourselves and tap into our hidden issues.

One aspect of Dream Work focuses specifically on the exploration of the shadow self. The shadow represents the parts of ourselves that we repress, deny, or disown; the characteristics we deem unacceptable or undesirable. These shadow elements may include our fears, insecurities, repressed emotions, and unresolved traumas.

Dreams provide a unique platform for the shadow to express itself and attempt to disclose what we have been disavowing. During sleep, the unconscious mind has the opportunity to manifest these shadow elements in symbolic or metaphorical ways through dreams. By paying attention to the imagery, emotions, and events in our internal projections, we can decipher the messages that the shadow is trying to communicate.

Developing a consistent practice of recording and analyzing your dreams is crucial for engaging in Shadow Work through Dream Work. An excellent way to start is by keeping a dream journal by your bedside and capturing the details of your dreams upon waking. As you develop this habit, you'll gradually start

recognizing recurring themes, symbols, and patterns that might hold significant meaning.

Gaining insight from dream symbolism necessitates a nuanced comprehension of your personal associations, considering symbols can differ from person to person. This idea, termed "amplification" by Jung, urges individuals to explore their own distinct interpretations of dream symbols. Engaging in dialogue with your dreams, employing techniques like active imagination or visualization (which we will discuss further in the next chapter), offers deeper insights and enhances communication with the shadow.

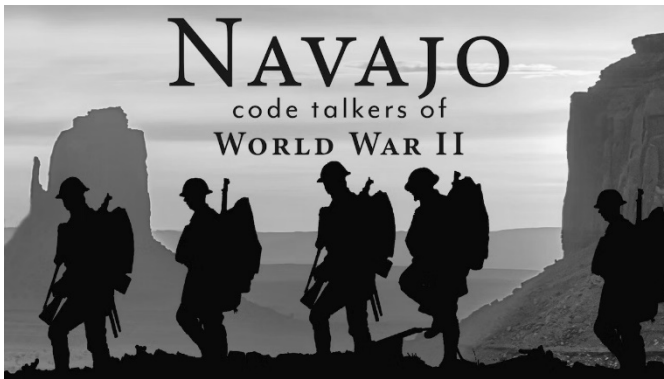
When embarking on Dream Work for shadow inclusion into the authentic self, it is vital to approach the shadow with compassion, curiosity, and an open mind. Embracing and acknowledging these repressed aspects of ourselves paves the way for healing and integration. By providing a voice to the shadow through Dream Work, we foster a chance for self-discovery, growth, and ultimately, the development of a more integrated and harmonious sense of identity.

It's important to remember that Dream Work and shadow integration are continuous processes, and need patience, self-reflection, and a readiness to explore into the depths of your psyche. Seeking guidance and support from a trained therapist or a Dream Work practitioner can also offer valuable assistance throughout this transformative journey.

# Decoding the Symbols

Dreams have captivated the human imagination throughout history, offering glimpses into the profound depths of our unconscious minds. Like encrypted messages awaiting decipherment, dreams are adorned with symbols that carry significant meaning. Exploring the realm of Dream Work parallels

the remarkable endeavors of the Navajo code talkers, where decoding symbols becomes an intimate journey known only to the dreamer.



In Dream Work, we find a parallel to the awe-inspiring feats of the Navajo code talkers during World War II. These remarkable individuals, uniquely equipped with the Navajo language and profound cultural understanding, developed an unbreakable code that played a vital role in secure communication among military units. Similarly, within the realm of dreams, we encounter a language of symbols that beckons us to unlock its secrets, a language understood solely by the dreamer.

Just as the Navajo code talkers encoded messages to safeguard valuable information, dreams encode messages within their symbolic tapestry. Dream work involves the delicate art of decoding these symbols, unraveling their veiled significance. The dreamer, like the code talkers, holds the key to deciphering the enigmatic language woven within their dreams.

The code talkers drew upon their native language, a vessel of deep cultural significance and historical resonance. In parallel, dream symbols in Dream Work draw upon personal and collective cultural experiences, memories, and archetypal elements, enriching the symbolic landscape of dreams. The dreamer's unique cultural background infuses the dream symbols with profound meaning, further individualizing the interpretation.

Unlocking the Navajo code required an acute awareness of the language's unique context and linguistic nuances. Similarly, Dream Work demands an understanding of the dream's contextual elements—exploring the dreamer's personal history, emotions, and experiences—to grasp the layers of meaning embedded within the symbols. The dreamer, intimately connected to their history, holds the context necessary for interpretation.

The Navajo soldiers functioned as a secure channel of communication, enabling effective and confidential exchanges. The same is true of the way symbols in Dream Work serve as a means of communication from our unconscious minds, offering insights into our emotions, conflicts, and desires. The dreamer

becomes both sender and receiver, attuned to the personal language of their dreams, and interpreting the symbols with the precision of a skilled linguist.

The Navajo code talkers possessed exceptional expertise, honed through rigorous training, allowing them to encode and decode messages swiftly and accurately. This is also seen with dream analysis practitioners, psychologists, and therapists developing

WORD	NAVAJO	LITERAL TRANSLATION
Airplane	Wo-tah-de-ne-ih	Air Corps
Dive Bomber	Gini	Chicken Hawk
Torpedo Plane	Tas-chizzie	Swallow
Observation Plane	Ne-as-jah	Owl
Fighter Plane	Da-he-tih-hi	Hummingbird
Bomber	Jay-sho	Buzzard
Patrol Plane	Ga-gih	Crow
Transport Plane	Astah	Eagle

expertise and interpretive skills to navigate the intricate realm of dreams. However, they act as guides and facilitators, empowering the dreamer to uncover their unique symbolism and meaning, for only the dreamer possesses the intimate knowledge needed for a comprehensive interpretation.

Embarking on the path of Dream Work invites us to investigate the enigmatic domain of our dreams, where symbols await our attention. By learning to decipher these symbols, we unravel the

deeper layers of our being, gaining profound insights into ourselves and illuminating the hidden aspects of our lives.

Through the comparison to the Navajo code talkers, we not only acknowledge the transformative potential of Dream Work but also recognize the significance of the dreamer as the sole interpreter of their symbolic language. Within the private world of dreams, each individual holds the exclusive understanding required to decode the intricate messages crafted by their unconscious mind.

### DREAM RIDDLE

Just as the Navajo Code Talkers battled with deciphering cryptic messages from their native tongue into English, let us also struggle to find comprehension when confronted with the perplexing symbolism we encounter in the realm of our dreams. Solving a riddle is a universally recognized concept that demands individuals to interpret clues, patterns, and symbols, all in pursuit of unraveling the mystery. Dream allegories can be likened to a complex puzzle, where the dreamer must meticulously examine the diverse elements of the objects, characters, actions, and emotions in dreams to construct the underlying meaning.

Similar to how one would examine the shape, color, and patterns of puzzle pieces to determine their placement, dream analysis involves examining the symbols, their context, and personal associations to uncover their significance. The dreamer

essentially becomes the puzzle solver, using their intuition, introspection, and knowledge of themselves to unlock the meaning behind the dream's symbols and patterns.

This analogy emphasizes the importance of decoding hidden meanings and comprehending the symbolic language of dreams without resorting to a generic approach of predefined and unreliable dream symbol lists. When it comes to understanding the language of your shadow, a "one-size-fits-all" approach is insufficient; rather, it necessitates a customized and tailored interpretation.

## DREAM TRANSLATION

Engaging in Dream Work involves translating the language of the shadow to convey its messages, which often come through symbolic and metaphorical elements in dreams. By exploring the figurative projections and underlying significance in our dreams, we decode the language of the shadow, enabling it to express itself and communicate its concerns, desires, and messages. This transformation process deepens our understanding of the shadow, helps us address unresolved issues, and integrates these aspects into our conscious awareness. As a result, we develop a more holistic and balanced sense of self, fostering personal growth and facilitating healing.

It's important to approach the translation of the shadow's language with an open mind, patience, and self-compassion. Dreams can be multi-layered and complex, and their messages



may not always be immediately apparent. Cultivating a regular Dream Work practice and seeking guidance from professionals versed in dream analysis can further enhance your ability to understand and translate the shadow's language effectively.

## Dream Journal

The first part is easy, you don't have to do anything but dream. Yet, this is already a tricky task for some people to perform, especially if you have any substance addictions or are required to take medications. Even things like nicotine and alcohol might give you trouble dreaming or at least problems remembering your dreams.

### DREAM WORK RECORD KEEPING

When recording your dreams, it's helpful to identify key points and list them underneath the dream story using bullet points. Include suggested titles such as People, Places, Things, Emotions, Events, and Topics. Remember to log your dreams each night, capturing as much detail as possible. This comprehensive record will allow for later analysis of patterns and a deeper exploration of the dream's meaning and significance. Here are the basic items you should track:

**DATE and TITLE** - Start by recording the date of the dream, and give it a title for reference. This can be important later during analysis, especially if you notice patterns developing over time.

**DREAM** - First write down the dream as quickly as possible before the content is forgotten; trust me, do not wait or it will be gone. Grammar, spelling, and punctuation are not important when recording your dreams. Just get the dream down on paper before it slips away and record everything that you remember even if it may only be fragments. As you start writing, more and more pieces of the dreams will come to you, because we are not able to write faster than we can think.

**PEOPLE** - Identify and describe the individuals present in your dream, whether they are familiar or unfamiliar to you. Note any significant characteristics of these people, such as their appearance, age, gender, or emotional state. If the dream includes people you know in waking life, reflect on the nature of your relationship with them and how it may relate to the dream's themes or messages.

**PLACES** - Describe the settings and locations where the dream takes place. Pay attention to both the overall environment and specific details. Note whether the places are familiar or unfamiliar to you and consider any personal associations or emotional significance they may hold.

**THINGS** - Record any objects, items, or elements that stand out in the dream. These can include both mundane and symbolic objects. Describe the appearance, characteristics, and interactions involving these things. Note any personal or cultural meanings associated with them. Pay attention to the role these

things play in the dream's narrative or how they evoke certain emotions or reactions.

**EMOTIONS** - Pay attention to the emotions you experienced in the dream. Jot down the predominant emotions you felt, whether it was fear, joy, sadness, or any other emotional state. Emotions serve as important indicators of the dream's significance and can guide your interpretation.

**TOPICS** - Examine the dream for patterns, themes, or recurring elements. Pay attention to specific situations, conflicts, or motifs that stand out. Identifying these patterns can provide insights into underlying subconscious concerns or unresolved issues.

**EVENTS** - Focus on specific actions, interactions, plot developments, and symbolic occurrences within the dream. Note behaviors, movements, gestures, and major plot points. Pay attention to transitions between dream scenes and identify symbolic or metaphorical events.

**PERSONAL ASSOCIATIONS** - Reflect on what each symbol means to you personally. Ask yourself questions like: What thoughts, memories, or emotions come up when I think about this symbol? How does it relate to my waking life? These can offer a unique perspective for interpreting the dream.

For future reference, it is a good idea to give your dream a title. As your journaling grows, you will hopefully see a correlation and pattern between your dream and reality.

## REVIEW CONTENT

After recording the details of your dream in your journal, take some time to review and reflect upon the dream's content. Look for recurring themes, symbols, emotions, and patterns within the dream. Consider how various elements of the dream may relate to your waking life, personal experiences, or inner conflicts.

Ask yourself questions such as:

1. What are the key symbols or images in the dream? What do they represent to you personally?
2. How did you feel during the dream and upon waking? Are there any emotions that stood out?
3. Are there any connections between the dream and your current life situation or any unresolved issues?
4. Are there any parallels or similarities between this dream and previous dreams you've had?

By analyzing your dream, you can start to uncover its hidden meanings and gain a deeper understanding of its messages. This step allows you to establish a foundation of awareness and insight before moving on to active imagination or other forms of dialogue with the dream.

Once you have spent time reflecting on the dream's symbolism and personal significance, you can then proceed to active imagination. This technique involves consciously engaging with the dream's imagery and entering into a dialogue with the dream characters or symbols. Active imagination can take the form of

visualization, meditation, or even creative expression like drawing or writing.

Remember that Dream Work is a highly individual process, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach. The important thing is to approach your dreams with curiosity, openness, and a willingness to explore the depths of your unconscious mind.



DREAM JOURNAL FORMAT

●	DATE and TITLE:
	DREAM:
	PEOPLE:
●	
	PLACES:
	THINGS:
	EMOTIONS:
	TOPICS:
	EVENTS:
	PERSONAL ASSOCIATIONS:
	FOOTNOTES:
●	

## Chapter 6

# Active Imagination



*"The world of reality has its limits;  
the world of imagination is boundless."*

~ Jean-Jacques Rousseau

# Exploring Active Imagination

Active imagination is a process in Jungian psychology used to bridge the gap between the conscious and unconscious minds. It places a heavy emphasis on dream interpretation and the contents of the unconscious mind. During the process of active imagination, clients are encouraged to translate the contents of dreams without adding any analysis from the conscious mind. The goal of this process is to understand the workings of the unconscious mind.

Dreams and other unconscious images can be particularly vivid when these images attempt to make their way to the conscious mind. Through the process of active imagination, these images may become less vivid and allow the contents of the unconscious mind to healthily integrate with the conscious mind. I do caution that the process of active imagination used in a meditative form needs to be done carefully because it could cause a disconnect with reality.

Active imagination is intended to bring about a state of hypnagogia. This is the state in between sleep and wakefulness, where people may be partially aware that they are dreaming. Carl Jung argued that active imagination can be achieved naturally during intense states of relaxation such as when listening to a story or drifting off to sleep.

For our purposes, we will remain in a more wakeful state as you would experience during a daydream. I make this comparison to

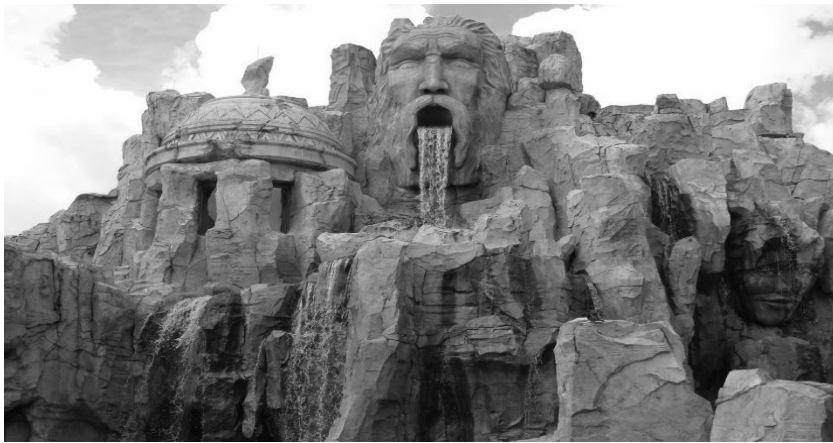


help with understanding the process of active imagination and how it's performed. While daydreaming and active imagination share some similarities, they differ in their intentionality and level of engagement. Daydreaming often occurs spontaneously and without conscious effort, allowing the mind to wander aimlessly, weaving imaginative narratives or scenarios unrelated to the present moment. It can be a form of mental escape or a source of entertainment, providing a temporary retreat from the demands of daily life.

On the other hand, active imagination is a deliberate and focused engagement with the contents of the unconscious mind. It is a structured practice that involves actively entering into a dialogue with the various aspects of our psyche, such as archetypal figures, symbols, and inner voices. Unlike daydreaming, active imagination is consciously directed toward exploring the depths of our inner world and seeking insights, understanding, and integration.

In active imagination, we intentionally create a receptive state of mind and enter into a purposeful dialogue with the contents of our imagination. We engage with the symbols and characters that emerge from our unconscious, allowing them to take on a life of their own and communicate with us in a profound and meaningful way. This process is characterized by a heightened awareness and a sense of active participation in the inner narrative.

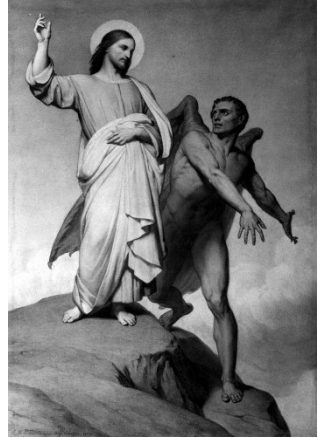
While daydreaming often remains superficial or disconnected from our conscious intentions, active imagination serves as a bridge between the conscious and unconscious realms. It enables us to access the hidden layers of our psyche and tap into the profound wisdom and creative potential that lies within. By actively engaging with our imagination in this intentional manner, we can gain profound insights, heal unresolved emotions, and integrate aspects of ourselves that have remained dormant or disowned.



# Examples in Literature

## BIBLICAL

This example I refer to is of Jesus' temptation in the Bible. Though it is not explicitly an example of Active Imagination as understood in Jungian psychology, it is an example often interpreted symbolically or metaphorically. In the story of Jesus' temptation in the Bible (Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13), Jesus goes into the wilderness and encounters various temptations presented by the devil.



These temptations are seen as symbolic challenges that Jesus faces before he begins his ministry.

When Jesus ventured into the desert for 40 days and nights, he encountered the devil, engaging in a conversation that likely involved active imagination. This experience can be understood as a manifestation of unconscious content, where the invisible becomes visible. The devil, in this context, symbolizes temptation. Given Jesus' exceptional gifts and strong self-awareness, it is natural to expect that he would be tempted by power. Interestingly, the manifestation occurred in the desert, a place devoid of distractions, allowing for focused introspection.

The depths of the unconscious can reveal themselves when one embraces solitude, devoid of external distractions. In such

moments, the spiritual dimension of Jesus' existence on earth found vibrant expression. The conversations with the devil symbolize active imagination, where the invisible becomes tangible through dialogue and vivid imagery. This pivotal experience marked a turning point in Jesus' mission, as he consciously rejected the temptations of power offered by the devil. Had he not confronted and integrated his unconscious shadow, his divine purpose would have been compromised.

While not a direct parallel to Active Imagination, some individuals may interpret this story as Jesus engaging with his unconscious symbolism or undergoing a psychological journey. The devil in this context can be seen as a symbol representing the temptations, doubts, or shadow aspects that Jesus needed to confront and overcome as part of his preparation for his divine mission.

## WONDERLAND

A commonly known literary example that can be seen as representing Active Imagination is the story of "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll. In this whimsical tale, Alice enters a fantastical world filled with peculiar characters, symbolic encounters, and surreal experiences. The story can be interpreted as an exploration of Alice's inner world and a journey of self-discovery.



Throughout her adventures, Alice engages in dialogue and encounters with various symbolic figures, such as the Cheshire Cat, the Mad Hatter, and the Queen of Hearts. These encounters and interactions can be seen as manifestations of Alice's psyche, representing different aspects of her unconscious. Through her interactions with these symbolic figures, Alice navigates challenges, confronts her fears, and gains insights about herself and the world around her.

Alice's adventures in Wonderland can be viewed as a metaphorical representation of Active Imagination. Through her imaginative engagement with the symbolic characters and situations in her dreamlike world, Alice gains self-awareness, explores her psyche, and undergoes personal transformation. The story highlights the power of imagination and symbolism in the process of inner exploration and self-discovery.

*"You," he said, "are a terribly real thing - in a terribly false world, and that, I believe, is why you are in so much pain."*

*~ Emilie Autumn*

The Asylum for Wayward Victorian Girls

# Method to Engage

## A PRACTICAL APPROACH

One practical way to engage in active imagination and initiate a dialogue with the unconscious involves selecting a specific image or symbol from an imaginary story or daydream and observing it closely. When the image starts to move or change in some way, it can signify the unconscious taking an active role in the dialogue. This approach aligns with Jung's idea of allowing the symbol to come to life and speak for itself.

By focusing on a particular image and observing its movements or transformations, you create a space for the unconscious to express itself. The movement or change in the image can be seen as a signal that the unconscious is activating the symbol and using it to communicate with you. It serves as an invitation to enter into a deeper dialogue with the symbol and explore its significance.

Engaging in this process requires receptivity, patience, and a willingness to let go of conscious control. By allowing the symbol to unfold and guide the dialogue, you create an opportunity for the unconscious to reveal its wisdom and insights.

It's important to note that this approach may not always produce immediate results or clear-cut dialogues. Active imagination is a fluid and subjective process, and experiences can vary from person to person. It is crucial to approach the practice with an open mind and a sense of curiosity, allowing the dialogue to

unfold naturally and trusting in the wisdom of the unconscious. Working with a trained analyst or therapist familiar with an active imagination can provide additional support and guidance in exploring this approach effectively.

## STAGES OF ACTIVE IMAGINATION

I've outlined several stages or phases that individuals may go through during the process of active imagination. These stages can vary in duration and intensity, and not everyone may experience all of them. Here are the general stages of active imagination:

- Preparation

This stage involves creating a suitable environment for active imagination. It may include finding a quiet and comfortable space, setting aside dedicated time, and adopting a receptive and open mindset. Relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or meditation, can also help prepare for active imagination.

- Invocation

In this stage, individuals intentionally evoke or summon images, fantasies, or figures from the unconscious. This can be done by focusing on a specific question, issue, or symbol and allowing the imagination to generate corresponding material. The goal is to establish a connection with the unconscious and invite its contents to emerge.

- Dialogue and Exploration

Once an image or figure appears, engage in a dialogue or interaction with it. This stage involves observing, questioning, and actively engaging with the unconscious material. The individual may ask the figure about its meaning, purpose, or significance. The dialogue can be both verbal and non-verbal, with the individual using their imagination to explore and gain insights into the symbol or archetype.

- Amplification and Reflection

After the dialogue and exploration, reflect on the encountered material. This stage involves considering the personal associations, cultural or mythological references, and potential symbolic meanings of the images or figures that emerged. Jungian amplification techniques, such as researching related myths, symbols, or dream motifs, can provide further insight.

- Integration and Application

The final stage focuses on integrating the insights gained from active imagination into one's conscious life. This involves reflecting on the personal relevance and implications of the encountered material. The individual may explore how these insights can be applied to personal growth, relationships, creative endeavors, or problem-solving. Integrating the lessons learned from active imagination helps bridge the gap between the unconscious and conscious aspects of the psyche.



These stages are not strictly linear or fixed. They provide a general framework for understanding the process of active imagination, but each individual's experience may differ. Some stages may be revisited or repeated, and the process can be ongoing and evolving over time.

### EXAMPLE OF USING STAGES

Here's an example illustrating how someone recovering from addiction might progress through the stages of active imagination:

**Preparation:** Mark, a man in his 40's, is in recovery from substance addiction. He decides to use active imagination as a tool to explore the underlying emotions and triggers that contribute to his addictive patterns. Mark creates a calm and comfortable space in his home, ensuring he won't be disturbed. He takes a few moments to ground himself, setting the intention to gain insight and support his recovery journey.

**Invocation:** Mark brings to mind an image that represents his addiction—a dark, swirling vortex. He visualizes the vortex and invites it to reveal itself



further. He allows his imagination to generate images, sensations, and emotions associated with the vortex.

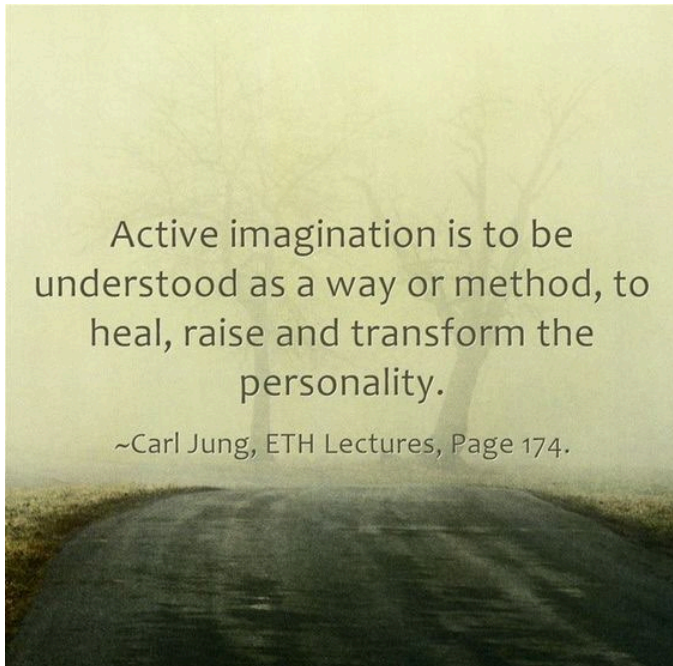
**Dialogue and Exploration:** As Mark focuses on the vortex, he engages in a dialogue with it, asking questions like, "What purpose do you serve in my life? What emotions or experiences are you linked to?" He allows the vortex to respond, imagining it speaking or manifesting symbolic representations of his underlying emotions and triggers.

**Amplification and Reflection:** Mark concludes the dialogue and takes a moment to reflect on the encountered material. He recognizes that the vortex symbolizes his deep-seated emotions of pain, trauma, and unresolved issues. He reflects on the personal associations he has with the vortex, considering the moments when he felt drawn towards addictive behaviors as a coping mechanism. Mark also seeks therapy or support groups to further explore and understand these underlying issues.

**Integration and Application:** Mark contemplates how the insights gained from active imagination can support his recovery journey. He realizes that addressing the underlying emotional pain is crucial for long-term healing. Inspired by the exploration, he seeks professional help, engages in therapy, attends support groups, and explores healthier coping strategies. Mark commits to self-care practices that promote emotional well-being, such as mindfulness, journaling, and creative outlets.

Mark continues to engage in active imagination sessions, gradually gaining deeper insights into his addictive patterns and emotional triggers. As he progresses, he might encounter other symbolic figures or scenes that shed light on his recovery journey.

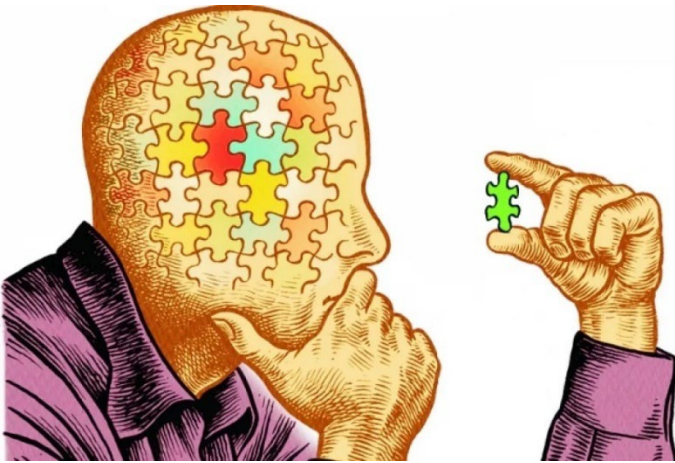
Through continued engagement with an active imagination and the integration of insights into his daily life, Mark strengthens his recovery, heals emotional wounds, and develops healthier coping mechanisms.





## Chapter 7

# Integration



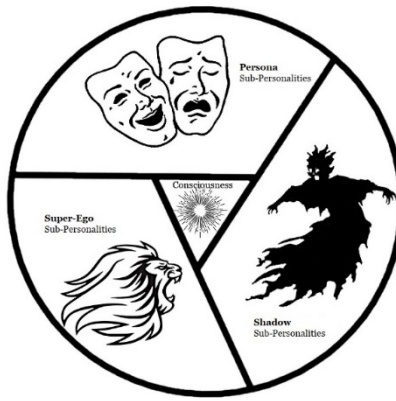
*“Unity, not uniformity, must be our aim. We attain unity only through variety. Differences must be integrated, not annihilated, not absorbed.”*

~ Mary Parker Follett (1918).

# Progress Status

What we've learned so far:

- We have sub-personalities that group into three parts:
  - o Personas – socially acceptable parts
  - o Shadow Self – traumatized parts
  - o Super-Ego – Harsh/Critical parts

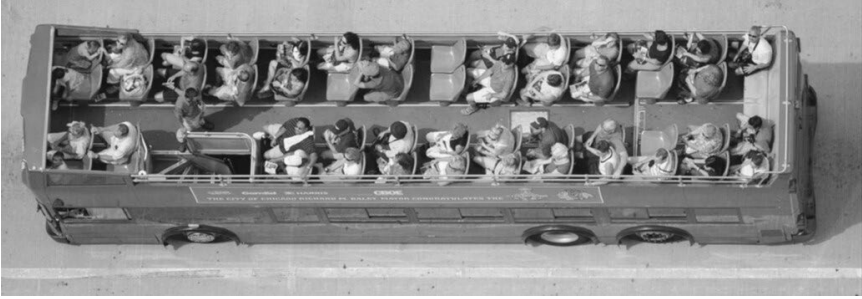


- The existence of an inner counselor/mediator serving in a self-leadership role
- Shadow Self comes from childhood trauma and neglect.
- Addiction, substance-related or not, is an attempt to ease suffering.
- Replacing addiction rituals is a key aspect of recovery
- Modalities for uncovering true self, giving shadow self a voice, and quieting super-ego are:
  - o Shadow Work
  - o Dream Work
  - o Active Imagination

Before moving any further, we need to identify who (of your sub-personalities) is in charge of your life. If your true self has not emerged, then you are still being led by the same combination of parts that got you into your addiction. This is the reason for the disclaimer at the beginning of the book,

*“The content is intended to empower readers to explore their inner worlds, address childhood trauma and neglect, navigate addiction, and cultivate a sense of happiness and fulfillment in their lives. While "PATH" provides valuable insights and resources, it is **not a substitute for professional medical or psychological advice, diagnosis, or treatment.**”*

Professional counselors and doctors of psychology stress that one should not go near the traumatized shadow self without help, actively discouraging people from doing it by themselves; it could lead to a death spiral. But to do nothing can lead to the same end: people find themselves in life circumstances where their shadow selves constantly get triggered starting the 'cycle of addiction' once again to alleviate the pain. So, what are people in my situation supposed to do? Just learn to live with the trauma? Maybe with lots of luck, sometime in the future (while having no insurance, money, or resources), someone qualified will be there to help.



## Who Is Driving Your Bus

Imagine a school bus as the vessel of our inner world, filled with a diverse group of passengers representing different aspects of our psyche. The bus is a metaphorical representation of our minds, navigating through life's journey.

At the front of the bus, we have our Super-Egos represented as the authority figures, symbolizing the critical voices we often internalize. They resemble past figures of authority, such as strict parents, teachers, or other influential individuals whose words and actions have shaped our beliefs about ourselves. These voices tend to be loud and dominant, occupying the front seats, and steering the direction of our thoughts and actions.

In the back section of the bus, we find the children who have been traumatized. Each child represents a specific moment or experience from our past that caused emotional pain, fear, or distress. These children embody the wounded parts of our Shadow selves, carrying the weight of unhealed wounds and suppressed emotions. They are filled with fear, anger, and



unfulfilled desires, yet they often remain ignored and silenced, confined to the shadows.

Caught in between these two groups are our adult Personas, representing the roles we play in our daily lives—father/mother, husband/wife, manager, worker, neighbor, son/daughter, or friend. These personas try to navigate the bus, attempting to balance the demands and expectations of the authority figures at the front with the needs and emotions of the wounded children at the back.

The question of "Who is driving the bus?" arises, highlighting the power dynamics within our psyche. It raises concerns about the true source of control and agency in our lives. Are we allowing the critical voices of authority to dictate our thoughts and behaviors? Or are we honoring and addressing the needs of our wounded inner children?

The dynamics that unfold within this bus can be complex and challenging. The authority figures may dominate the front seats, steering the bus towards self-criticism, doubt, and perfectionism. The wounded children, hidden in the back, may create disruptions, manifesting as emotional outbursts, triggers, or self-sabotaging behaviors.

Meanwhile, the adult personas caught in the middle may struggle to find their voice and balance amidst the competing influences. They may try to mediate between the critical voices and the

wounded children, seeking harmony and healing within themselves.

Ultimately, our task is to recognize and integrate all parts of ourselves. By accessing our Consciousness, our True Self, as our inner guide and counselor, we can begin to acknowledge the wounded children within us and their unmet needs. This empowers us to provide the care, compassion, and healing they require. Simultaneously, we can learn to challenge and reframe the critical voices of authority, questioning their validity, and fostering self-empowerment.

In this analogy, the journey of driving the bus represents the journey of self-discovery, self-acceptance, and healing. It is about finding the right balance and harmony within ourselves, allowing our adult personas to become compassionate guides while addressing the needs and honoring the experiences of our wounded inner children.

## INTEGRATING SHADOW TO STOP PAIN OF TRAUMA

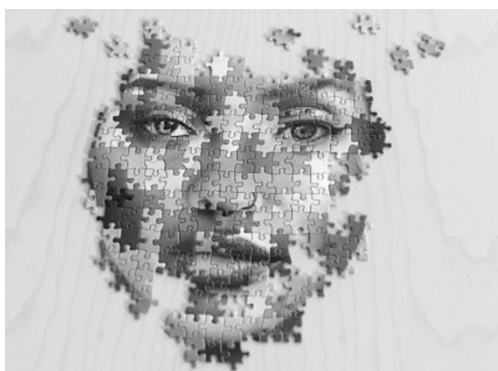
Integrating the shadow self is a powerful process that can contribute to healing inner pain stemming from childhood trauma or neglect. Integrating the shadow self involves acknowledging and accepting the suppressed and often painful aspects of your personality. This includes recognizing how childhood trauma or neglect may have shaped and influenced these aspects. By acknowledging the existence of these painful

experiences and their impact on the psyche, individuals can begin the process of healing.

Integrating the shadow entails exploring the painful emotions, memories, and beliefs associated with childhood trauma or neglect. This exploration is done with compassion and support through the self-leadership established by developing your Consciousness as discussed in the first chapter. By performing inner dialog into these experiences in a safe and non-judgmental manner, individuals can gain a deeper understanding of how the past has affected them and their current patterns of behavior.

Integrating the shadow provides an opportunity to release pent-up emotions and process unresolved feelings related to childhood trauma or neglect. This can involve expressing and validating the pain, grief, anger, or sadness associated with those experiences. Through the therapeutic techniques of Shadow Work, Dream Work, and Active Imagination, individuals can work towards healing the wounds and finding emotional relief.

Integrating the shadow allows individuals to examine and challenge the limiting beliefs and narratives that have developed as a result of childhood trauma or neglect. Through self-reflection and reframing negative self-perceptions, you can start reshaping your understanding of yourself and your



potential. This process helps in fostering self-compassion, self-acceptance, and the development of healthier self-narratives.

While integrating the shadow self is a profound and transformative process, it's important to note that deep-seated childhood trauma or neglect may require specialized therapeutic interventions; let the intensity of emotional pain be your guide in making this decision. Seeking help from qualified mental health professionals can provide the necessary support and expertise for navigating this complex healing journey effectively.

## NAMING SHADOW TRAUMAS

Giving names or labels to different aspects of neglect and trauma can be a helpful tool in the shadow work process and the subsequent integration. This naming process can facilitate inner dialogue and increase awareness and understanding of these aspects. By assigning specific names or labels to different aspects of neglect and trauma, it becomes easier to recognize and differentiate them within oneself. This naming process can help identify specific patterns, emotions, or belief systems associated with different aspects of the trauma or neglect. It provides a framework for understanding the complexity of these experiences and their impact on one's life.

Naming aspects of neglect and trauma can create an internal dialogue within oneself. It allows for a more focused and intentional exploration of each aspect, enabling deeper self-reflection. By engaging in this inner dialogue, individuals can

better understand the origins, triggers, and effects of each aspect, leading to increased self-awareness and insight. Naming different aspects of neglect and trauma can help create a sense of separation between one's authentic self and those aspects. This separation allows individuals to view these aspects as separate entities, rather than defining their entire identity. It supports the recognition that these aspects are not the entirety of who they are and can be worked with and integrated into a more holistic sense of self.

The act of naming and identifying aspects of neglect and trauma can be empowering. It provides a sense of agency and control over these experiences. By acknowledging and labeling these aspects, individuals can actively work on healing and integrating them into their lives. It allows for targeted healing efforts and helps in developing strategies to address each aspect effectively. It's important to approach the naming process with sensitivity and self-compassion, as it may bring up intense emotions or memories. It's advisable to undertake this process in a supportive environment, such as with the guidance of a therapist or counselor, who can provide assistance and create a safe space for exploration and integration.

#### PROCESS EACH OF THE IDENTIFIED SUB-SHADOW SELVES

I'm providing you with a general process when working with identified sub-shadow selves through dialoguing with their issues from childhood. Find a quiet and comfortable environment where you can focus without distractions. Ensure you have ample

time for this process. You may also want to have a journal or notepad to write down your thoughts and reflections. Begin by reflecting on your experiences of neglect and trauma from childhood. Identify the different aspects or sub-shadow selves that have emerged as a result. Give each 'sub-shadow-self' a distinct name or label that resonates with its specific issue or characteristic.

Choose one sub-shadow to begin with. Mentally or in writing, address this identity by its name. Initiate a dialogue, inviting it to express its feelings, needs, or concerns. Imagine or write down what it might say in response. In the dialogue, adopt a compassionate and non-judgmental stance. Listen attentively to what the 'sub-shadow-self' expresses, allowing it to voice its pain, fears, or unmet needs from childhood. Be patient and open to whatever arises, maintaining a space of understanding and empathy. Respond to the 'sub-self's' concerns with empathy and reassurance. Acknowledge the validity of its emotions and experiences. Offer comforting and supportive words, letting them know that you are there to listen and understand. Provide reassurance that you are committed to its healing and well-being.

Prompt the 'sub-shadow-self' to dive deeper into its issues from childhood by asking open-ended questions. For example, "What were the specific experiences or events that contributed to your pain?", "What unmet needs did you have at that time?", or "How did these experiences shape your beliefs about yourself and the world?" After the dialogue, take some time to reflect on what

emerged. Write down any insights, realizations, or patterns that you noticed during the process. Consider how these ‘sub-selves’ and their issues have influenced your life and behaviors. Contemplate how you can begin integrating their needs and



healing into your present self. Continue the dialogues with each identified sub-shadow, one at a time. Work through their issues from childhood, engaging in compassionate listening, response, and reflection. Allow each sub-self to express itself fully and offer the understanding and support it needs.

Shadow work can be intense, and some aspects of neglect and trauma may require professional guidance. If you encounter particularly challenging emotions or find it difficult to process certain issues, consider seeking the assistance of a therapist or counselor who specializes in trauma or shadow work. Remember to approach this process with self-compassion, patience, and a willingness to heal. Integrating shadow selves takes time and may

require ongoing inner work. Be gentle with yourself and honor your unique journey of healing and self-discovery.

## PROCESSING THE OTHER PARTS

After addressing issues of the shadow self, it can be beneficial to engage in some processing work with the personas and the sub-personalities associated with the super-ego. While the integration of the shadow self is an important step, achieving overall harmony within the self involves addressing and balancing all aspects. Start by reflecting on the different personas you present to the world and the roles you play in different contexts. Consider whether these personas align with your authentic self or if they are based on external expectations or societal pressures. Evaluate whether any of these personas have become overly dominant or disconnected from your true desires and values.

Examine each persona and assess its authenticity and alignment with your core self. Ask yourself whether these personas serve as a genuine expression of your identity or if they are primarily driven by fear, a need for acceptance, or a desire to conform. Consider whether any adjustments or modifications are needed to align your personas with your true self. Cultivate authenticity by embracing and expressing your true thoughts, feelings, and desires. Strive to align your actions and behaviors with your core values and aspirations. Allow yourself to be more vulnerable and genuine in your interactions with others. This process involves



letting go of the need for external validation and embracing self-acceptance.

Super-ego sub-personalities are the internalized voices of authority figures, societal expectations, or cultural norms that shape your sense of right and wrong. These voices can be excessively critical, judgmental, or rigid in their standards. Take time to identify and examine these sub-personalities, recognizing how they influence your self-perception and decision-making. Once you identify super-ego sub-personalities, work on challenging their critical and judgmental voices. Reflect on the origins of these standards and beliefs, considering whether they are realistic or based on outdated conditioning. Practice self-compassion by reframing self-judgment and adopting more supportive and nurturing self-talk. Aim to develop a compassionate super-ego that encourages personal growth, self-care, and balanced self-improvement. Foster an internal voice that supports you in setting healthy boundaries, making wise choices, and striving for personal well-being. This compassionate super-ego encourages growth without harsh criticism or unrealistic expectations.

Maintain an ongoing practice of self-awareness to monitor and adjust your personas and super-ego sub-personalities as needed. Regularly reflect on your thoughts, behaviors, and motivations to ensure they align with your authentic self and promote overall well-being. Engage in practices like journaling, meditation, or

therapy to deepen your self-awareness and foster continuous growth. The goal is not to eliminate personas or the super-ego sub-personalities, but rather to cultivate a healthy and integrated sense of self. Strive for a harmonious balance among the different aspects of your personality, allowing your true self to shine while still honoring the social roles and responsibilities you choose to embody.

### SUGGESTED EXERCISE

Here's an exercise using a bus seating chart to help the reader visualize and integrate the different players of their inner dialogue:

Materials needed:

- A bus seating chart (you can create a simple one by drawing rows of seats)

Instructions:

- Print or draw a bus seating chart with enough rows to accommodate the number of sub-personalities you would like to explore. Leave space for labeling each seat.
- Divide the seating chart into three sections: Front (Super-Ego/Authority figures), Middle (Adult Personas), and Back (Shadow/Traumatized Children). You can draw lines or use markers to separate the sections.
- Start with the front section (Super-Ego/Authority figures). Think about the critical voices or authority figures that have influenced you in the past. These can be parents, teachers, or anyone whose words and actions shaped your

beliefs and behaviors. Write down their names or role titles (e.g., strict parent, demanding teacher) on the seats in the front section of the bus.

- Move to the middle section (Adult Personas). Consider the various roles you play in your daily life, such as father/mother, husband/wife, manager, worker, neighbor, son/daughter, or friend. Write down the names or role titles associated with these personas on the seats in the middle section of the bus.
- Finally, focus on the back section (Shadow/Traumatized Children). Reflect on the moments or experiences in your past that have caused emotional pain, fear, or distress. These can be instances of humiliation, harsh punishment, or family crises. Think about the different wounded aspects of yourself that emerged from these experiences. Give each wounded aspect a name or label and write them on the seats in the back section of the bus.

Take a moment to observe the seating chart as a representation of your inner world. Notice the distribution of names and roles across the bus, representing the different sub-personalities within you.

Reflect on the dynamics and interactions between the different sections. Visualize how the authority figures at the front may influence or dominate the personas in the middle, and how the wounded children at the back may affect both the authority figures and the personas.

Consider how these different sub-personalities have influenced your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors over time. Are there any patterns or conflicts that arise from these dynamics? Take note of any insights or realizations that come up.

To foster integration and healing, imagine yourself as the bus driver, taking control and guiding the bus towards a harmonious and compassionate inner dialogue. Envision a nurturing and understanding presence that acknowledges the needs of the wounded children, challenges the authority figures' dominance, and allows the personas to express their authentic selves.

By completing this exercise and visualizing the different players of your inner dialogue through the bus seating chart, you can gain a clearer understanding of the dynamics at play within yourself. This visualization can help you integrate and reconcile the different sub-personalities, ultimately fostering healing and wholeness within your psyche.

Front of Bus		
Driver↑		Door→
#2		#1
#4		#3
#6		#5
#8		#7
#10		#9
#12		#11
#14		#13
#16		#15
#18		#17
#20		#19
#22		#21
#24		#23

Authority  
[Super-Ego]

Adults  
[Persona]

Children  
[Shadow]

# Role Rehearsal

## GROUP THERAPY ACTIVITY:

### Internal Dialog Role Rehearsal

#### Objective:

To practice and understand the internal dialog between different aspects of the psyche (Persona, Super-Ego, and Shadow) with guidance from the central consciousness (group leader serving as self-leadership of the central consciousness).

#### Participants:

- 3 participants (each representing Persona, Super-Ego, and Shadow)
- Group leader (acting as central consciousness/self-leadership)

#### Materials:

- Chairs arranged in a circle
- Notepads and pens for each participant
- A whiteboard or flip chart for group leader to jot down key points

#### Activity Structure:

1. **Introduction** (10 minutes)
  - Explain the purpose of the activity: to practice internal dialog and understand the dynamics between Persona, Super-Ego, and Shadow.

- Briefly introduce each aspect of the psyche:
  - **Persona:** The public personality, how we present ourselves to the world.
  - **Super-Ego:** The inner critical voice, upholding societal standards and morals.
  - **Shadow:** The complex trauma and neglected aspects from childhood (Primal wants, desires, and fears.)

## 2. **Role Assignment and Scenario Setup** (5 minutes)

- Assign each participant to a role (Persona, Super-Ego, Shadow).
- Present a common life situation/topic for discussion. Example scenario: “Receiving unexpected news of a loved one’s severe illness.”
  - **Persona:** Struggling to maintain a composed and supportive exterior.
  - **Super-Ego:** Overwhelmed with guilt and self-blame for not being able to do more.
  - **Shadow:** Triggered past traumas and fears, leading to feelings of helplessness and despair.

## 3. **Role Rehearsal** (30 minutes)

- Participants take turns expressing their thoughts and feelings from their assigned roles.
- The group leader mediates, guiding the conversation and ensuring each aspect is heard.
- Example dialog prompts:

- **Persona:** “I need to stay strong and supportive, but I feel like I’m falling apart inside.”
- **Super-Ego:** “You should have been more attentive. This is partly your fault.”
- **Shadow:** “This reminds me of the time I was abandoned. I can’t handle this pain.”

#### 4. **Guided Mediation by Central Consciousness** (Group Leader) (20 minutes)

- The group leader (self-leadership) steps in to mediate the dialog.
- Acknowledge each aspect's concerns and desires.
- Facilitate a balanced and integrative approach to managing the crisis without resorting to addictive/destructive behavior.
- **Example mediation:** “Persona, it’s okay to feel vulnerable. Super-Ego, we all have limitations and cannot control everything. Shadow, your pain is valid, and we are here to support you through it. Let’s find a way to work together and handle this crisis constructively.”

#### 5. **Reflection and Discussion** (20 minutes)

- Open the floor for participants to share their experiences and insights from the role rehearsal.
- Discuss how the internal dialog felt and what they learned about each aspect of their psyche.



- Encourage sharing of personal takeaways and how they can apply this understanding of “self-leadership” in their own lives.

#### **6. Conclusion (5 minutes)**

- Summarize the key points discussed during the session.
- Emphasize the importance of ongoing internal dialog and self-leadership.
- Provide resources for further practice and reflection, such as journaling prompts or follow-up activities.

#### **Follow-up:**

Encourage participants to journal about their experiences and continue practicing internal dialog in their daily lives. Consider scheduling follow-up sessions to reinforce and build upon the skills learned.

This structured activity can help participants gain a deeper understanding of their internal dynamics and develop healthier ways to mediating internal conflicts during crises, ultimately preventing the Persona from resorting to addictive behaviors to quiet the discord.



# Appendix

## List, Assessments, and Techniques

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- ESSENTIALS FOR RECOVERY
- PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY
- HOLD FAST
- SHADOW WORK
  - Model
  - Process
  - Strategies
  - Journal
  - 50-Prompt Questions
- DREAMWORK
- ACTIVE IMAGINATION
- INTEGRATION
  - Naming Sub-personalities
  - Dialogue with Parts
  - Role Rehearsal
- MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS
- MOUNT RECOVERY MODEL
- EPIPHANY: AUTHENTIC SELF MODEL
- TEN COMMANDMENTS OF RECOVERY
- CRISIS HOTLINES – Contact Information

# Essentials for Recovery

## CHANGE YOUR WORLD

- ✓ Know your TRIGGERS:
  - As you identify them – AVOID AT ALL COST!
- ✓ End ALL RELATIONSHIPS that promote your addiction:
  - Change phone number and social media accounts.
  - Be very guarded about who you let have this new information.
- ✓ ENVIRONMENTS must be safe from addiction triggers:
  - Drug/Gambling Free Cars.
  - Drug/Gambling Free Homes.
  - Even if it's family - DO NOT LET THEM IN IF DRUGS OR DRINKING!
- ✓ Have 3-Emergency Contacts for Relapse Prevention:
  - Stable Recovery-People willing to let you contact them Night or Day.
  - Have numbers and addresses.
  - If one is not available, reach out to the next on the list.

## FIND RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION

- ❖ Public transit, private car, bicycle, or walk:
  - Only look for housing where one of these means of transportation is available.
  - Make sure your transportation will get you from home and to work on time.

## GET A STEADY JOB

- One that takes income taxes out and pays in checks or direct deposit:
  - No “cash only” or “work on demand”.
- Have a “Generic” application filled out that you carry with you:
  - This will be your resource information when applying for jobs.
  - You can get one from the unemployment office or just ask for one from any business.
  - Use the information to fill out applications around town.

## GET A HANDLE ON YOUR FINANCES

- Follow a simple basic budget:
  - Always take out ‘Housing Costs’ first.
  - Then transportation costs.
  - Followed by your need for groceries.
  - Ask for help if you are having difficulty making a budget.

## GET A PLACE TO LIVE

- Secure affordable housing away from old people-places-things:
  - No ‘couch surfing’.
  - No living out of your car, a tent, or someone's camper.

- Preferably find a ‘Sober Living’ home for your first year of recovery.

## SET A SCHEDULE

- Schedule every minute of your day and night:
  - Follow your schedule religiously.
  - Plan activities for any ‘relaxation’ or ‘fun’ times.
  - No just scheduling “free time”; always have a plan.
  - Keep your schedule busy; no time for boredom.

## PLAN A YEARLY CALANDER

- Have addiction-free Holidays – plan activities for these times.
- Anticipate how to handle upcoming birthday parties or other celebrations.
- Prepare to grieve during anniversary days, comfort yourself without substances.

# Personality Development Inventory

Here are five yes/no questions for each of Erikson's stages of psychosocial development. If you answer 3 or more “**No**” in a given stage, then you may be struggling with this issue.

Trust vs. Mistrust:

- Do you feel like you can trust others to meet your needs? (Yes/No)
- Have you kept away from any major disruptions to your sense of safety or security? (Yes/No)
- Are you comfortable asking for help when you need it? (Yes/No)
- Do you trust others easily without suspicion? (Yes/No)
- Have you had positive experiences with others that have strengthened your trust in them? (Yes/No)

Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt:

- Do you feel comfortable making decisions for yourself? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to express your needs and desires? (Yes/No)
- Do you handle criticism or negative feedback very well? (Yes/No)
- Do you accept responsibility for your actions and refrain from blaming others? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to learn from your mistakes and move forward? (Yes/No)

### Initiative vs. Guilt:

- Are you comfortable trying new things and taking risks? (Yes/No)
- Do you feel like you have a sense of purpose or direction in life? (Yes/No)
- Do you handle failure or setbacks very well? (Yes/No)
- Do you take responsibility for your actions, and avoid blaming others? (Yes/No)
- Do you try again even when you repeatedly fail? (Yes/No)

### Industry vs. Inferiority:

- Do you feel a sense of pride or accomplishment when you complete a task? (Yes/No)
- Do you handle competition or comparison with others in a positive manner? (Yes/No)
- Have you avoided having any major setbacks or failures in your pursuits? (Yes/No)
- Do you feel confident in your abilities? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to take on challenges and persevere through difficult times? (Yes/No)

### Identity vs. Role Confusion:

- Do you have a clear understanding of your values and beliefs? (Yes/No)
- Do you avoid comparing yourself with others? (Yes/No)
- Have you remained confident about who you are even when faced with major changes in your life? (Yes/No)



- Are you comfortable expressing your true self to others?  
(Yes/No)
- Are you secure in who you are and what you stand for?  
(Yes/No)

#### Intimacy vs. Isolation:

- Are you comfortable being vulnerable and open with others? (Yes/No)
- Do you have stress-free romantic relationships? (Yes/No)
- Have you avoided any major losses or separations in your relationships? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to maintain close relationships with others?  
(Yes/No)
- Are you able to balance your own needs and desires with those of your partner or loved ones? (Yes/No)

#### Generativity vs. Stagnation:

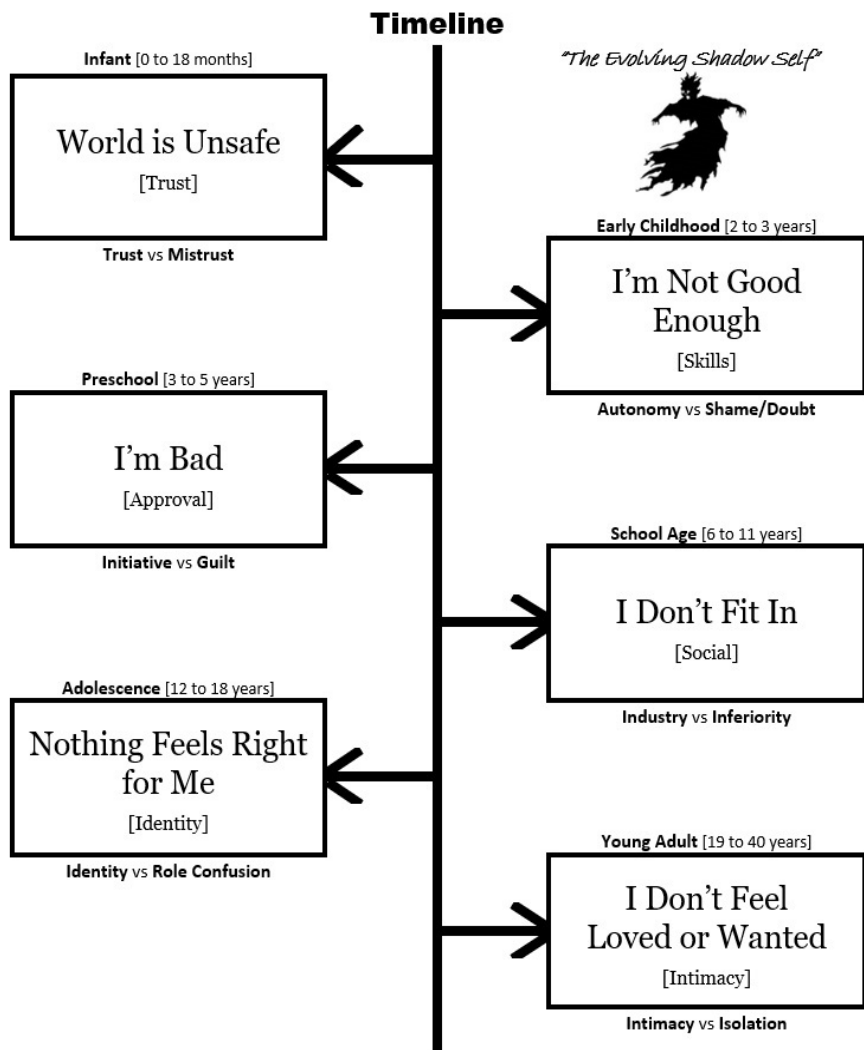
- Do you have goals and aspirations for the future? (Yes/No)
- Do you contribute to your community or society at large?  
(Yes/No)
- Do you feel a sense of purpose or fulfillment in your work or personal life? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to balance your own needs and desires with those of your family, career, or other obligations?  
(Yes/No)
- Are you able to adapt to change and new challenges?  
(Yes/No)

## Integrity vs. Despair:

- Do you feel satisfied with the life you've lived so far?  
(Yes/No)
- Are you free from any unresolved issues or regrets from your past that continue to bother you? (Yes/No)
- Do you feel like you've made a meaningful contribution to the world? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to find meaning or purpose in your life, despite any challenges or setbacks? (Yes/No)
- Are you able to accept the inevitability of death and dying?  
(Yes/No)

## Psycho-Social Development – scoring feedback

[Circle Issues of Struggle from Scoring]



## POSSIBLE CAUSES

If areas of concern were found, you can explore further the possible source of the problem when developing through those psycho-social stages. There are a variety of environmental or life events that can contribute to a failure in achieving any particular phase. Here are some situations covering each stage that often strongly impact the outcome of personality development, and that will help your self-examination into the past.

### Trust vs. Mistrust:

- Neglect or abuse by primary caregivers.
- Inconsistency in caregiving, such as frequent changes in caregivers or unpredictable responses to the child's needs.
- Traumatic experiences, such as hospitalization or a natural disaster.

### Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt:

- Overly restrictive or controlling parenting.
- Overly critical or punitive responses to the child's attempts to assert independence.
- Traumatic experiences, such as a serious accident or illness.

### Initiative vs. Guilt:

- Overly harsh punishment or criticism for mistakes or accidents.
- Lack of opportunities for exploration and play.
- Traumatic experiences, such as abuse or witnessing violence.

### Industry vs. Inferiority:

- Negative feedback or criticism from teachers or peers.
- Lack of opportunities for success or mastery in academic or extracurricular activities.
- Traumatic experiences, such as bullying or social rejection.

### Identity vs. Role Confusion:

- Pressure to conform to rigid gender, cultural, or societal expectations.
- Lack of support or opportunities for exploring different identities and roles.
- Traumatic experiences, such as sexual assault or bullying based on identity.

### Intimacy vs. Isolation:

- Traumatic experiences, such as rejection or abuse in past relationships.
- Difficulty establishing close relationships due to social or emotional barriers.
- Lack of opportunities for socializing and meeting new people.

### Generativity vs. Stagnation:

- Lack of opportunities for career or personal growth.
- Negative life events, such as job loss or divorce.
- Feelings of social isolation or lack of purpose.

## Integrity vs. Despair:

- Lack of opportunities for reflection or resolution of past conflicts.
- Chronic physical or mental illness that affects the quality of life.
- Fear or anxiety about death or dying, often related to a lack of acceptance, or meaning in life.

# Hold Fast

## Brief Overview – 3 methods to grasp

### 1. Grounding Techniques [Thought – Deep Breathing – Body Scan]

- 5-4-3-2-1 Technique: This simple exercise can help distract from negative thoughts by focusing on the immediate environment. Identify 5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.
- Deep Breathing: Practice deep breathing exercises. Count slowly to four as you breathe in (through your nose), hold for four, and then exhale (blowing out the mouth) for four.
- Body Scan Meditation Routine: Sit comfortably. Take a deep breath in through your nose and out through your mouth. As you exhale, close your eyes. Notice how your body feels. Starting from the top of your head, gently scan down through your body. Observe any areas of comfort or discomfort without trying to change anything. Continue scanning evenly through each part of your body, all the way down to your toes.

### 2. Challenge Negative Thoughts

[Stop Thought – Switch Thought]

- Interrupt Negative Thoughts: When you catch yourself engaging in negative self-talk, use a thought-stopping

technique. This could be saying "stop" out loud or visualizing a stop sign.

- **Redirect Attention:** Shift your focus to a more positive or neutral activity, like visual-mental imagery, listening to uplifting music, or engaging in a hobby.

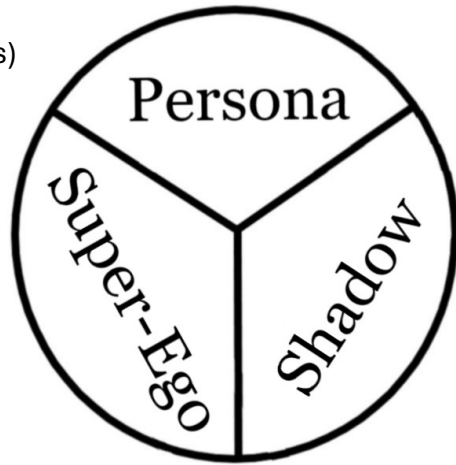
### 3. Cognitive Restructuring [with Mirror Affirmations]

- **Identify Negative Thoughts:** Recognize the negative or distorted thoughts about yourself. These could be related to self-worth, abilities, appearance, or any other aspect of self-perception.
- **Create Positive Affirmations:** Develop positive, affirming statements that counteract these negative thoughts. For example, if you often think, "I am not good enough," you might create an affirmation like, "I am capable and worthy of success."
- **Use the Mirror:** Stand in front of a mirror, make eye contact with yourself, and say the positive affirmations out loud. The act of looking at yourself while affirming positive beliefs can reinforce the message and make it more impactful.
- **Consistency:** Repeat this practice daily, ideally multiple times a day. Consistency helps reinforce the new, positive thoughts and beliefs.
- **Reflect and Adjust:** Reflect on how the affirmations make you feel over time. Adjust them as needed to ensure they remain relevant and powerful for you.



## Ego State of Functioning

- **Persona** - social personalities
- **Super-Ego** - critical inner voice
- **Shadow** - painful past  
(and primal desires)

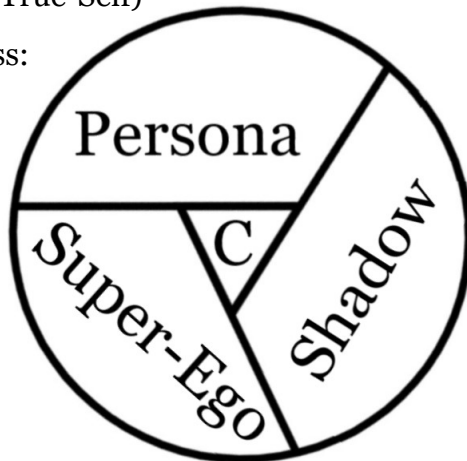


## Emergence of Intellectual Humility

**C** = \***Consciousness** (True-Self)

**HOPE** of \*Consciousness:

Honest  
Open  
Peaceful  
Empathy



**\*Consciousness** [*Inner Leader and Self-Counselor*] It serves to mediate between the Persona, Super-Ego, and Shadow, fostering balance and reconciliation of internal conflicts.

## SHADOW WORK PROCESS

1. Review your childhood
2. Become aware of your shadow
3. Don't shame the shadow
4. Use your triggers
5. Observe without judgment

## SHADOW WORK STRATEGIES

- Pay attention to your reactions
- Look for recurring patterns
- Explore your dreams
- Reflect on your childhood experiences
- Practice mindfulness

## SHADOW WORK JOURNAL FORMAT

- Situation:
  - *A troubling thought or feeling you are currently experiencing.*
  - *Use a prompt supplied at the end of this section that causes strong emotions.*
- Examine Emotions:
  - *What am I feeling?*
  - *Why am I feeling this way?*
  - *Where did this feeling come from?*
  - *Have I felt this way before?*
- Realization:
  - *You see a similar situation in your past.*
  - *You 'connect the dots' to why you are reacting so strongly to this event.*
- Change:
  - *How can I take this understanding and improve myself?*
  - *What can I try to do next time this happens?*

## 50-PROMPT QUESTIONS

- What memories from my childhood and teenage years still affect me today?
- What were some of the significant events in my childhood?
- What were some of the things that I was not allowed to do or express when I was young?
- What was the emotional climate of my household growing up?
- How was conflict or stress handled at home growing up, and how did that affect me?
- What parts of my personality or behaviors do I blame on my childhood or when I was a teenager?
- What were some of the significant losses or traumas that I experienced when I was younger?
- How did I cope with problems I faced in school or at home?
- What impact did my childhood or teenage experiences have on my relationships?
- What were some of the significant relationships I had growing up, and how did they affect me?
- What did I feel I needed as a child or teenager that I did not receive?
- What was my own sense of self or identity I had as a teenager?
- What were some of the significant conflicts or struggles I faced when I was young?

- What negative self-talk or beliefs do I still carry from my childhood and teenage years?
- How did I learn to deal with difficult emotions as a child or teenager, and how has that affected me as an adult?
- How did I learn to express or suppress my emotions?
- How have my childhood and teenage experiences affected my self-worth and self-esteem?
- What were some of the significant transitions or changes that I experienced, and how did they affect me?
- How did my childhood and teenage experiences impact my relationship with authority figures?
- What are some of the things that I wish I could tell my younger self?
- What emotions do I still need to process from when I was younger?
- How did my teenage experiences affect my sense of belonging and identity?
- What are some of the things that I feel I missed out on or wish I had experienced?
- When was the first time I felt like I didn't belong?
- What were the unspoken rules in my family growing up?
- What was my relationship with my parents like? How did that affect me?
- What was my experience with love and relationships growing up? How has that affected my relationships now?

- Did I ever feel like I had to hide or suppress parts of myself growing up? What were those parts?
- How did I cope with difficult emotions as a child and teenager? Are those coping mechanisms still present in my life today?
- What were some major milestones or turning points in my teenage years? How did those experiences shape me?
- How did my experiences with bullying or peer pressure affect me growing up? Are there still lasting effects?
- What were my dreams and desires growing up? How have they changed over time?
- How have my experiences with childhood trauma and neglect affected my relationship with myself and others?
- What are some of my earliest memories, and how do they make me feel?
- What are some specific events or experiences from my childhood that still affect me today?
- What was my relationship with my parents like growing up? How did that affect my sense of self?
- How did my childhood experiences shape my current beliefs and values?
- What was my experience with love and relationships growing up? How has that affected my relationships now?
- Did I ever feel like I had to hide or suppress parts of myself growing up? What were those parts?

- What emotions come up for me when I think about my childhood? How do I usually deal with these emotions?
- What is one experience from my childhood that I have been avoiding thinking about? Why do I think that is?
- How have my childhood experiences impacted the way I see myself and the world around me?
- What parts of myself do I try to hide from others? Why do I feel the need to hide them?
- How did my relationship with my siblings, if any, affect me growing up? Are there any unresolved issues or emotions related to those relationships?
- How did my experiences with school shape my sense of who I am?
- How did my childhood experiences with religion or spirituality shape my beliefs and values?
- What was my experience with body image growing up?
- What are some of the emotions that I tend to avoid feeling? How can I begin to work on feeling and processing those emotions?
- How do I deal with failure or rejection? Are there any childhood experiences that have affected the way I handle those situations?
- How did my childhood experiences shape my views on money and financial stability?

# Dreamwork

Dreams provide a platform for the shadow to express itself and attempt to disclose what we have been burying deep inside our psyche. During sleep, the unconscious mind manifests these shadow elements in symbolic or metaphorical ways through dreams. Pay attention to the imagery, emotions, and events present in the dream, and decipher the messages for use during the Active Imagination process.

●	DATE and TITLE:
	DREAM:
●	PEOPLE:
	PLACES:
	THINGS:
	EMOTIONS:
	TOPICS:
	EVENTS:
	PERSONAL ASSOCIATIONS:
	FOOTNOTES:
●	

# Active Imagination

## PREPARATION

- Find a location where you can be uninterrupted with your thoughts.

## INVOCATION

- Within your mind call up the imagery, emotions, and events that were present in your dreams.
- Wait and watch this image in your mind; when something moves without your intentional thought then this is your subconscious engaging in dialogue.

## DIALOGUE and EXPLORATION

- In your mind talk with the images or figures that are present.
- This involves observing, questioning, and actively engaging with the unconscious material.

## AMPLIFICATION and REFLECTION

- Consider the material you examined and find the potential meaning of the images or figures that emerged.

## INTEGRATION and APPLICATION

- Explore how insights gained can be applied to your personal growth, relationships, or problem-solving.



# Integration

## NAMING SUB-PERSONALITIES

In your journal make a bus seating chart to help visualize and integrate the different players for your inner dialogue:

1. Draw a bus seating chart with enough rows to accommodate the number of sub-personalities you would like to explore. Leave space for labeling each seat.
- Divide the seating chart into three sections: Front (Super-Ego/Authority figures), Middle (Adult Personas), and Back (Shadow/Traumatized Children).
  - Start with the front section (Super-Ego/Authority figures). Think about the critical voices or authority figures that have influenced you in the past. These can be parents, teachers, or anyone whose words and actions shaped your beliefs and behaviors. Write down their names or role titles (e.g., strict parent, demanding teacher) on the seats.
  - Move to the middle section (Adult Personas). Consider the various roles you play in your daily life, such as father/mother, husband/wife, manager, worker, neighbor, son/daughter, or friend. Write down the names or role titles.
  - Finally, focus on the back section (Shadow/Traumatized Children). Reflect on the moments or experiences in your past that have caused emotional pain, fear, or distress. These can be instances of humiliation, harsh punishment, or family crises. Write their assigned names and titles based on each moment or experience that caused the trauma.

SEATING CHART FORMAT:

Front of Bus	
Driver↑	Door→
#2	#1
#4	#3
#6	#5
#8	#7
#10	#9
#12	#11
#14	#13
#16	#15
#18	#17
#20	#19
#22	#21
#24	#23

Take a moment to observe the seating chart as a representation of your inner world. Notice the distribution of names and roles across the bus, symbolizing the different sub-personalities within you. By using the bus seating chart as a visualization tool, you can gain a clearer understanding of the dynamics within yourself of the different players during your inner dialogue process.

# Dialogue with Parts

*[A structured self-talk process]*

## BASIC GUIDELINES:

- Every sub-personality has a good intention.
    1. Even those from your trauma and neglect.
  - Learn about the sub-personality's positive protective intentions (i.e., avoiding bad situations from happening to you again).
  - Whichever critical Super-Ego sub-personality is in control (driving your bus), ask permission to access the Shadow parts so that the critical voice doesn't interfere.
- 

## DIALOGUE STEPS:

- Identify the sub-personalities that are present.
  - Which is causing problems?
- Follow your internal power structure.
  - Work with sub-personality 'in charge' first.
    - Always get their permission before working with any Persona or Shadow sub-personality.
    - After permission is granted, you may have to ask Super-Ego part to "step back".
  - Next work with the sub-personality causing the problem.
    - Get to know them.

- Defuse the strong thoughts and feelings coming from this sub-personality.
- Ask questions with true curiosity and compassion.
  - Like you're talking to a lost and scared 7-year-old child.
    - "What's wrong?"
    - "Tell me more about it?"
- Befriend the sub-personality.
  - Develop a friendship through curiosity and compassion.
    - "How did you get this job?" (responsibility burden to remain aware of past trauma)
    - "How has it been going?"
    - "If you didn't have to do this job, what would you do instead?"
    - "How old are you?" or "What year do you think this is?" (this helps uncover the trauma event)
    - "What should I call you?" (asking for a name to go by)
- What does this sub-personality fear?
  - "What could I do to help you?"
  - "What do you think will happen if you just quit being responsible for this burden?"

*[You're not doing this process to look for answers or fix a specific problem; healing by integration will take place through your understanding of the source of your pain.]*

# Role Rehearsal

## GROUP THERAPY ACTIVITY:

### Internal Dialog Role Rehearsal

#### Objective:

To practice and understand the internal dialog between different aspects of the psyche (Persona, Super-Ego, and Shadow) with guidance from the central consciousness (group leader serving as self-leadership of the central consciousness).

#### Participants:

- 3 participants (each representing Persona, Super-Ego, and Shadow)
- Group leader (acting as central consciousness/self-leadership)

#### Materials:

- Chairs arranged in a circle
- Notepads and pens for each participant
- A whiteboard or flip chart for group leader to jot down key points

#### Activity Structure:

7. **Introduction** (10 minutes)
  - Explain the purpose of the activity: to practice internal dialog and understand the dynamics between Persona, Super-Ego, and Shadow.

- Briefly introduce each aspect of the psyche:
  - **Persona:** The public personality, how we present ourselves to the world.
  - **Super-Ego:** The inner critical voice, upholding societal standards and morals.
  - **Shadow:** The complex trauma and neglected aspects from childhood (Primal wants, desires, and fears.)

## 8. **Role Assignment and Scenario Setup** (5 minutes)

- Assign each participant to a role (Persona, Super-Ego, Shadow).
- Present a common life situation/topic for discussion. Example scenario: “Receiving unexpected news of a loved one’s severe illness.”
  - **Persona:** Struggling to maintain a composed and supportive exterior.
  - **Super-Ego:** Overwhelmed with guilt and self-blame for not being able to do more.
  - **Shadow:** Triggered past traumas and fears, leading to feelings of helplessness and despair.

## 9. **Role Rehearsal** (30 minutes)

- Participants take turns expressing their thoughts and feelings from their assigned roles.
- The group leader mediates, guiding the conversation and ensuring each aspect is heard.
- Example dialog prompts:

- **Persona:** “I need to stay strong and supportive, but I feel like I’m falling apart inside.”
- **Super-Ego:** “You should have been more attentive. This is partly your fault.”
- **Shadow:** “This reminds me of the time I was abandoned. I can’t handle this pain.”

## 10. **Guided Mediation by Central Consciousness**

(Group Leader) (20 minutes)

- The group leader (self-leadership) steps in to mediate the dialog.
- Acknowledge each aspect's concerns and desires.
- Facilitate a balanced and integrative approach to managing the crisis without resorting to addictive/destructive behavior.
- **Example mediation:** “Persona, it’s okay to feel vulnerable. Super-Ego, we all have limitations and cannot control everything. Shadow, your pain is valid, and we are here to support you through it. Let’s find a way to work together and handle this crisis constructively.”

## 11. **Reflection and Discussion** (20 minutes)

- Open the floor for participants to share their experiences and insights from the role rehearsal.
- Discuss how the internal dialog felt and what they learned about each aspect of their psyche.

- Encourage sharing of personal takeaways and how they can apply this understanding of “self-leadership” in their own lives.

## **12. Conclusion (5 minutes)**

- Summarize the key points discussed during the session.
- Emphasize the importance of ongoing internal dialog and self-leadership.
- Provide resources for further practice and reflection, such as journaling prompts or follow-up activities.

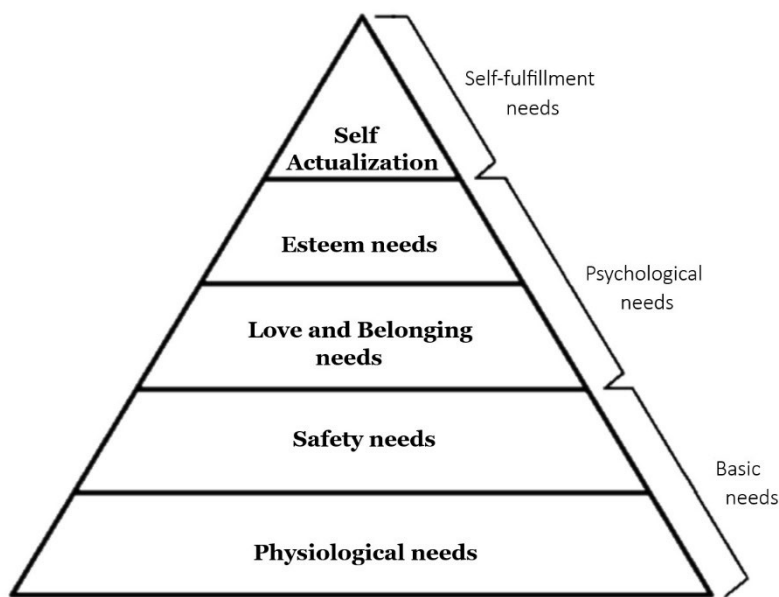
### **Follow-up:**

Encourage participants to journal about their experiences and continue practicing internal dialog in their daily lives. Consider scheduling follow-up sessions to reinforce and build upon the skills learned.

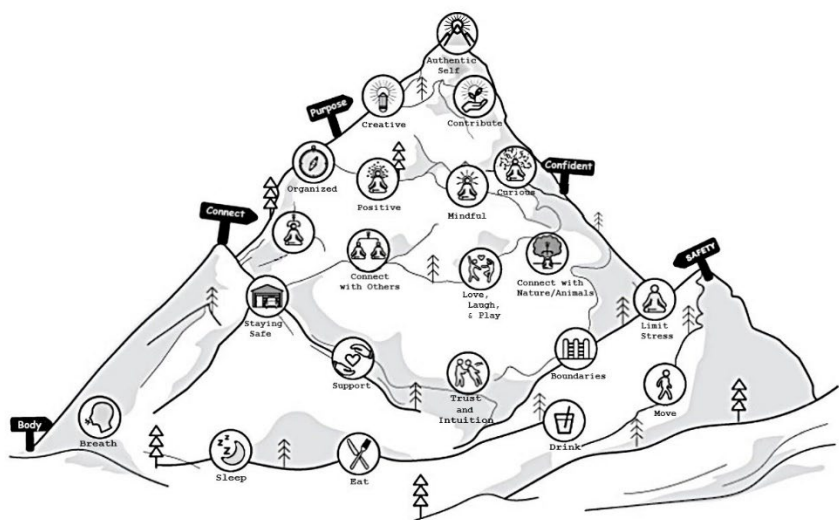
This structured activity can help participants gain a deeper understanding of their internal dynamics and develop healthier ways to mediating internal conflicts during crises, ultimately preventing the Persona from resorting to addictive behaviors to quiet the discord.



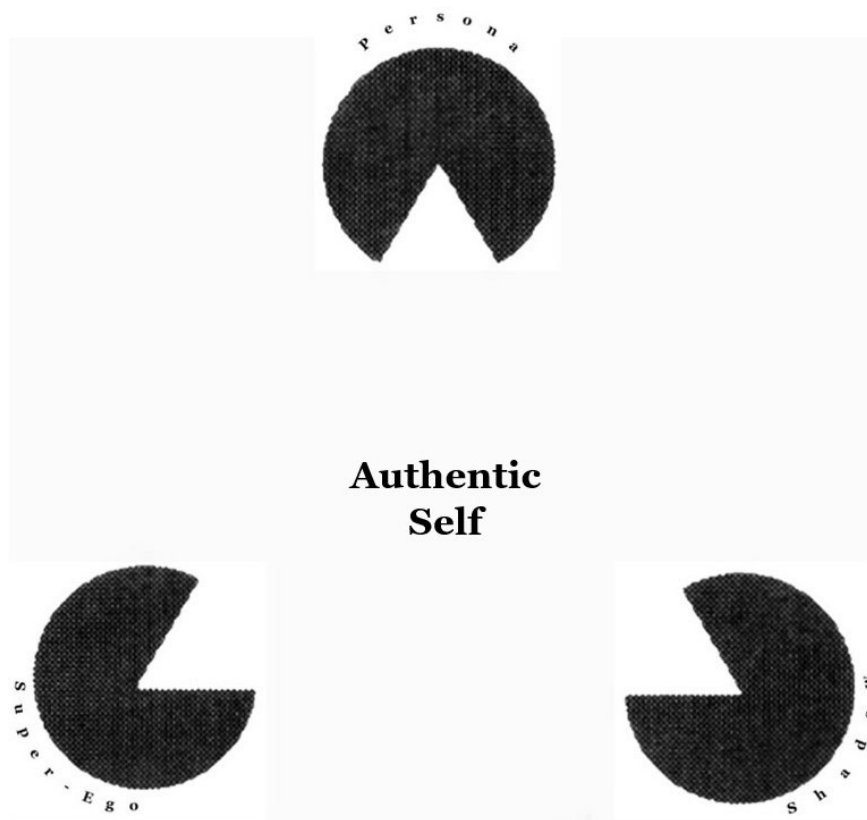
# Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



# Mount Recovery



# Epiphany of Authentic Self



The importance of recognizing and experiencing an epiphany becomes apparent following the work you have performed with the Programmed Approach to Happiness (PATH), and bringing your inner struggles into balance. After addressing issues of the shadow self, and engaging in the process work of the personas and the sub-personalities associated with the super-ego, it is time to see the emergence of your 'Authentic Self'.



## TEN COMMANDMENTS OF RECOVERY

- 1.** End all addiction-related relationships (new phone number - DO NOT SHARE)
- 2.** All environments free of any addiction triggers
- 3.** Find reliable transportation
- 4.** Get a Job (paycheck or direct deposit ONLY)
- 5.** Budget all Money (on paper and live by)
- 6.** Secure affordable housing (Sober Living preferred)
- 7.** Set a schedule for every minute of every day (sleep included - no free time)
- 8.** Plan a yearly calendar (anticipate events so as addiction-free)
- 9.** NO SOCIAL MEDIA during 1st year (maybe longer)
- 10.** No romantic relationships during 1st year (maybe longer)

[ANTICIPATE! No more excuses – No more, “it just happened”]



# Facilitator's Guide to PATH

## Meetings

### *How to Conduct a 60-Minute PATH Support Group Meeting*

**Purpose:** This guide is designed to help facilitators conduct 60-minute support group meetings for individuals seeking to heal from childhood traumas and overcome addictions using the principles outlined in "PATH: Programmed Approach to Happiness."

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#### 1. Preparation

- **Facilitator Training:** Ensure facilitators are familiar with the content and principles of the "PATH" handbook.
- **Meeting Space:** Secure a comfortable, private location with adequate seating and minimal distractions.
- **Materials:** Make sure each participant has a copy of "PATH", along with any necessary writing materials.

#### 2. Meeting Structure

##### 1. Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)

- Greet participants and introduce the facilitator(s).
- Briefly explain the purpose and format of the meeting.

- Emphasize confidentiality and the importance of a safe, non-judgmental environment.

## **2. Opening Reflection or Meditation (5 minutes)**

- Begin with a short meditation, breathing exercise, or inspirational reading from the "PATH" handbook to center the group.

## **3. Reading and Brief Discussion (15 minutes)**

- Select a brief passage or key points from the chapter in "PATH" to read aloud.
- Facilitate a short discussion around the reading. Encourage participants to share their initial thoughts and feelings related to the text.

## **4. Activity or Exercise (15 minutes)**

- Engage the group in a concise activity or exercise from the "PATH" handbook that promotes self-reflection and inner transformation.
- Examples include a improving on journal use, practice grounding techniques, or conduct internal dialog role rehearsal exercise.

## **5. Sharing and Support (15 minutes)**

- Open the floor for participants to share their personal stories, challenges, and successes.

- Encourage a supportive atmosphere where participants can offer empathy and encouragement to one another.
- Remind participants to respect each other's time and to speak from their own experiences.
- Present in a “Before – During – After” format when sharing their personal accounts.

## 6. Closing Reflection (5 minutes)

- End with a closing reflection, gratitude circle, or another brief meditation.
- Summarize key takeaways from the meeting and provide any announcements or reminders.

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## 3. Additional Tips for Facilitators

- **Active Listening:** Practice active listening and validate each participant’s contributions.
- **Inclusivity:** Ensure that everyone has a chance to speak and that no one dominates the conversation.
- **Boundaries:** Set clear boundaries to maintain a safe and respectful environment.
- **Follow-up:** Encourage participants to apply the principles from the meeting in their daily lives and offer resources for additional support if needed.

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## **Example 60-Minute Meeting Agenda**

- 1. Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)**
  - Brief welcome and introduction to the meeting.
- 2. Opening Reflection or Meditation (5 minutes)**
  - Short meditation or reading.
- 3. Reading and Brief Discussion (15 minutes)**
  - Read a selected passage and have a short discussion.
- 4. Activity or Exercise (15 minutes)**
  - Conduct a concise activity or exercise.
- 5. Sharing and Support (15 minutes)**
  - Allow participants to share their experiences.
- 6. Closing Reflection (5 minutes)**
  - Conclude with a reflection and any final thoughts.

By adhering to this 60-minute structure, the meetings remain concise and focused, aligning with the format and duration of typical support group meetings.



# Crisis Hotlines

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## **Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline**

(800) 422-4453

## **Crisis Text Line**

Text HOME to 741741

## **National Domestic Violence Hotline**

(800) 799-7233

## **National Sexual Assault Hotline**

(800) 656-4673

## **National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**

988

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** (Options for Deaf and Hard of Hearing)

For TTY Users: Use your preferred relay service or dial 711 then 988

## **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services**

Administration National Helpline

(800) 662-4357

## **Veterans Crisis Line**

988, then PRESS 1

Text 838255



## About the Author

David N. Russell is an Internationally Certified Co-Occurring Disorders Professional - Diplomate who specializes in addiction recovery and mental health counseling. His post-graduate education was originally in Neuropsychology, after having worked 23 years in Occupational Therapy, focusing on the treatment of traumatic brain injuries. Later, changed his career to Forensic Psychology, where he worked as a Drug Court Advisor to the 14th Judicial District in Arkansas and eventually became a Substance Abuse Program Leader for the Arkansas Department of Corrections, Area-2. He was also certified by the Arkansas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training as a Specialized Law Enforcement Instructor. With over 15 years of experience in this field, he has helped a multitude of individuals overcome their challenges and transform their lives from more than addiction alone.

David holds a master's degree in counseling psychology from Liberty University, a second master's degree in occupational therapy from Belmont University, and a third master's degree in clinical psychology at Forest Institute of Professional Psychology (where he was also a doctoral candidate). Following his reluctant retirement from the State of Arkansas due to partial paralysis from spinal stenosis, he received two successful spinal surgeries and a total hip replacement regaining limited ability to walk. He

remains current with his credentials as a certified substance abuse counselor for co-occurring disorders.

His passion for supporting those in need stems from his personal journey of overcoming mental illness, addiction, multiple arrests, and finding renewed purpose in life. Having experienced the struggles firsthand, David brings empathy and understanding to his work, providing practical strategies and insights to empower others on their own paths to recovery.

His therapeutic approach is grounded in Jungian Psychoanalysis and heavily influenced by Internal Family Systems Therapy. It's from these two schools of thought this book is written, as an extra tool for others who struggle with Personality Disorders/Traits feeling forever trapped by addiction and the legal system. Unfortunately, it seems more cost-effective to build new prisons for controlling criminal behavior than to spend the money on intensive mental health treatment, which may or may not be able to prevent recidivism. As a result, he is dedicated to raising awareness about addiction within the criminal justice system and promoting holistic approaches to healing during recovery. You can learn more about David and his work by visiting his website at [www.innerpursuitofhappiness.com](http://www.innerpursuitofhappiness.com)

