Romancing the Brain in Recovery
Conflict Resolution in Recovery and
Relapse Prevention

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Training Goals

✓ Be more thoughtful about reactions to conflict.

✓ Develop new tools and concepts in understanding your own reactions to conflict and alternative methods.

✓ Demonstrate strengthened impulse control when faced with conflict.

✓ Be more present with others as you are communicating in conflict.

✓ Develop a deeper understanding of your own “baggage” and “tender points” in conflict situations with a new ability to heal.
Note Taking

Notes for Both Sides of the Brain Handout:

- Acknowledges the left & right sides of the brain
- Minds wander - so you are encouraged to use the left side for your personal list or doodling - or whatever.
- The right side of the paper is good for note taking from the class session.
Your **Limbic System** is located approximately in the center of your brain.

- It is the part of the brain that most people use most often in conflict.
- It is the oldest system of your brain – the reptilian brain.
- In pre-historic times, it was the largest mass area of your brain.
Conflict Resolution in Recovery

BUT!! LIMBIC

DON’T YOU EVER!

Absolutes

Should

NO!

you better!

If you ever...

EVER

ALWAYS

Fight

COULD

NEVER

A Component of NAADAC’s Life-Long Learning Series
Role Play

The mother/father picks up the 7-year-old child at the close of the school or work day. The child immediately begins asking the parent to go to McDonald’s or for pizza or anything else that a 7-year-old might do. The parent scolds the child by saying: “That is not going to happen. I don’t have money (or time). We’ve already gone there this week, etc.” The child acts out, wanting his/her way. The parent escalates by saying: “I am the parent, and this is the way we are going to do it!”
How is This Scene Familiar?

• Is this scene familiar to you?

• Maybe in other families that you know?

• How do you think the child feels…?
  – Listened to?
  – Respected?
  – Like he/she has Options?
  – Nurtured
  – Capable
  – Loved

• What is the child learning?

• How will this scenario develop year after year…early teens…teens…and beyond?
The parent and child are at home. The child receives a snack of crackers and milk as the parent prepares dinner. The child spills milk on the floor. The parent sees this and becomes angry, pointing his/her finger, and saying something like: “How many times have I told you not to put your milk so close to you! Look what you have done! You are always making messes, and I just cleaned this floor!”
How is This Scene Familiar?

What does this tell you?

What do you want to do when a person points a figure at you?

What does your brain say to you when someone points a finger at you?

What is the child learning?
Spontaneous Role Play

- “Don’t you ever do that to me again!”
- “You never remember our anniversary!”
- “I like your skirt – but…..those pants!”
  - (Getting our Big BUT in the way!)
- “Where is your report?”
- “You’d better….get that done…do that…”
- “If you ever…..”
- “Don’t you know better than that?”
- “I don’t even have time to…..”
The cortex located in the front part of the brain.

- It functions are decision-making, problem solving, creativity and discovery.
- It can be trained to be mindful.
- It reacts positively to options.
- It is like your internal computer.
- It helps you to sort, process and store information.
Conflict Resolution in Recovery

Cortex

Let Us Find Another...

I believe...

Will you

YES!

Often

Consider

Stand Still

I wonder

Let's Discover!

Thank you

Please

Back-up the Train

Is it possible

I would like
The Cortex - Discovery

- We learn impulse control
- Maturity and imagination develops
- Decision making – judgment – reasoning
- Creativity and discovery
- Problem solving
- Romance develops into maturity and commitment
• One helpful skill to learn is the ability to stand still in the moment.

• In standing still in the moment, you learn to stop or slow down your thoughts and conflict process by asking yourself 3 questions:
  – Is what I am going to say (words and phrases) and the way I am going to say it (tone, inflection and gestures) going to build the relationship up?
  – Is it going to keep the relationship level?
  – Is it going to tear the relationship down?
Expressing anger in an unhealthy manner causes the person doing it:

- to have increased blood pressure
- to have increased heart rate
- to increase the adrenaline level
- to cause a rush to the brain

Example…”going limbic”

- What was my body experiencing?
- Recovery and a rush of endorphins from anger – Do they match?
- Anger rushes are destructive to both (all) persons on the receiving end of the anger
Role Play

• The parent begins the interaction by getting down to eye level with child and asking, in a calm and kind voice, “How was your day today?” When the child starts to fuss over what he/she wants, the parent reaches out and gives a positive touch. This helps to calm the child, and it connects the child to the parent.

• As the parent, offer several suggestions. For example: “We went to McDonald’s earlier this week, so I cannot afford (or do not want) to go there again tonight. These are the choices, and please pick the one you like best. We can go home and have leftovers, we can go home and make a grilled cheese sandwich with salad or we can go home and have chicken and salad. Which do you want, honey?”
Let’s go back to the episode with the spilled milk.

Instead of yelling or berating the child for the spilled milk, the parent responds by saying, “Honey, I see you spilled your milk. I’m going to go to the kitchen and get something to clean it up. I’ll be right back.” The parent brings back a damp cloth and a dry cloth. The parent shows the child how to clean up the spilled milk with the damp cloth, and gives it to the child to do. While watching the child, the parent points out any extra film on the floor that needs to be wiped up. The parent then demonstrates for the child how to dry the floor with the dry cloth.
Debrief...What was Different?

• Most of us learn to make haste in a crisis or (in what seems like a crisis). For example, do this, do that, don’t do this or don’t do that. Afterwards, we have to clean up the damage done by hasty words and behaviors.

• Using the cortex teaches us how to think through a situation, stop ourselves, and ask. "Is what I am going to say and the way in which I am going to say it going to build the relationship up, keep it level or tear it down?"

• Recall the example of the "cortex" parent. That parent now has an "emotional bank account" in which to grow and use, when it is necessary.
• It is not any different in adult-to-adult, romantic, working or other types of relationships.

• This also sets the foundation for discussions and clear, respectful communication between parent and child.

• Other thoughts or ideas this gives you?
Being Deliberate

• Phrases like “Thank you,” “Please,” “I am sorry” and “I did not intend to …” give people more power in their lives or diminishes their power?

• Words or phrases like the following add what to a conversation?
  – I believe…
  – I wonder…
  – Let’s discover…
  – I would like…
  – Consider…
  – Often…

• Consider how this change could effect what you would expect to see in other people (for example; work colleagues, family and friends).
Phrases that “Romance” the Brain

• Is it possible…?
• Have you had an opportunity to…?
• I wonder what would happen if…?
• Help me understand…
• I’m confused, I thought…
• Is this ok with you…?
• I’m curious about…
• Please explain to me…
• My pleasure to…
• Please…
• Thank you…
• May I have permission…?
• Please tell me what you mean by this.
• When you have a minute, would you please…?
Phrases that “Romance” the Brain (cont)

- I am sorry.
- Is there another way I could (say/do/explain this)?
- Let us discover/consider/believe…
- Often, this is a misunderstood (action/behavior/word)…
More “Romancing” the Brain

• Will you agree to this…?

• I would like to find a solution, together.

• Would you consider…?

• I would like to assist you…

• Your thoughts?

• Please see handout
More “Romancing” the Brain

- I feel _____ when this behavior _____ occurs and then I want to _____ . I request this _____ instead.
- It could be…
- Another possibility…
- Another way to look at it…
- What about this idea…
- Let’s consider…
Training the Brain

- Please go to handout
  - Hear It
  - See It
  - Say It
  - Write It
  - Read It
  - Repeat It
Homework – Yeah!
The Brain does Not Change Without Practice

• **Response Log - Week 1**

• Ways in which to build relationships.

• For example:
  – Listening to the other person without judgment
  – Discovering the other person’s needs or perceptions
  – Being willing not to push for my own way
  – Being willing not to “go limbic”
Five (5) Stages of Relationships

1) Honeymoon
2) Disillusion
3) Misery
4) Awakening
5) Peace/Calm
Honeymoon Stage

• Please take a Trip down Memory Lane with me

• Were you, at one time, looking for that prince or princess?

• Think back to the beginning of that time, the beginning of the relationship, what did you feel and what did you do?

  • Exciting
  • Scary
  • Fun
  • Lots of communication
  • Few feelings
  • Hopes

  • Dreams
  • Careful
  • Thoughtful
  • Sex was great
  • Cards and notes
  • Special nights out
Disillusionment Stage

- What happens after some time in the Honeymoon stage?
- Disillusionment sets in...
- This is sometimes referred to as the Familiarization or Adjusting to Reality stage.
- Your endorphins cannot keep producing at the same level as before. You become more relaxed in the relationship, as does your partner.
- You and your partner are human and your flaws are beginning to show. There’s generally enough goodwill left over from the honeymoon stage that you can overlook most flaws.
More Disillusionment

• If the flaws are more serious - such as dishonesty or deceit - the relationship can become confusing and discouraging.

• If you want the relationship to keep evolving, you need to be able to communicate effectively and resolve conflict.

• Sex has become more familiar, and maybe the fun sleepwear has changed to less enticing wear.

• Communication tends to go down. There is less time spent sharing and it is less positive.

• The things that attracted you to the person now detract you from them.

• Arguments over money, friends, priorities, sex, etc., begin to happen with less agreement on how to solve these new differences.
Misery Stage

- This is also called the **Power Struggle, Disappointment or Distress** stage.
- You become more aware of the differences between you and your partner. Depending on your style of communication, you find yourself avoiding, accommodating, judging, competing and fighting in the conflict. Conflict continues to grow.
- Deep resentments can begin to build in this stage. You see your partner as uncaring, self-centered or untrustworthy.
- People really know they are in the Misery stage when they ask themselves:
  - “*Why did I ever get involved with this person in the first place?*”
  - “*What was I thinking?*”
  - “*If only I never got involved in the first place!*”
  - “*Will this ever change?*”
  - “*Is there no way out?*”
More Misery

• Couples remain in this stage, building resentment and frustration until they either decide to:
  – End the relationship in some manner
  – Avoid the issues and remain in the relationship
  – Seek some means to resolve the conflict in the relationship

• Misery can last for years and years. There are couples (and you might have experienced this or seen others in this stage) remaining in Misery for 10, 20 or 30 years, often citing kids, financial constraints or fear of changing the familiar as reasons for staying together.

• Many couples do not evolve from this stage and decide to end the relationship here.

• However, if a couple can resolve conflicts here, then they move on to the next stage - *Awakening*.
Awakening Stage

• This is also called the Stability, Friendship or Reconciliation stage.

• Couples who make it this far express feelings of stronger commitment, connection, trust and love.

• You know neither one of you is perfect, but this concept is no longer threatening.

• You are confident in your ability to resolve most of your issues.

• You begin to reestablish your own outside interests (unlike the Honeymoon stage, where you only had eyes for each other).

• There is some danger of boredom with your partner, so you have to work to maintain the connection you made in the Honeymoon stage.

• Most couples are comfortable and content at this stage.

• To help a couple move to this stage, it is vital that they learn how to listen and communicate with each other.
“Listening with the heart” is a term we use to express the skill of empathy. It involves remaining “present” with the person and hearing all he or she is saying - the deep feelings being expressed, their affect and fears and concerns as they relate to the relationship - without thinking about and trying to develop words you are going to use to respond.

In this practice of “listening with the heart,” it is also vital to learn from each other, to learn what each needs - not wants, but really needs - to be in relationship with the other. In other words, what are the “basic needs” for that person to feel safe, secure and ready to fully participate in the relationship?
Need...to be in Relationship

What do we really need – not want....?

- Financial
- Physical/Spatial
- Emotional/Social
- Spiritual
Peace & Calm Stage

- Other names for this stage are Commitment, Acceptance, Transformation or Real Love.

- It is estimated that less than 5% of couples make it to this stage.

- You are with your partner because you have chosen him/her, faults and all, not because you need him or her.

- You and your partner are a team and look out for each other’s best interests.

- At this stage, your relationship becomes a true partnership.
Five Stages of Relationships

• Please turn to page 33 in your workbooks

• The other hope is that couples are able to return to the times and attitudes of Honeymoon stage. Once the step of Awakening occurs, I ask couples to go back to that Honeymoon time, buy something from Victoria’s Secret for each other and go to some of the places they used to go or write love notes, or play that special music or make that special dinner … Romance each other again! Play and have fun! Laugh and have excitement to see or be with each other again!

• Please take a few moments to complete the items on the second page of the worksheet
Where is This Feeling Familiar?

- Use the “Where Is This Feeling Familiar” worksheet to chart occurrences in your life, your age when they occurred and your deepest feelings at the time.

- Occurrences such as separation or divorce might have evoked feelings of isolation. They might have caused fighting, cussing, arguing with parents or police, hurting animals or other people, walking away, name calling, throwing things, using weapons or threats or using gestures.

- Write as much as you like and share as much as you feel comfortable.
Some might find it more useful to sketch out your life events on a timeline or chronogram.

Beginning at the very left-hand side of the chronogram and moving toward the right, identify points in your life when you recall conflict or anger in your life. What was happening? How did you feel?

Use the “Feelings Check Sheet” from Session 1 to help accurately describe your feelings.

This chart then becomes an identification of issues that need to be addressed in individual or family sessions.
Body Escalation = Endorphin Rush

• Keeping our voice, tone and body rhythm in a calm, lower tone and deliberate state causes our brain to be calmer and ready to receive information – cortex

• As voice, tone and body gestures escalate – so does blood pressure, pulse, brain activity moves to the limbic

• Endorphins are released and my body goes into a “rush”

• If I am a person who is addicted to alcohol or drugs – what center of the brain does this trigger?

• I may be setting up my brain for a relapse.
Anger Rush

- Have you noticed this phenomenon in someone or yourself?
- Do you notice this in people in early recovery? ...later on in recovery?
- Have you heard the expression “dry drunk”?
- This is toxic behavior without using drugs or alcohol.
- Consider that anger can be a substitute for alcohol and other drugs.
Four Types of Agreement

• We discussed earlier how the four types of agreement are important in the stages of relationships

• Now – we will dig a little deeper - please turn to your handout (Page 44)

• Four areas we ask people to consider in terms of what they “need” in a relationship

• These are not the “wants” – we are concentrating on the real “needs”
Four (4) Types of Agreement

- Financial
- Physical/Spatial
- Emotional/Social
- Spiritual
Financial Agreements

• What do you need to be in financial agreement?

• Who works?

• What amount of money do you need for the household? (Don’t fool yourself: if you are a $75,000-a-year expectation person, and your partner only makes $35,000, then there will be conflict.)

• Is it one joint checking account or two separate checking accounts?

• Is there savings, money for retirement and money for vacation?

• And what about donations? Is tithing something you believe in?
Financial Agreements and Budget

- Do you keep a budget that is agreed to? (Refer to “Budget Table” worksheet on page 45 of the workbook.) Is it projected out?

- A budget will keep financial arguments down since there is agreement on what the budget will be. When considering a new purchase, go to the budget and ask “Does it fit?” It no longer becomes an argument of “you don’t want me to have this”; it becomes a discussion of the budget and whether a purchase fits.

- What about credit cards? Can you use them? How much can you use them? Have you and your partner agreed to internal limits?
Financial Philosophy

• Is the other person from a family that had enough money to live on and the philosophy was “there is always enough”

• Is the other person from a family that struggled with money and people held tight to the money they did have?

• Who taught you what you believe about money?

• What are the rules?
  – Are there rules to save or spend?
  – How much money should be saved?
  – When is it okay to spend?

• Is there a rule about a savings account?
Physical/Spatial Agreements

• What are your physical expectations for the sexual relationship, physical exercise, the manner in which you keep up yourself (body, hair, etc.)?

• What type of physical space do you need—a crowded room, a sparse room, a house in the open, a house in the woods or in the city?

• What about physical abuse? What is okay with you? What is not negotiable (such as pushing, shoving, beating, hitting, scratching, etc.)?

• What is physical safety to you and appropriate boundaries in your relationship for all the above areas?

• What about own “body bubble”? How close do you like your partner and how often? Are you a cuddlier or do you prefer to have more space?
Body Bubble’s

• We all have our own personal “body bubble,” formed as we grew up, that advises us how close we want others to come to us or when we get to the place when we know someone “enough” to allow them closer.

• People who have been physically or sexually abused might have a different experience of closeness

• It is likely take more time, trust and patience in allowing others to come closer.

• As you build a relationship with a person, it is important to learn his or her body bubble styles and respect them.
Emotional/Social Agreements

- Emotional agreements also take into account those times when the other person is just “off” emotionally.

- We don’t always know the whys of it and just needing a little extra special consideration to get through whatever it is.

- This kind of emotional support goes both ways, for the nature of emotional agreement is reciprocal.

- Part of the discussion on the emotional agreement is to learn your partner’s emotional strengths and weaknesses.
Emotional/Social Support

- Are there certain situations (times of the year, seasons) that are more difficult emotionally for your partner? This might be related to a loss (death, divorce, accident, etc).

- When does your partner feel he or she needs more support from you? In what type of situations?

- When does your partner want you just to listen, and (possibly) hold them, rub their back or just be “present” with them?

- What do you need from your partner for positive emotional support?
• Do you expect unconditional love and support?

• Do you expect understanding and a person to listen to your hurts?

• How is that played out at the end of day, on the weekend, after an argument?

• Do you go to bed on your fight, in anger?

• What do you need there in terms of resolution?
• Every person comes to this life with a spiritual piece

• How we relate to that spiritual side is dependent on the fabric of our background

• Not everyone identifies their spiritual side

• Yet, everyone goes about trying to fill it in some manner
Spiritual Agreement Support

• What does spirituality mean to you? How do you want to express it?

• How do you want your partner involved?

• Where is your source of strength? How do you express it?

• Do you want to do this together or separately?

• Is there reading, praying or worship that you expect?

• What are your other spiritual expectations?
Completing the “Agreements” Loop

• Once this is done, it helps to write each of these on paper.

• Put them in a dual frame - and in the bedroom - so that when an issue or argument begins to rise, it can be agreed to revisit these agreements and to remind each other to put their needs first, not their wants.

• When a couple makes these types of agreements, after really listening to each other, a peace and calm is achieved.
Completing the “Agreements” Loop (cont)

- There is a sense that they know how to resolve conflict, they know what is expected and they know how they can meet these, specifically, in each of those areas.

- It does not mean that there won’t be future disagreements or that everything will be peaceful and calm.

- The difference is that there is agreement to work and live in peace, understanding and mutual support for each other.
Building a Healthy Life

- Being with someone – no matter what.
- We are inter-dependent on each other – interconnected. We need each other.
- Must be entered in – heart and soul. Don’t worry about the outcome.
- All you want is their highest good.
What It Takes to Have a Healthy Relationship

This type of relationship means:

- You are willing to do what is right to **rescue** the relationship.

- It is **what you do with** what has happened – NOT what happened.

- Doing all this means taking risks. The biggest risk is not basing the relationship on **ME**.

- It requires the ability to forgive.
What It Takes to Have a Healthy Relationship

This type of relationship **CANNOT** be based on:

- A cause
- A goal
- A Crisis
- Financial Gain
- Workplace
- Recreation
What It Takes to Have a Healthy Relationship

This Type of Relationship **CANNOT** be Based on:

- School
- Hobbies
- Family Gatherings
- Lust
- Your child’s Activities
A HEALTHY Relationship DOES NOT Intend to:

- Manipulate
- Keep Score
- Control
- “You owe Me” Attitude
Costs of a HEALTHY Relationship

- Risk
- Time
- Money
- Energy
- Reputation

- Heart
- Dreams
- YOUR Agenda
- YOUR Customs
- YOUR Taste/Style
It Can be Broken by the Following Behaviors

- Lying
- Stealing
- Sexual Deviance
- Abuse of ANY Type
- Outside Sexual Relationships
If you find an inability to forgive someone, it tells you that you had not entered into the relationship as a covenant.

**TIPS**

The issue is NOT what they can give. It is what you give!
Four Levels of Violence

1) Inconsideration
2) Rejection
3) Sabotage
4) Destruction
Inconsideration

- **Inconsideration** is the first level of violence.
- What would cause you to think about inconsideration as the first level of violence.
- When people are purposefully inconsiderate, they are aware of their poor behavior yet they choose to behave this way.
- This type of behavior is self-centered and ego-bound and is a means of taking control and power over another person.
- If an individual is inconsiderate to a person and continues to be inconsiderate, that individual is exhibiting a behavior pattern that devalues others.
- Devaluing others is a form of violence.
- The consequence of this behavior is hurtful and harmful to others because it is thoughtless.
- If a person can be inconsiderate to others, it is easier him or her to move to the second level of violence—rejection.
Rejection

- **Rejection** is another form of self-centeredness.
- When individuals use rejection, their ego allows them to justify treating others in this harmful manner.
- The act of rejection is a level of violence that further devalues another person; in other words, the person exhibiting this behavior displaces the worth of the person being rejected.
- When an individual is able to reject another and cause that person to feel a sense of worthlessness, it furthers the individual’s inner belief that he or she has power and control over other people.
- The people on the receiving end of the rejection might internalize this feeling and think they have less meaning or value in this world.
- This reaction is especially true if the person perpetrating this behavior is in a close relationship with the rejected individual.
- Rejection can bring on feelings of unworthiness, depression, desperation and self-destruction.
- The consequence of rejection is at a higher emotional and spiritual level to those to whom it is directed.
Sabotage

- **Sabotage** can take a variety of forms, from hurting someone’s chance or opportunity to do something or receive something. It can be the act of saying something hurtful and potentially harmful to another person to the point of hurting them, someone else or something else.

- Sabotage is an active behavior. It is a plotting activity; it requires time and effort, planning and plotting.

- During the planning phase, the saboteur could decide to abort the behavior.

- The continuation of the sabotaging behavior is a direct behavior of power and control. It is meant to take something away from another.

- It is a direct and targeted behavior toward another person with the intention to be of harm.

- The level of consequence for this type of behavior is even higher than the last level of violence (rejection), as it is more active and more deliberate and requires a longer period of thought and planning.
Destruction

- The last level of violence is destruction, which often is the first level that people relate to violence happening.

- Destruction is the intention to tear a person down completely, to the point of killing his or her spirit, dreams, hope, property or/and life.

- This is power and control to the final degree—the perpetrator can willingly destroy or kill another person.

- To destroy a person means that the perpetrator believes that he or she has the right to completely obliterate another person.

- This type of behavior is pathological.

- There is a mental illness or a toxic level of some sort (for example, sociopathic or psychopathic mental illness, chemicals or severe narcissism) that allows the perpetrator to justify his or her behavior.
Four Levels of Violence Homework

- Think and write about times and situations where your behavior has reflected these levels.

- Think and write about your “payoff” for these types of behaviors.

- In what ways would you like to restructure your behavior?
Change Plan

• A change plan is simply a document that contains your plan to change your behavior. Refer to the “Change Plan” worksheet found in your workbook.

• Use the first row to write down the behavior that you want to change. In the next row, write down the new behavior that you want to exhibit. In the third row, write down the steps you will take to begin practicing and including this behavior in your life. In the last row, write down the date when you expect to attain this new behavior.
Creating A Mantra

- **Self-control** is not a natural instinct. It is learned.

- Some of us learned higher levels of self-control by the discipline we were taught or saw as children.

- Still, others of us were in families with limited self-control and our behaviors are low-impulse control.

- Learning a higher level of self and impulse control is possible and attainable.

- It truly is a “brain choice.”

- This higher level of self-control can be achieved by creating mantras that help you “stand still in the moment” or “slow down your jets” when an angry or mean-spirited impulse wants to run loose!

- The key to this technique is to create a mantra that has meaning and enough significance that you will remember it and then to use it.
Mantras Are Used To

- Maintain control
- Slow down reactions
- Control impulses
- Avoid shame and blame
- Motivate oneself
The Empowerment of a Mantra

• Begin your day reminding yourself of your mantras and in what circumstances you plan to use them.

• End the day with these thoughts, as well.

• You are logging these phrases and anticipated behaviors into your “computer brain” so that your brain automatically spits these out when you discover you are in one of these situations.

• You are becoming more in touch with yourself and developing a deeper sense of yourself and others through these exercises.

• You are also creating a positive change in your behaviors, thereby creating a life with more personal power and self-control that leads to a feeling of empowerment and self-esteem!
Creating Your MANTRA

• Develop your own statement that you believe and will say when you feel like you want to explode, yell, fight, scream or basically, lose control

  • Example: “I think I can, I think I can!”

• Page 55 in your workbook
Repairing Relationships

• Life offers many situations and circumstances that damage relationships.

• A person does not get through any relationship without some damage.

• It is not always the damaging effects of “what happened” that make the damage so destructive.

• It is the manner in which individuals involved deal with the damage that causes the ongoing hurt and deep feelings of unresolved resentment, lack of forgiveness and loss.
Repairing Damaged Relationships

• The first step in repairing a damaged relationship - identify the relationship that has been damaged and the root cause of the damage. Was the surface issue that you and the other involved individual identified as the source of the problem the actual root cause or was there something deeper and more difficult to identify that lead to the hurt?

• Next step is to validate your feelings around the hurt, unresolved resentment, lack of forgiveness or loss. Being able to identify your feelings helps reduce any chaos or “feelings of craziness” around the situation.
• Now, here comes the tough step.

• Check in with the other party or parties to see what they recall and how they feel about the situation or circumstance. This is more than just asking their perception of what happened. It also attempting to understand the context in which it happened.
Life Happens

• We all know that “life happens.”

• Yet when it is happening to another person and that person then affects us in a negative manner, we tend to take it personally.

• Understanding the other person’s life situation might also help you to see that what was going on for them was not “all about you.”

• Maybe it was about them.

• Their life situation caused an inability to really see or feel what was happening to you at the time.
Repairing Damaged Relationships - Steps

Follow these guidelines to help the individual explain their story, of how “life happened” to them:

– Check out their perception of the situation.

– Listen without judgment (that is, suspend judgment).

– Do not jump in as he or she tells the story. The person is telling you what was actually happening in his or her life at the time.

– Stand still in the moment (use your mantra if need be) to just sit and listen.
Stress Build Up

• Stress is caused by internal pressures that build up each day in the natural course of exposing yourself to your environment.

• Stress is natural and takes on many forms, and all these forms have a common pattern.

• Stress is also caused by a buildup of past experiences projected onto current situations

• Especially if the past experiences are the source of a deep hurt or an unresolved issue.

• These stressors are particular to a person, their background and their personal history.
The Movement of Stress

• Please turn to the “Cycle of Stress” worksheet on page 56 in the workbook.

• All stress has a cycle.

• During one phase of the cycle, you might feel peace with yourself and those around you.

• During another phase you might feel uneasy or uncomfortable.

• This phase is normal, it is just not peaceful.

• Be reassured – it is likely that the cycle will move back to a more comfortable or peaceful state.
Biological Causes of Stress

- People get into stress cycles that trigger old insecurities
- Old habits
- Stress can cause biological or/and emotional change
- Bio-stressors are biological forces that act on the body
Bio-Stressors

Some examples of bio-stressors:

- Gas buildup in the stomach and/or intestines
- Urine buildup in the bladder
- Feces buildup in the bowel
- Dust buildup in the nose
- Phlegm in the throat
- Hot climatic conditions; heat
- Physical pain
- An itch
- Viruses, colds, diseases
- Nausea in the stomach
- Inactivity
Emotional Causes of Stress

Emotional stressors are emotional forces that act on the body. Some examples:

- Joy
- Grief
- Terror
- Shame
- Embarrassment
- Frustration
- Anger
- Inadequacy
- Jealousy (specifically the fear of being abandoned)
Emotional Causes of Stress

- Envy (specifically the fear of being inadequate or “not good enough”)
- Extreme boredom
- Helplessness
- Resentment (anger and/or hurt hidden or repressed)
- Finding something humorous
- Needs for relieving loneliness
- Needs for sexual gratification
- Hurt
- Fear (nervousness, anxious, hyper-vigilance)
- Denial and repression (keeping something secret from myself or from someone else as a way to control myself)
Thoughts seen as real
Loss of conscious awareness that a thought (perception, expectation, belief or opinion) is not necessarily reality.

Burnout
Stress becomes a conditioned reality and fact of life.

Thought Validated
This validates our initial perception and makes the thought seem real.

Situation Worsens
Increases stress by creating negative reactions in others (i.e., defensiveness, controlling, punishment, etc).

Insecurity
Takes the thought seriously, increases and validates negative emotions of insecurity and stress.

Focusing on Details
Preoccupation with negative thought diminishes broader perspective (wisdom).

Triggers Habits
Triggers learned habit patterns to cope with stressful feelings.
Stress & Perception

- Nora & Jake’s Cycle of Stress Story
  - Perceptions seen as Reality
  - Thoughts seen as real
  - Focus on details to the point of obsession
- Insecurity created
  - Trigger old habits
  - Situation worsens
  - Thoughts validated
  - Burnout on the situation
Decision-making

• Many of us are faced with making minor to major decisions on a daily basis.

• How do we assess the importance of these decisions and the best way in which to make a “good” decision?

• Decision-making is best done when certain steps are taken.

• Not all decisions require all of these steps.

• The critical and complex decisions are best decided after some work in the following steps.
Effective decision-making steps:

1) Identify what you believe is the true problem.
2) Look at and list all options for solutions to that problem.
3) Speak with someone about options. Gather more ideas on how to look at the real problem and resolve it.
4) Review all options and check out consequences. Get with someone you trust.
5) Choose the top decision—not what you want to do, but what makes the most sense. It should be collaborative, right or correct.
6) Execute the decision—do that!
7) Evaluate the results; that is, identify what worked and what was not as valuable.
8) If needed, choose second top option.
9) Reevaluate—go back over the steps.
Styles of Communication

- **Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument**

- Answer each question as if “push comes to shove”

- Answer each question the closest to your response – what you most likely do – “A” or “B” response

- 30 Questions total – add your responses
Scoring the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

• Please circle your response (either A or B) in the corresponding column in numerical order. You will have 30 answers.

• At the bottom of each column, add up the number of your responses. Together, they will add up to 30 if you added them correctly.

• Then, chart your numerical number for each column in the “Score Distribution” Chart. You will see certain percentiles given in each column.

• Once you enter your numerical number in each column across the scale, draw a line from the first left number to the next number, connecting the numbers that you scored. You will come up with a scale in the five columns. You will notice that each number does not find itself on the same percentile as the next in each column. Each column is weighted differently.
Five Styles of Communication Work Sheet

• Turn to the “Five Styles of Communication” in your workbook.

• Five Styles:
  1) Competing
  2) Avoiding
  3) Compromising
  4) Accommodating
  5) Collaborating
Competing Style

- The attitude is “I’m going to win; you’re going to lose.”
- There are only two possible outcomes from conflict: winning and losing.
- Winning is associated with status and competence.
- Losing is associated with loss of status, incompetence and weakness.
- Prime importance on personal goals to the virtual exclusion of any concern for the relationship.
- Protection of personal goals is taken as an index of successful combat.
- It’s a dog-eat-dog world.
- Nice guys finish last.
- Method of control: RESENTMENT
Conflict Resolution in Recovery

Avoid
Avoiding Style

• We are both going to lose, so I’ll leave.
• There is a feeling of hopelessness.
• Avoiding protects the person from the useless and punishing experience of endless struggles that cannot be won.
• Rather than suffer, I will leave physically or psychologically.
• An Avoider might adopt the role of a detached observer.
• Roll with the punches and live to fight again another day.
• Getting angry means losing control.
• It is unfair to lose control, so leave.
• Method of control: WITHDRAWAL
Conflict Resolution in Recovery

Compromise
Compromising Style

• You get half the cookie, and I get half the cookie. We both lose a little and compromise. It’s better to get something than nothing.

• A secret variation of losing/winning.

• Soften the effects of losing by limiting gains of the other person.

• Arrive at compromise by somebody playing the “judge.”

• Ringing oratory invoking everything from “the democratic process” to “the rules.”

• Nobody wins, and nobody loses.

• Evokes the attitude that “war is hell.”

• Method of control: RULES
Conflict Resolution in Recovery

Accommodate
Accommodating Style

• The primary concern for the effect of conflict is on the well-being and durability of relationships.

• The assumption is that human relationships are fragile, that they cannot endure the trauma of working through differences.

• There is a fear of losing the relationship.

• Appease others by ignoring or denying their behavior and avoid conflict by ignoring or denying how you feel about their behavior.

• Personal objectives are set aside, and the relationship lends itself to one-sided domination.

• There is an attitude of forced, cheerful compliance.

• Eventually, the “Mt. St. Helens” effect will play out (“Tic, Tic, Boom!”) or it is like a time bomb (“TIC TOC, TIC TOC … BOOM!”).

• Method of control: GUILT
Conflict Resolution in Recovery

Collaborate

A Component of NAADAC’s Life-Long Learning Series
Collaborating Style

- This has an altogether different attitude that results in a different behavior.

- We can both win.

- Importance is attached to the well-being of the members of the relationship and to the relationship simultaneously. The two sets of goals are not seen as mutually exclusive as with other styles.

- Conflict is inevitable because we are different from one another. This leads to differences in opinion. The most common reasons for differences are incomplete understanding and commitment to inequality.

- A collaborator has a tolerance and acceptance of differences.

- You have the right to feel, and so does the other person in the conflict.
More Collaborating...

• Let’s differentiate (and get out of our feelings) and then integrate (and create more closeness … let’s be solution focused).

• The real paradox of control is to not control! The real power comes into play when you both allow each other to get out your feelings and then think of the other’s perspective to the point of creating more closeness through the understanding and then, through that, you come to a place to problem solve that takes the feelings, points of view, background and perspectives of both parties into play. This is true integration of both parties.

• The paradox of control: REAL POWER
Conflict Resolution in Recovery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodate</th>
<th>Collaborate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *I try my best...* | *The paradox of Control*
| *Method of Control: Guilt* | *Real Power!!!* |
| Avoid | Compete |
| *Not tonight dear…* | Method of Control: Resentment |
| *I have a headache* | Method of Control: Rules |

Method of Control: Withdrawing

A Component of NAADAC’s Life-Long Learning Series
• Avoiders have minimal concern for personal goals as well as minimal concern for the relationship (1,1).

• Competers have maximum concern for personal goals and minimal concern for the relationship (9, 1).

• Accommodators have minimal concern for personal goals and maximum concern for the relationship (1,9).

• Compromisers fall into the middle of the quadrants. They want to preserve personal goals and the relationship and are willing to give up some of each to do so.

• Collaborators have maximum concern for personal goals as well as maximum concern for the relationships. They want everyone to win (9,9).
Conflict Communication Styles in Families

- Turn to the “Conflict Communication Styles in Families” Worksheet
- Who talked out their anger?
- Who hide it or avoided it?
- Who exploded and pushed their anger onto others?
- Was there an individual in the family who tried to be the “peacemaker?” How did they try to do this? How did others in the family react to these attempts? Did the attempts work?
- Who provided the role of “fairness” in the family? In other words, “you get half the cookie, and your brother (or sister) gets the other half.” Is this fair?
- Who held control in the family and was it questioned?
- How was conflict resolved in the family?
- When did you know the argument “was over”? 
Family Circle Homework

- Study the 5 styles of communication.

- Create a “Styles of Communication” wheel for their family of origin using the example provided – use the “Family Circle” handout as your worksheet.

- Add lines as needed for family members.

- Then answer the questions:
  - Consider from whom you first learned your primary style of communication in conflict. How has it served you?
  - Consider from whom you first learned your secondary style of communication in conflict. How has it served you?
  - Is there anything you would choose to change?
Positive & Negative Aspects Competing

Positive elements of competing behaviors include:

- Sports—wanting to win or complete something
- Working to complete a course of action, like a college program
- Surviving—in war or warlike situations
- Making quick and firm decisions when they are vital
- Other positive elements?

Negative aspects of competing behaviors include:

- Not caring about how the outcome affects others
- Being seen as uncooperative, judgmental, unreasonable or unapproachable
- Being left out due to above behaviors
- Other negative elements?
Positive elements of avoiding behaviors include:

- Being seen as not pushing for your “own way”
- Being seen as reasonable for waiting to resolve the issue and not doing so in the heat of the moment
- Being able to decide when or if the potential outcome of the issue deserves or warrants the effort of the conflict
- Being seen as protecting others from the conversation
- Other positive elements?

Negative aspects of avoiding behaviors include:

- Being seen as not caring
- Being seen as having no inner power or juice
- Being seen as not having an opinion
- Ask the participants for other negative aspects.
- Other negative elements?
Positive & Negative Aspects Compromising

Positive elements of compromising behaviors include:

- Being seen as reasonable and fair
- Being seen as a peacemaker
- Being seen as sharing problems, ideas and solutions
- Being considered a backup when collaborations or competing does not work

Other positive elements?

Negative aspects of compromising behaviors include:

- Being seen as a “judge” and who gave them that power
- Appearing to pay more attention to the rules of the game than others’ feelings
- Coming out with the feeling that no one was heard or understood

Other negative aspects?
Positive elements of accommodating behaviors include:

- Being seen as self-sacrificing for others
- Being seen as caring and loving
- Person seen as a peacemaker
- Knowing when you do not know what to do, how to do it or want to learn from someone else a possible solution

- Other positive elements?

Negative aspects of accommodating behaviors include:

- Being seen as having no backbone
- Being seen as dependent on others
- Being seen as manipulating

- Other negative aspects?
• Are there negative elements to collaborating? What are they?

• What are the positive outcomes for this style?
  – People’s feelings (their fabric) are taken into consideration.
  – No one has to lose or feel like a loser.
  – People do not have to agree (even after they talk it out), and yet they can still respect others’ beliefs and opinions even though different from their own.
  – Each person is left feeling a sense of their own power.
  – It leaves the door open for future discussions, relationships and problem-solving.
  – It is a deliberate behavior – it engages the cortex.
Getting to Win/Win

• Getting to Win/Win first means learning your true feelings in conflict

• Primary feelings – these “push” the Limbic

• Feelings from end of the spectrum to the other….scared, fearful, jealous, embarrassed, overwhelmed

  or

• Love, joy, happiness, mischievous, empathic, trusting (See “Primary & Secondary Feeling/Wall of Misunderstanding” handout in workbook)
Win/Win is Not Mine…

• Getting to win/win is not **MY** truth

• It is not **YOUR** truth

• It is **OUR** truth

• Non-blaming

• Non-shaming

• Finding the fabric of both persons and discovering the solution together
Getting to Collaboration Win/Win

- Creates mutual benefit
- Creates mutual understanding
- Builds mutual trust
- Builds the emotional bank account (for future withdrawals without bankruptcy!)
- Listening is a skill that aids collaboration
Phrases to Lead You…

• “I see you are very upset. Please tell me what I might do to assist you.”

• “Is there something I did to offend you? That really was not my intention.”

• “I am feeling like you are mad or distant from me, and I do not like that feeling. Please tell me your perception of what is happening between us.”

• “I feel overwhelmed when your behavior is aggressive. Please tone it down a bit so that we might consider what is going on and find a mutual solution.”
• “What I would like instead of your yelling and belittling me is to discuss what the issue is and see if we might find a solution together.”

• “I’m in this relationship as much as you are, and for whatever reasons, I still want it to work. Please help us by discussing what you are feeling so I might understand better.”

• Are there other “cortex phrases” they could use to promote a conversation in a “win/win” manner?
Competing Controls by...

- Resentment!!!
- What you said
- What you did
- What you did not do
- Bullying and Blaming
- Focus off of them and onto... You
- Certain and Intense
- How does this behavior assist the competitor in controlling others?
- Other examples?
Avoiding Controls by...

- Withholding
  - Withholds love, feelings, opinions, attention, affection, finances...
  - Malignant growth of anger develops
  - Blame to both self and others – schizophrenic
  - Don’t know what is coming at you
  - Other examples?
Compromising Controls by...

- **Rules!**
- You get half and I get half
- This is fair and just!
- Feelings and needs not taken into account – Cold or frozen
- Partner feels like they do not matter
- No blame – just is
- Other examples?
• **Guilt**

  • “After all I have done for you – given up for you – sacrificed for you!”

  • Nagging type of control

  • Blames self – should have worked, tried been better…

  • Becomes depressed – turning blame inward

  • Other examples?
Collaborating Controls by...

- **No Need to Control**
- Letting go of the right or need to control
- Looks for mutual benefit
- No blame or shame necessary
- Focus not on “fault”
- Focus on solution – mutual solution
- Understanding and solution is the key – taking down the “wall of misunderstanding”
- Other examples?
Tip 1 – Stand Still in the Moment

• Reverse of flight or fight (Limbic)

• Take your time

• Delay a reaction and consider your actions (is about what I am going to say and do…)

• Indecision can be your best friend in order to get to mutual problem solving

• Third reaction …. Stand still in the moment
Tip 1 – Stand Still in the Moment

• Reactive styles of communication:
  - avoiding   - accommodating   - competing

• Finding your “neutral” gear – emotions under control
  – Linger in the moments of conflict
  – Re-establish communications
  – No defense necessary – no poop!
  – Developing the “eye of the tiger”
  – Resist the argument
  – Beneficial to work with the energy rather than against
When We Stand Still in the Moment, We…

- **Are learning to build impulse control:**
  - Our impulse control (or lack of control) is learned in our family of origin
  - Disease and trauma have an impact on our control

- **Are deliberate about our choices and our decisions:**
  - Power affects our emotions
  - We lose personal power if we fight or flee
  - We retain personal power when we are deliberate

- **Ask ourselves whether our response will:**
  - Build the relationship
  - Help maintain the status quo of the relationship
  - Tear down the relationship
Impulse Control

- Please refer to the “Impulse Control Contracts” in your workbook.

- The first example is for people scoring highest in compete.

- The second example is for people scoring highest in avoid or accommodate.
Tip 2 - Do Not Assume Intent

• Another version of the “Blame Game”
• People within “sticking it to” distance
• Let go of presumptions or premeditated attacks
• Misunderstandings and accidental collisions
• Accountability as a “WE” issue – change is the responsibility of both parties
• Information is useful.
• Inner agreement not to follow what you “might know”.
• Ask for clarification or information.
• “Call out” words and behaviors that are hurtful.
• Seek out the intention of the other person.
• Watch for your own “baggage” getting in the way.
• Ask the other person to tell you what they meant by the words or behaviors.
• **Remember – not to go “limbic”!**
Information Seeking Questions

• What time is it?

• I’m confused as to what you said and what you meant. Will you please explain it to me?

• Will you help me understand what we agreed to the other day [week] [month] in regards to this issue?

• It seems that showing affection in public is uncomfortable for you. Will you please tell me if this is so? Will you help me understand why it is so?

• It appears from your statement that you feel I did something to hurt you. Will you please tell me what that is so that I can understand your perspective?
Loaded Questions

• Why would you do such a stupid thing?

• What the hell is wrong with you? What the hell is going on with you?

• Did you mean to be rude [mean]/[insensitive]?

• Don’t you love me? Is that why you are not affectionate in public? What are you trying to hide and from whom?

• So, what - is everything about you?
Mutual Problem-Solving and Understanding

• To help get to mutual problem-solving or understanding, it is important to have the other person participate with you.

• To do so:
  – Describe the events leading up to the misunderstanding (or confrontation).
  – Give examples of what you thought you heard or saw, and be careful not to do this in a blaming or shaming manner.
  – Name the effect this had on you (did it cause confusion, hurt or embarrassment?), but do not indicate that the other person purposefully intended to do this to you.
Mutual Problem-Solving & Understanding

• Leave the door open for the other person to explain his or her perspective and intentions.

• From that information, begin to draw your conclusion and decide how to respond.

• If the other person says this communication or behavior was not intended to hurt, embarrass or affect you in a negative manner, then believe him or her.

• Then ask the other person to change that behavior to avoid further confusion and hurt in the future.
When We Assume Intent

- We jump to conclusions—often the wrong conclusion.
- We wonder, “Are they trying to control me?”
- Remember, everything doesn’t revolve around you.
- Determine intent by asking the other person to explain what he or she means by his or her behavior
  - “Your actions tell me…”
  - “Did I do something to offend you…”
- Remember that culture and background are factors. Take Japanese culture, for example. It is considered rude to say “no” to a request, so many delaying tactics are used to avoid responding “no.”
- We can be quick to show anger and become vengeful; for example, the “I’ll show you” attitude pervades.
- Don’t make an “assume” = ass out of u and me
Tip 3 - Dig Deeper into Conflict and Anger

- Digger deeper into conflict and anger is like being an archaeologist

- There is reasonable expectation that there is a some type if treasure below

- Our treasure is our “fabric” of our life

- “Fabric” is our: culture, race, religion, values, creativity, ideas, past experiences, family’s past experiences, unresolved grief, layers of happiness and love and go on.

- Other examples of the “fabric” of your life?
Being an Archaeologist

- An archaeologist for humans understands at a deeper level
- Everyone has wonderfulness and desperation
- Not a comparison game – more like a reality show
- Using the Tips helps us to view the show without assumptions
- It means putting aside your well-developed defense mechanisms
- Put on your solution-focused glasses
• Have you ever incurred the wrath of an angry person and thought, “Wow! That’s an overreaction! What is causing so much anger?”

• Have you ever had an intense and powerful reaction to something someone did or said and thought, “Wow? That was an intense feeling I just had. Where did that come from?”

• Have you even been in a conflict situation that evokes a memory (either through words, behaviors or feelings) from an previous intense conflict and you thought, “I thought I was done with those feelings! I wonder why this situation is flooding my emotions with this old stuff now!”
The Fuel of Anger & Conflict

- Sometimes anger and conflict are fueled by past psychological, emotional, physical or other abuses

- Add the layers emotions that were not resolved: hurt, pain, devalued, embarrassed, humiliation, etc.

- We become skilled at hiding our vulnerability – even from ourselves!

- Denial is high and being in touch with our feelings is low and well hidden

- Layers of denial deaden our emotional nerve endings or our ability to control our impulses

- Who is the “who” someone is really feeling?
What are We Really Fighting For…

• What are we really fighting about – McDonalds’ for dinner or other disappointments?
• Do we remember what got the argument started?
• Is it black or white?
• Is it I get control or you get control?
• Other examples?
Back Up The Train

- The more you back up the train – oops, did not mean to say it that way, in that manner with those assumptions

  – And dig deeper…

- The more likely you are to get beyond the surface and get to the issues …that now can be identified and resolved!

- Work not to bring shame/blame/pain back!
Leading with Confusion

- “I’m confused. How did we get to this place of anger? Let’s find another way.”

- “I am confused. Earlier, did you mean that you wanted to do it this way, and now you are changing your mind and you want it this other way instead?”

- “I am confused. Did we not have an agreement to do such and such? ”

- “Help me understand why I am feeling this resistance. Did I say or do something to offend you?”

- “Help me understand how we moved from a place of rational conversation to hurtful conversation. What happened?”

- “Help me understand how we can move away from this impasse to a place of positive movement.”

- I’m confused. I felt like we were connected and in agreement on this issue before. What has happened since we last spoke about it? Did something change your mind?”
Allowing yourself to be confused gives you:

- Time to develop an understanding of the other persons motives, needs, and desires
- Learning if there were other intentions
- Learning what their perceptions are in regards to the situation
Balderdash or Confusion?

- Image Control – can’t be confused
- Strong or vulnerable
- Cocksure or flexible
- Cool and aloof or warm and reachable
- Superhuman or imperfect
- My solution or the “WE” solution
- Other Examples?
Tip 5 – The Paradox of Control

• A paradox is a seemingly contradictory statement that may be true.

• The paradox of control means the more and harder I try to control you, the less and less of you I am in control of you.

• The common denominator of being human = control junkie

• We become less of who we are in the process

• Emotional manipulations to control others
Emotional Manipulations (Blame-based Control) are:

- Anger
- Guilt
- Withholding
- Can be overt or covert
- Used to alter a mood
- Used to edge off an awkward emotional moment
- People with relationship problems become dependent on some form of blame-based control
- Negative habit develop and follow a progressive path that leads toward addiction-type behaviors
Blame-Based Control

- Competitive people religiously turn to their anger to get what they want through intimidation.

- Avoiders automatically resort to cold shoulders to get their point across and exercise their style of control.

- Accommodators use guilt to manipulate and control the outcome of behaviors.
Powerless over Control

- Compare to the 1st Step in AA
- Admit we are powerless over the need to control
- Life becomes un-manageable the more we try to control others
- The more reactive energy spent to manipulate the less likely to get want is wanted or the means to get it
- The harder it is tried – the more others are pushed away – to the point of loss of the relationship
Encourage Resistance

• The more I try to force you to do what I believe is good for you – the more you resist me.

• Use of paradoxical strategy = encourage you to resist = no control necessary

• Wear out the natural resistance

• Leads to mutual problem solving as I am also using the earlier skills and Tips

• Build a mutual plan, implementing it side-by-side
Consider a husband and wife talking about buying a house.

- **Point:** “No, I don’t think so. We cannot afford it. I think you are being hasty!”

- **Counterpoint:** “Why not? We afford what we want! Don’t turn your back on me now—you promised!”
Discussion of Resistance

• If I assume your resistance is something that has to be forced out of you, then you are going to resist more and more.

• On the other hand, what if I say instead: “OK, now let us talk about the negatives. What are your negatives?”

• Or “Tell me your fear so I can understand what you are feeling.”

• What if, instead of me trying to force you out of your position, I invite you into a mutual exploration?

• What if I really listen to your fear and show a willingness to do something to diminish your fear and therefore, your resistance?
• **Response:**

“Maybe we should wait until the interest rates go down. I am willing to put it off for a couple of months, and in the meantime, may we start looking so we can get a feel for the market and what we might like to purchase?”

• In addressing the resistance, listening to the fear, showing sensitivity to the fear, and working with the fear, we are able to move to a new level. Both parties can win, and this takes mutual problem solving, not just controlling or being controlled.
Resistance Denied

• Typical response – to blame you for not seeing My logic and benefits of MY position!

• Take the resistance personally

• Make assumptions

• Throw in the rules, tools and old schools

• Imploding on a “vertical” relationship
Light at the End of the Tunnel

Moving away from the endless struggles by:

• Making a mutual commitment to more self-control
• Exchange ideas
• Becoming more whole human beings
• Accepting responsibility for our behaviors
• Bring the honeymoon back!
• Building a “horizontal” relationship
Vertical & Horizontal Relationships

- Vertical Family structures develop at birth.
- Someone is over-responsible and someone is under-responsible.
- When we grow up – ideally – we leave the vertical structure behind – mature.
- Forming our own relationships now can take the shape of a vertical or a horizontal relationship.
- Control struggles develop – like the “terrible two’s”.
- Reactive styles undermine equality in the relationship (accommodate, avoid, compete).
- Built in tendency to undermine healthy horizontal interactions between equals.
Reactive Styles Undermine

• Accommodators and avoiders develop the instinct to be over-responsible.

• May become permissive as a parent or significant – don’t want to make waves.

• Identify with those who do “more than there fair share” in a relationship.

• Keep peace or stay out of harms way.

• Clean up everybody’s messes.

• Over control themselves.

• Have a need to rescue.

• Become depressed or anxious.
And Undermine...

- Competitors who are over-responsible
- Seize control because they think others are incompetent
- Insubordinate
- The over-responsible competitor has a need to control...
- Then become angrier over time...
- And has a need to punish
- Both bring in a tendency to undermine healthy horizontal interactions
Choices of Mates

• Most likely to choose someone whose reactive style feels comfortable, familiar and is opposite to our own.

• 70-80% of time an over-responsible person is paired with an under-responsible person.

• More and more blame is placed with more and more control trying to be applied.

• Nobody taught them how to have a horizontal relationship.
• Please turn to the “Vertical and Horizontal Relationships” worksheet in your workbook.

• Reflect on the relationships in your life.

• Where would you place your closest relationships?

• Review your impulse control contract – will it help you move to healthier, horizontal relationships? If not, please record on your worksheet how you can change it to do so.
Review – Paradox of Control

- We don’t need to control others in a healthy relationship.
- Loss of control is equated to loss of respect.
- Take control out of the relationship and replace it with collaboration and discovery.
- Find out what each person in the relationship needs and wants.
- Ask “Why am I pushing for control?”
- Ask “Is this going to get us what we want, which is mutual respect and agreement?”
- Take the power out of words by using the deliberate words and phrasing. Once you do this on a regular basis, then the need to control is less and the resistance from the other person lessens.
Use the “Paradox of Control” worksheet to:

- List the areas you try to control in work and personal relationships.
- Describe the resistance you get in return from others.
- Describe what that resistance costs you.
- Record what more you believe you would gain if you let go of the control and shared it with the other people in your life.
Tip 6 - Look to the Misunderstanding

- People, in general, think they know **THE TRUTH** with a capital “T”.

- If things do not go their way, they feel compelled to interrupt or point out an error in your reasoning.

- See the world in black or white – no grays or rainbows.

- In interpersonal communications...there is always – all ways – more than one truth!
The Truth Will Set You Free

- Competers – the higher the score the more likely to be “experts” on what is right and what is wrong

- Accommodators and avoiders wed self to own personal Truth

- Tip 6 encourages us to go beyond one-dimensional interpretation of our view and our view alone
Do You Want to be Right or Happy?

- Win the Battle and lose the War
- “Happily ever after” not possible with this style
- Healthy relationships evolve into a mutual truth
- Make way in a relationship for your own “misunderstanding” in the disagreement
Misunderstanding allows:

- The parties to start over and say what they meant to say in the way they meant to say it.
- What was heard may not be what was meant.
- Divorce yourself from the first reading of the conflict.
- You may have different views saying the same thing!
- Misunderstanding creates a wall
- No one wins when the wall is in the way!
The goal is to tear down the walls – the tools are:

- Understand how the wall got there
- Understand how the wall was built
- Understand what the misunderstanding are by each member
- Learn how the misunderstanding is causing the other person to feel
- Discuss how you feel
- Discuss how you both would like to feel, instead and build in a healthy manner
- Agree no one is at fault – it is a true misunderstanding
- Together - tear down the wall!
The Amplifier Effect

• Our past issues, fears, hurts and disappointment amplify how we see, hear or perceive things.

• See handout in workbook – “Amplifier Effect”.

• Confusion or Tip 3 – was used in getting you to work through some tough spots.

• Fear – or your amplifier effect – can guide you like a light.

• It can inch you into conflict situations with delicacy.

• Your fear can lead you into the conversation to learn more information and problem solve.
Example of Leading with Fear

“I’m afraid of saying anything about this for fear of hurting your feelings. Our relationship is too important, though, for me to remain silent. I’m worried about you drinking more regularly. Are you?”

“My fear is that your unwillingness to talk with me is an indication that you just don’t want me around. Is that accurate?”
Rule Out Before You Rule In

- Test the temperature of the water by sharing what you are afraid of finding out
- Tear down your aloof or cool self
- Rule out what your fears through a process of elimination
- Holding your fear can allow it to fester and distort your point of view
- Allow the other person fill in the blanks for you – what is missing in your perception.
- Ask their input to illuminate a path through the dark days of your relationship
- Misunderstanding give way to understandings
Tip 7 – Having a Blameless Relationship With Yourself

• The first six Tips introduced a series of techniques and skills that draw the other person into a process of “we” decision making.

• Along these paths you have discovered that the “we” also means “you”.

• Most proactive place is to begin the change in “you.”
Tip 7 – Having a Blameless Relationship With Yourself

- A blameless relationship with ourselves begins with peeling the layers of onion.
- At our outer layer of exploration we discover that we have to peel further to get to the true meaning.
- Examining our self-talk helps us to see directly into our relationship with ourselves.
- Recording these conversations may help us see the effects of being raised in our families of origin.
- We can learn to cut the invisible apron strings that bind us to old patterns and behaviors.
• Please turn to the “Blameless Relationships” handout in your workbook

• Review together the “survival skills”
  – When do you use these currently?

• Review together the “success skills”
  – When do you use these currently?
  – How is that different than in your recent past?
Good or Bad?

• None of these roles are “bad”

• We all play one or all of these at times

• Often times we play out these roles in our current situations in order to make sense of them in our own minds or change them

• Can be used in conflict – need to learn the successful skills for relationships

• Can cause more grief in our minds as we try to sort out healthy behaviors

• Important not to do any of these in a compulsive manner

• Or expect others to be in one of these all the time
Creating a Blameless Relationship with Yourself

To create a blameless relationship with yourself:

• Understand your family system

• How your family system effected you

• How you try to repeat those behaviors in your new system

• What you can change and knowing that you have the power to change
What Roles Did You Play in Your Family Worksheet

- Please turn to “What Roles Did You Play in Your Family” worksheet in the workbook.

- Review the four roles discussed in today’s session.

- Use the worksheet to record what roles were played in your family and to what degree or in what mannerisms.

- Ask yourself if any of these roles were lived out compulsively or if your family members moved in and out of these roles fluidly.

- Write down your analysis of the roles you play in your current relationships and how those roles affect your life.

- List the mannerisms or behaviors that you feel need to be changed.

- Develop an action plan to change.
Tip 8 – Avoiding Premature Forgiveness

• The first response of a peacemaker is to shut down in an conflict or disagreement

• Or work quickly to smooth it over

• Major problem in close or intimate relationships

• Act as if the most important thing is to re-establish harmony

• Happens at their and the others personal expense

• Tic - Tic - Tic - Boom!!!
The magnetic attraction of the implosive (accommodator and avoider) and the explosive (competer) people is 70-80%.

- Under-reacts and over-reacts
- Cycle of violence – eventually a blow up
- Under-reactor moves to premature forgiveness to avoid the unsettling feelings of the conflict and honeymoon phase begins with the expected tension build up soon on its heals
Keep the Conversation Going

• The under-reactor needs to bite their lip from saying the usual “I forgive you’s.”

• And…keep the conversation going or take a break and agree to come back to the conversation when things have cooled.

• Say what you don’t like – words, behaviors and what you want to see different in the future.

• Share the responsibility of solving the problem by changing your behavior.

• Your needs are important, too.
“I’m Sorry!” often means:

- I want you to excuse me from the responsibility of having to figure out what to do to help solve this problem.

- Your needs are more important than my needs.

- No matter what the price, I just want this hassle to be over.

- You’re right! (You’re a better debater than I am.) Watch for the next time around—it will be coming over this unresolved issue!

- You win this time—but I will get you, some time and some how!

- You owe me now that I’m acting so humble. If you truly loved me, you would offer me some forgiveness.

- My responsibility is to make you feel loved. (Never mind that I don’t feel loved)
Losing the Argument by Saying “You’re Forgiven”

Closing the argument by simply saying “You’re forgiven” often means:

- “I can live with your behavior the way it is.”
- “Getting to a solution can wait.”
- “As long as you ultimately see the error of your ways, and I know you’re trying, then that’s enough for me (until the next time).”
- “I do not like the feeling of the relationship being under stress, so let’s hurry through this ugly part and get on with the better or happy part!”
- “I’m scared to ask for equality in the relationship. I’m not even sure if I deserve it (self-blame).”
Premature Forgiveness Worksheet

- Please turn to the handout “Premature Forgiveness” in your workbook.

- Describe the person who is the premature forgiver in your life.

- Describe the subsurface truths about the apologies and forgiveness most often used. (See handout in workbook)

- Describe how you can help to keep the conversation going (if you are the premature forgiver) or how you can move toward mutual solution creation (if you are the competer).
Tip 9 – Put Down Your Dukes

• Getting angry, taking the offensive and attacking someone verbally is offensive and hurtful

• Competers are in your face with an over-reactive style

• Accommodators and Avoiders have an ultimate same result: Tic – Tic-Tic- Boom

• The best offense is a good defense
Is the Best Offense a Good Defense?

- Cumulative effects of defense over time…all the negative behaviors of defending

- Major source of damage to the people who matter most in your life – the ones you are suppose to be the closest

- All said and done – putting up your dukes as an attempt of cutting off communication – kills most relationships
Courageous People

• Courageous people make big efforts to be transparent
• Put their dukes down
• Create meaningful conversations
• Risk their ego for the possibility of creating a new life change – intimacy
• Intimacy is broken down to four interconnecting words:

“In – To – Me - See”
• Lead with your transparencies

• Take the Tips and use them daily

• Remain – hang in there – build your spiritual, emotional, physical and psychological self

• Influence the potential change in the relationship by establishing the change in you

• No relationship is perfect – we all must work to get to better relationships

• It is a life long journey
Tip 10 Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

• Please turn to “Self-Fulfilling Prophecy Role Play” in your workbook.

• Two people read the Role Play

• Does this dialogue sound familiar to you in any way? If so, with whom and/or in what situations?

• How could this be played out differently using the tips?
Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

• What are self-fulfilling prophecies and how do they seem to work?

• They are anticipations and expectations that we pack around with us.

• Some are beliefs – like “I will never amount to anything.”

• Our fears tell us to expect it, and when they do happen, we may not notice the role we play in bring these into our life.
We Are Not Innocent Bystanders

• We are not innocent bystanders in life
• The pain we suffer in relationships re-opens the wounds
• No acknowledgement – no healing
• We become hyper-vigilant – waiting for the next shoe to drop
• We develop a knee-jerk reaction
• “I knew you were going to leave me.”
Time and Maturity

- It takes time and maturity to identify and interrupt these attitudes and thoughts.
- Work hard to fairly assess the events leading up to the hurtful moments.
- Effort not to assassinate the other person’s character or our own.
- Our internal distortions need to be calmly identified and examined.
- Adolescent approach to intimate relationships will result in the self-fulfilling prophecy of relationships never working out!
Getting to... Collaboration = Win/Win

- Mutual Benefit
- Mutual Understanding
- Builds Mutual Trust
- Builds the Emotional Bank account (for future withdraws without bankruptcy)
Thanks and Blessings

Many blessings as you move through your life. It is yours to change and influence!

Thank you for participating in the seminar!

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