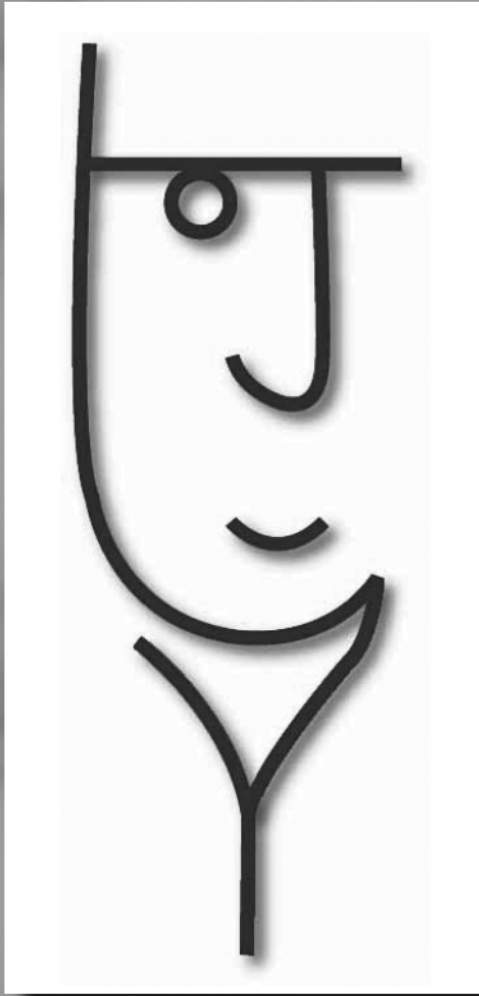


REJOINING

JOY



Volume IV

Daily Living

Gerald Young, PhD

REJOINING JOY

Volume IV

Daily Living

ALSO BY DR. GERALD YOUNG

Books

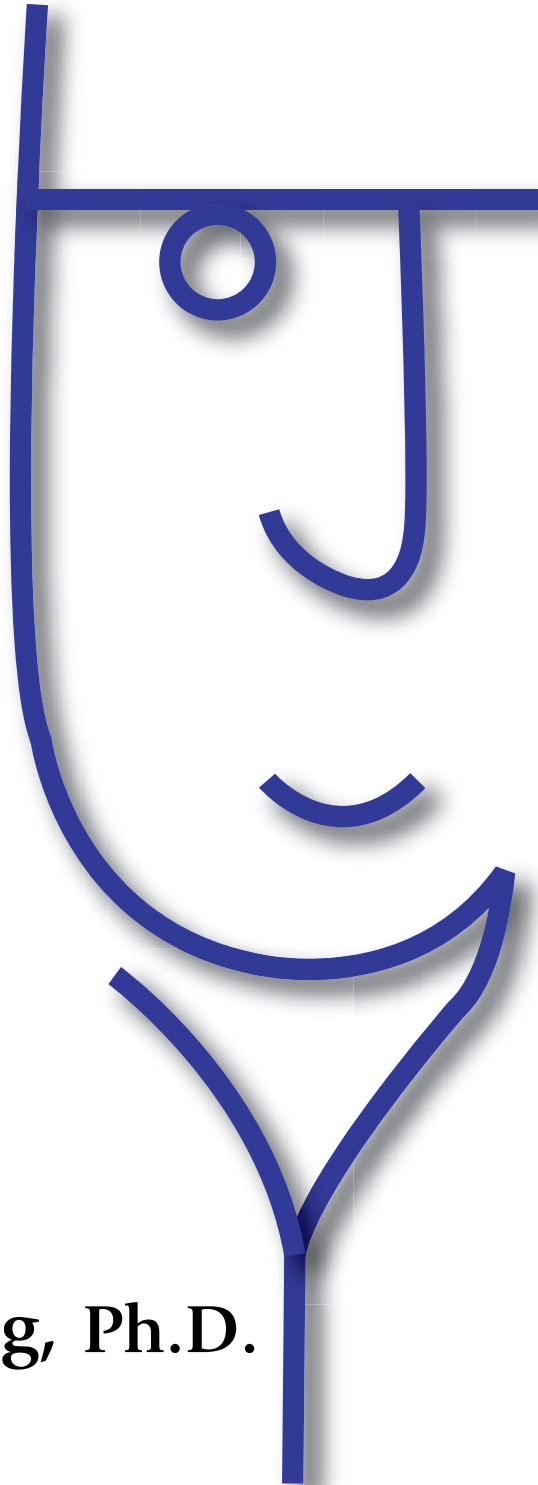
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The 2013, 2012, 2010, 2007, and 2006 books are books on psychological effects of traumatic events, and the like, in relation to personal injury law. The 2011 and 1997 books are on life span development. You may also consult the journal for which I am editor-in-chief, entitled, *Psychological Injury and Law*. To see my work in the area of psychological injury and law, consult the websites www.asapil.org and springer.com. To see my work in the area of self-help consult www.rejoiningjoy.com.

Rejoining Joy



Gerald Young, Ph.D.

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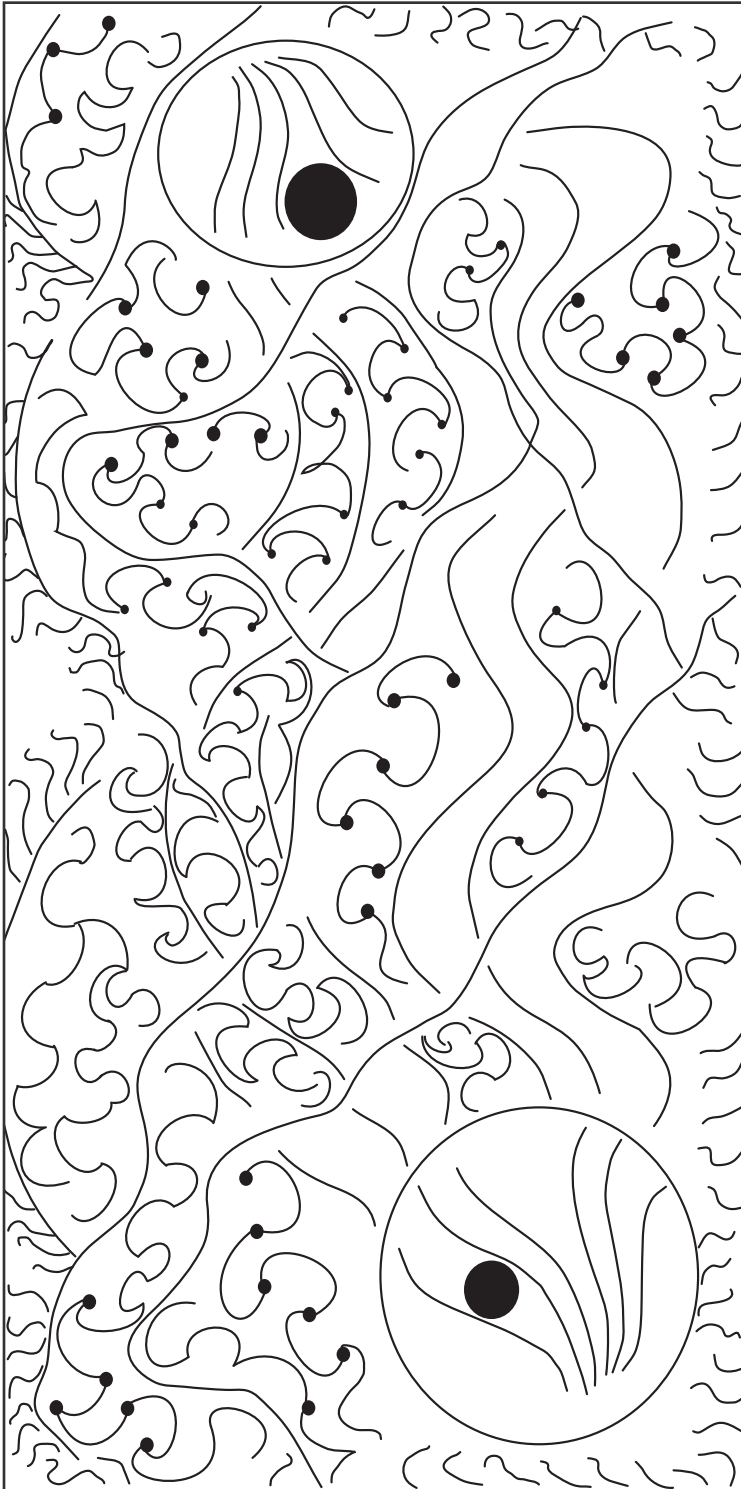
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To my Family and my Clients



REJOINING JOY

Daily Living Volume IV

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DR. GERALD YOUNG is an Associate Professor Psychology at Glendon College, York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He is also a practicing psychologist dealing with rehabilitation and with counseling. He undertakes research on two major topics. The first is on psychological injury and law [five books]. The second is on child development. His most recent book is entitled: *Cognitive and Affective Parallels in Development: Comparing the Neo-Piagetians Fischer, Case, and Young* (published by Springer SBM, New York). He has written one other book, on the topic of manual and hemisphere specialization. He has received an outstanding research award from his faculty at the university. He is the editor of the leading journal in the area of psychological injury and law (*Psychological Injury and Law, PIL, springer.com*), and is the president of its housing association (ASAPIL, see www.asapil.org).

Dr. Gerald Young has gained the trust of his clients and of his professional colleagues in his professional practice in clinical psychology. He has helped numerous clients over the years; and his reports have been presented to court. As an Associate Professor at York University, he teaches students the courses of Rehabilitation Psychology, and Abnormal Child, Adolescent, Adult, and Advanced Development.



“There is unity in my university teaching, my research, my practice, and the self-help book series. With much passion, I have dedicated my professional life to the area, and the self-help books reflect that passion and the skills that I have learned and developed and want to communicate to the reader.”

FOREWORD

R*ejoining Joy* is a self-help book series on stress, emotions, pain, managing stress, and dealing with a range of daily issues, such as raising children and functioning well at work (see rejoiningjoy.com). The series is not a self-help one in the traditional sense, for it is more about improving our ways of living. It does not simply ask us to be more positive, happy, or better. Rather, it shows the reader how to accomplish these and related goals in a realistic manner. It does not simply give the reader positive statements about the self to learn. Rather, it helps facilitate the reader in *learning new ways of living* by dealing better with the negatives and increasing the positives.

The series is based on figures and accompanying text created by psychologist Dr. Gerald Young in sessions with his clients. The text for each figure is described in one to several paragraphs and, usually, includes a positive message. In his clinical work, Dr. Young encourages people to tell better stories about themselves, to find inner qualities and strengths, to learn destressing skills in order to add to them, and to use appropriately these qualities and strengths in solving problems.

There are eight volumes in the book series.

The first volume presents essays, without accompanying figures for the most part, including an essay on an

introduction to psychology, and another on therapy. The next volume, the first with figures and accompanying text, is on stress and destressing. The next two volumes are also in this figure-text format. Specifically, the third volume in the series is on emotions, such as worrying but, also, it includes positive feelings, such as love. The fourth volume deals with diverse topics relating to children, work, change, and so on. The fifth volume has neither essays nor figures and accompanying text, but presents artwork meant to be relaxing. In a sixth book, the reader is provided a self-contained workbook of psychological exercises. In addition, the series includes a seventh book based on excerpts from the best material from books in the series. The eighth book is on sayings for living, loving, and learning. The reader should find them inspirational. They emphasize the major theme of the book series—that when life is difficult, we can still do our best and do it well, and that we choose to find techniques, strategies, and ways of living to help us in this great and empowering task. Another way of describing the major themes of the book is that they involve: Reducing Negatives, Increasing Positives, and Improving Relations and Love. I created over 20 sayings for over 20 themes.

Together, the books are aimed at having the reader not only regain joy but, also, keep it.

Introduction to the Book Series

Dr. Young has written a series of eight self-help books. In these self-help books, he shares with you the clinical advice he gives to his clients, most of whom have been in traumatic accidents. A large part of the material in the books consists of graphics and accompanying text. They cover the multiple areas of stress, negative emotions, and life disruptions that follow trauma. There is also an introductory book of essays, a book on art and nature, and a workbook. The series concludes with an excerpted book of the best of the other books. It ends with a book of the sayings, some excerpted from the other books and some newly written for it. The workbook is about *Empowering the Core* and the collection of sayings is about *Living, Learning, and Loving Together*. Together, the books constitute a series called, *Rejoining Joy*. The title reflects the belief that we can learn to be in charge of our lives and maintain joy even when we might experience traumatic events such as accidents. We can learn to live our life to the fullest, and have a sense that we are in charge no matter what may happen to us, and no matter what our situation or age.

The contents of the books are scientifically-based, yet tailored to each client. The goal in these books is to help people who want to grow, learn from their experiences, and have a more positive and peaceful psychology. The work is based especially on car accident survivors, who come into the office with a whole host of life issues. Therefore, the books covers how to handle stress, how to deal with

negative emotions, how to handle injuries and pain, how to cope with death of a loved one, how to handle the many difficulties that emerge in daily life, how to promote positive emotions, and how to improve communication and relationships, deal with children, families, and work, and how to change for the better.

The approach taken is cognitive-behavioral, narrative, interpersonal, and developmental. The books emphasize that ultimately we are responsible for ourselves, but we create that sense of responsibility by active participation in our social relations and daily life, and by actively finding solutions to the problems that may arise in our roles. Even when the worst tragedies happen to us, we can still be in control, learn from the experience and grow, stay ourselves, and be helpful to others. No matter how bad things seem, there is always something that we can direct, adapt to, and live through with inner positivity and peace. Even in the most extreme stress and negative emotions, we can turn to those parts of us that are more positive and peaceful, make them expand, and regain joy. We can learn to emphasize our positives and work with our negatives, to make us better people and to make our future better.

The Book Series Has Taken a Unique Approach

1. The most important point about the book series is that it will be helpful to readers because it presents a wide range of useful strategies, techniques, and ideas for use in daily

life. The book series is not just for people who are undergoing stress, whether through great tragedies such as serious accidents or in the hassles of daily life. The counseling given in the book series also is useful to prevent stresses from growing out of hand, to head off bad habits, and to promote good habits. We all can develop control in our lives and prosper psychologically in our daily activities. There are eight books in the series and it is comprehensive in the topics discussed and the education and instructions given.

2. In addition, the book series reflects an integration of my practice, teaching, and research, yet stays at the level of my clients and the general reader. In an article written in 2008 for the journal *Psychological Injury and Law*, I describe the psychotherapeutic encounter, and argue that it should deal with the whole person, through 10 critical areas, as well as through family counseling and related interventions, if necessary. This model is an integrative one that has guided the present book series, leading me to organize many common psychotherapeutic techniques into a holistic model. It allows me to keep the client in focus in therapy, and facilitate their self-growth, inner peace, and relations with others in their daily lives.
3. The majority of the books use visual graphics with accompanying text. In the heart of the book series, there are 30 such chapters spread over three books. The books are unique in the amount of graphics and in their use as central organizers, with text written solely to explain them. That is, for each visual, usually there is a paragraph or page-long description. For any one chapter, together the graphics cover the major themes important for it. For the excerpted book, the author took material from each of these 30 chapters, in particular, as well as some introductory essays and some art on nature, as described below. In addition, he put in select sayings written for the margins, as described below.
4. The book of introductory essays includes essays that explain psychology and explain psychotherapy. The author wrote these essays instead of using cumbersome footnotes or endnotes. Almost all key words in the visual graphics and their accompanying text are explained in the essays. Other essays are more motivational and inspirational. Finally, there are those that explain development very well, and they are based on my professional publications. This book concludes with a few poems.
5. The art and nature book is a “green” one, for it encourages readers to respect and love the planet and its animals. The art consists of simple line drawings, illustrating that any one can undertake art, and at any age. Also, the themes are peaceful, motivational, and inspirational, such as ones on families, flowers, dancing figures, and art based on a visit to the holy land.

6. The workbook consists solely of workbook exercises, each having a brief introductory text. Most exercises and their introductions fit on one page. Each exercise consists of two questions, asking for up to five possible answers, or at least things to think about. Other workbooks use more text for each exercise, so there are fewer exercises in other books than in the present workbook. Each of the exercises is aimed at creating a sense that one can succeed in taking charge of life's difficulties. The workbook was written so that it can stand alone, and be read without reading any other book in the series.

7. The book of sayings is a collection of sayings used as margin material, but it turned out important in its own right. For the most part, other collections of sayings involve those not written by the authors, but by famous writers and public figures. Because the sayings are tied to the book series, all of them are psychological in nature, which is unlike the case for other books of sayings. The reader will find the sayings are consistent with the major themes of the book, and therefore reasoned, motivating, inspiring, and promoting positives while helping to control negatives.

Who Needs to Read the Book Series?

1. Anyone who has confronted any kind of stress, not just those coming from accidents, should read the book series.
2. Anyone who wants to learn how to handle effectively stress, negative emotions, and bad habits will profit from the book series.
3. Anyone who needs advice on communication, relationships, love, children, teenagers, families, work, and taking responsibility of any kind will keep coming back to the series.

In short, the book series will be useful for almost anyone. Moreover, its attractive visual and workbook format makes for easy reading and good learning.

People of all ages will find the book series interesting and informative, from teenagers to the elderly. Some of the graphics and workbook exercises might seem more appropriate for young people and others for adults. However, readers of all ages, whether they are young or young at heart, will find the book to their liking.

In addition, because the graphics have been made in session and because the workbook is oriented to clients, both treating mental health professionals and their patients should find the book series valuable.

AUDIENCE

Market

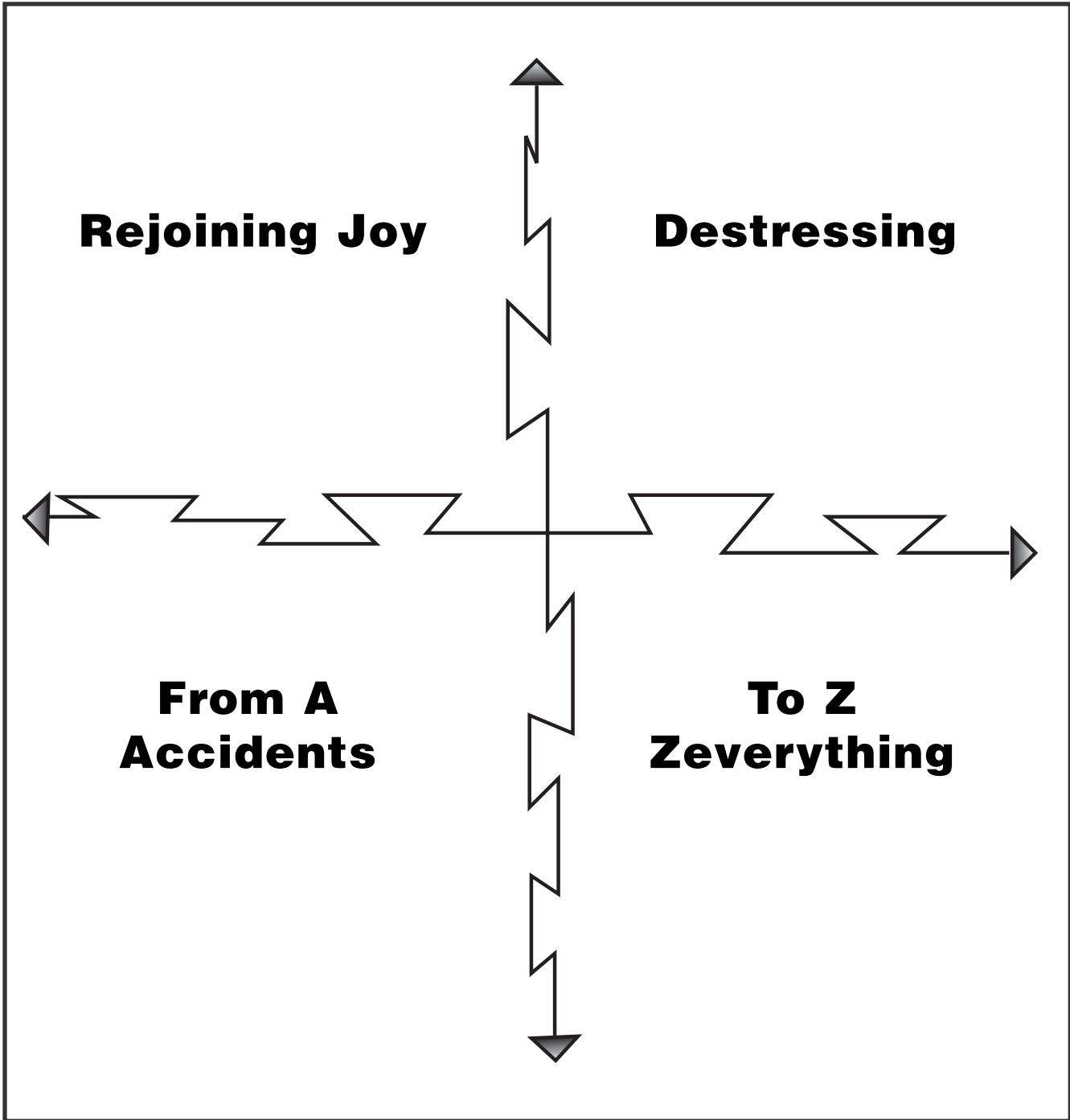
The book series was written starting with *clients* right in their sessions. I would make for them the therapeutic visualizations that I have described in order to illustrate what I wanted them to learn and to apply in their distressing and regaining joy. However, the book series is not just aimed at clines in need of mental health services. It aims, as well, for the self-help and self-healing *market, in general*. Many people need and seek simple techniques to use in their attempts to distress and regain joy, and they also seek books that further their sense of meaning and fulfillment, inspire them to change, and facilitate their growth. Therefore, the book series can be of great help to the general reader, given its motivational, inspirational, and reflective contents.

Because of its contents and the way it is written, *psychologists* and other mental health professionals will also find that the book series can be helpful in their practice. The contents of the books can be used effectively with their clients, just like I have used them with mine. For example, psychologists can use the therapeutic visual figures and their associated text to make crucial points in session. The sayings and art can be used to motivate and inspire. The essays can help flesh out therapeutic work, both in terms of facilitating reflection and for giving clients at-home reading assignments.

The advantage of my approach lies in its inclusive nature. I cover so many themes, with one chapter usually per theme. Within each chapter from the three books in the book series that have figures and matching text, there are at least 10 figures. Some are meant to present the same or similar information in different ways. However, most are quite distinct from the others. Because there are about 500 figures in the book series, and they cover a full range of topics, the mental health professional can select from much choice in the material covered by the books for the particular needs presented by clients in sessions. The therapist using my book series can design individually tailored groups of readings and figures for clients to consult.

REJOINING JOY: DESTRESSING

Stress infiltrates every aspect of our life. So can destressing and joy.



BOOK SERIES CONTENTS

Volume Descriptions

The first volume in the book series presents in a straightforward manner essays introducing psychology and how to live life more happily and effectively. The essays are meant to cover the basic topics presented in the remaining books, and they include pertinent definitions and explanations of concepts, although the reader does not have to read these essays before reading the other books. The topics in the first set of essays range from what are the fundamentals in psychology, to how to deal with stress, to how cognitive behavioral therapy works. The second set of essays is more literary in the first part and more scholarly in the second. The essays range from short ones that are more inspirational and motivational, to ones on change and on stages in development and their implications. Key themes relate to growth and responsibility.

The second volume is on destressing. This volume marks the beginning of the major use of therapeutic figures. In this volume, I explain basic concepts about stress and I explain behavioral techniques on how to distress. I emphasize various cognitive techniques, such as keeping our hope, optimism, and positive attitude. We learn that when confronted with stress, we have options in our behavior and we can be in control. I go on to explain that having some stress can be growth promoting and that we can learn to live effectively

with it. This first book in the series concludes with a chapter on recovering—stress is a start and dealing with it is our goal.

The third volume of the book series deals with negative emotions, such as worry and sadness, and specific emotional problems, such as drinking or dealing with pain. The volume moves from these negative and most basic emotions to positive ones, for it concludes with chapters on love and motivation, in particular. The main theme of this volume is that we can use emotions to our advantage, that emotions color all our activities, and that we can control them when they are negative. This third book in the book series concludes with a chapter on rewriting the stories that we tell about ourselves so that they are more positive.

The fourth volume in the book series is about improving the quality of our daily living. It deals with more complex topics, such as the self, communication, handling children and adolescents, coping with change, and managing work and family life. It includes a chapter on inspiration. It terminates with a description of major points of view in psychology, including the biopsychosocial perspective. This reflects the integrative effort that I have taken in writing the book series. To better understand our psychology, we need to look both inside and around us, both at our bodies and our mind, both at our thoughts and our emotions,

and both our bad habits and good ones. We all have core positives waiting to grow.

The fifth volume presents two-dimensional artistic line drawings intended to relax and inspire. Many of the drawings are about nature and animals. Many are about people and family. I do these drawings quickly, illustrating that, with a single line or a series of lines, we can both express ourselves and relax in doing so. The accompanying text for this book emphasizes the role that we all have to play in helping nature survive. I added text related to nature and our need to protect and preserve it. By acting to save the planet, its habitats, its animals, and its plants, we engage in the best forms of destressing.

Book six of the book series represents its crowning achievement. It consists of excerpts of the best material, especially from books III, IV, and V of the first five books in the series. I selected those figures and accompanying text that provide the clearest description of the book series' major messages and its best therapeutic self-help skills. The excerpted book offers a concise presentation of the book series contents, allowing the reader to consult the complete series for more in-depth reading.

Book seven presents workbook exercises that have the reader review and reflect on the contents of Books III, IV, and V of the book series. The exercises emphasize empowering our inner positive psychological core and good habits, or strengths and advantages, while helping readers toward altering negatives, bad habits, and so forth. Each of the exercises begins with an introduc-

tory paragraph, so that the reader can read the book by itself, without reference to other books.

The last volume of the book series presents inspirational sayings for living, loving, and learning. The sayings were written based on Dr. Young's work with his clients. They offer a basis for rejoining joy and gaining in life. The third through fifth book of the series concern stress, emotions, and daily living, and there are 10 chapters in each book. For each chapter, there are about 50–100 sayings and bolded sentences that are like sayings. They cover topics such as increasing positives, ensuring success, and improving relationships. There are over 20 topics related to destressing, emotions, and daily living, including at work and with family. There are over 20 sayings per topic. They will motivate, inspire, and help to promote good habits while helping to inhibit negative ones.

What the Book Series is NOT.

To better differentiate how this book series is different from other books similar to them the market, we need to know what the book series is not.

1. The book series is not on one particular topic, such as how to handle stress, depression, or pain, because it covers all these matters. Dr. Young, in his sessions with clients, deals with the full range of issues that come up after accidents and in life.
2. The book series does not give simplistic answers on how to cure or how to deal with all critical problems

that people face because there aren't any such simplistic answers, despite what some people or authors might preach. Books that simplify by giving catchy titles and cute phrases may inspire for the moment, but they do not create long-lasting helpful effects. The approach in the present book series is to not only inspire and teach, but also to have readers learn and apply the strategies in the series, and therefore improve their ways of living.

3. The book series is not a complex scientific explanation of psychology and its therapies. There are not a lot of theoretical explanation, references to the literature, and footnotes. Dr. Young has written scientific books and articles on therapy, but the goal of the present book series is practical and it is aimed at the mass market. The book series speaks to the reader at the level of the reader and gives a bibliography that the reader can consult for further information. Therefore, the book is balanced by being not too simple yet not too complex.
4. The book series is not simply text, because it includes many visuals. For each visual, there is usually an associated paragraph or page, and the visual and the text should be examined together.
5. The book series is not dry and humorless. To the contrary, it includes humor when necessary, it includes some
6. The book series is not another self-help book project that will not help people. We are coming to understand that self-help books have temporary effects and even some harmful ones. For example, by painting everything rosy or minimizing the difficulties in dealing with problems, other self-help books may overlook the serious problems people have in dealing with stress. Or, they may give very simple solutions that can only work in some situations, but lead to difficulties in others; so in the end, they limit the person and have opposite effects to those intended. The present book series is more realistic, never promising too much. However, it always offers good ideas and strategies, it motivates, and it always gives hope. **Life is a Lesson and we are both its teacher and student.**
7. The book series is not just for accident survivors. Indeed, it will be helpful for most people who want to learn how to handle stress of any kind, and regain joy. Also, it will be helpful to any one wishing to grow and transform for the better. Often, psychology is considered as a discipline that deals with helping people with their problems. The approach of the present book series goes beyond this, because psychology can help all of us all, no matter what our age, to learn to improve our psychological wellness, positivity, quality of life, ways of living, and joy in living.

PREFACE

The title of this book series includes the phrase, "Rejoining Joy." When we experience stress, we do the best that we can to get through it. We try to regain joy, and we use various destressing techniques, perhaps some like the techniques in this series. Rejoining joy is the goal so that we can get on with our lives and live it in enriching, productive ways. "A healthy way of living" is an important means to attain joy.

However, destressing is not a list of techniques mechanically applied. It is essential to want to destress and go beyond our repertoire of learned destressing techniques. People can learn to minimize or take away their present stress. It is just as important to learn that destressing is an ongoing process. When we go beyond the techniques used and see the whole picture, it becomes easier to deal with future stress.

The book series *Rejoining Joy* is divided into eight volumes. They cover a diversity of topics related to destressing, *a)* the nature of stress and how to best deal with it, *b)* the topic of emotions, such as worry, anger, motivation, and love, and *c)* topics relevant to daily life, such as communication, children, and work. The series does not try to cover every area relevant to destressing, nor does it attempt to be exhaustive. In order for readers to complete their knowledge and appreciation of the available destressing techniques in the field, they should consult other relevant self-help

books, their family physicians, and, if necessary, mental health professionals, such as psychologists.

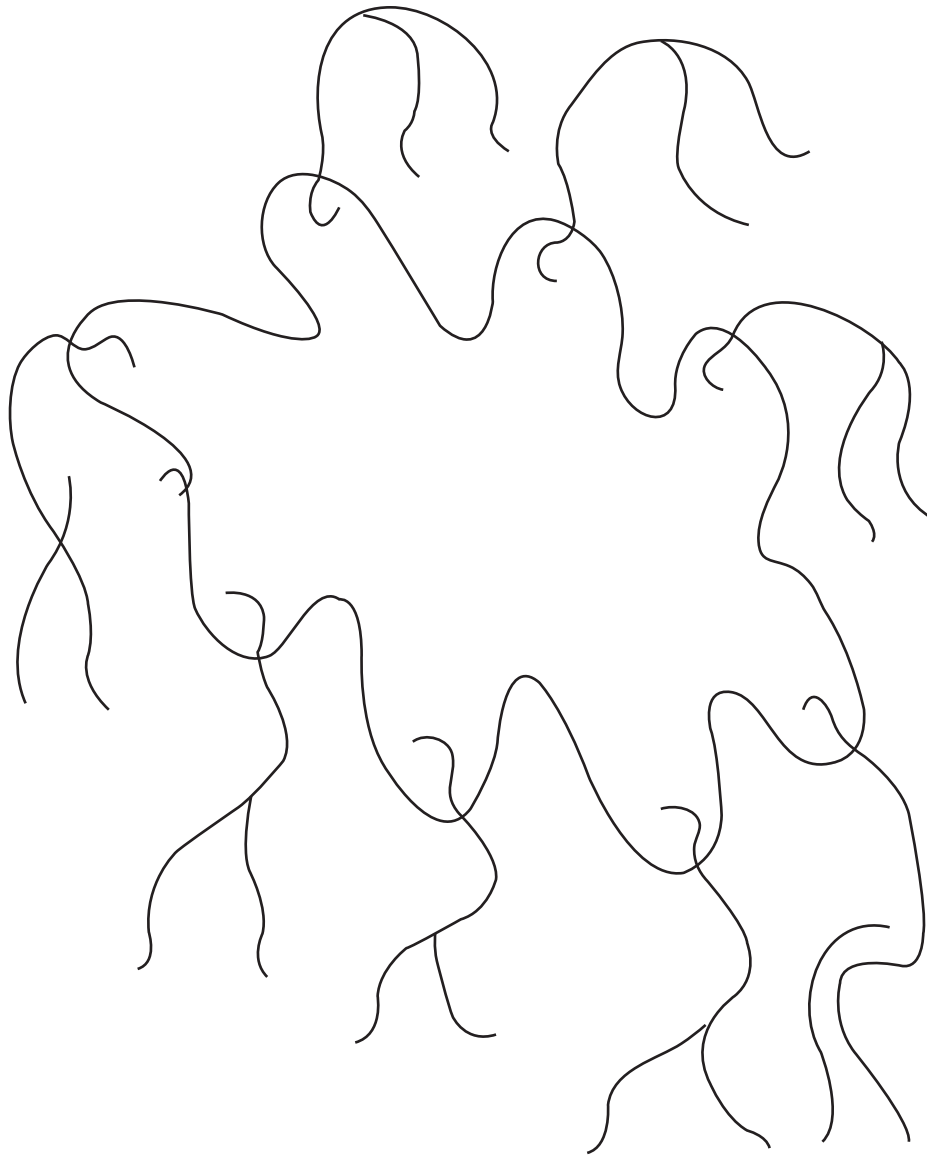
The *Rejoining Joy* book series is unique because it makes extensive use of visualizations, illustrations, drawings, figures, diagrams, graphs, charts, tables, and so on. In the book series, for the most part, I refer to them as "figures." The advantage of using the visual modality is that it captures simply the message that is being communicated. Moreover, visualizations are like verbal metaphors. They suggest, inspire, make people think, and so on, and often avoid direct instruction. Thus, they can function as powerful therapeutic tools. Within each chapter, the figures are loosely organized. It is not necessary that they be read in sequence from first to last. Each figure is meant to be a self-contained unit. Although there is accompanying text, each figure can be understood without reference to it. Similarly, the text can be read and understood without reference to any associated figure. Therefore, the reader can read the text on its own without reference to the figures, or can flip through the figures without reference to the text, or go back and forth between them.

One result of this format is that, at times, there are repetitions. For example, the idea of having a positive attitude is a common theme in the book series; instead of seeing this repetition as a drawback, we can see it as positive because it allows for the accentuation of important themes. The reader should note

that, although the focus of the book series is on figures, graphs, and so on, such visualizations have their time and place. For example, if using the book series, the therapist should not simply rely on visualizations. It is important to see each client as an individual with particular problems in particular stressful situations and, only when it is appropriate, should visualizations be used.

In our streams of consciousness, we find not only words and ideas but, also,

visual images, both of what happened in the past and what can happen in the future. Therapists can use more effectively the human penchant to visualize. Often, the visual modality is neglected in our thinking process regarding more positive stories that we can tell to ourselves and to others. The current book series aims to rectify this oversight through its many therapeutic visualizations. Narratives need not be verbal alone.



Dream Dance

The joy of music, rhythm, and dance invigorates life and provides the best source of destressing. We are connected in the smooth flow of coordinated, undulating bodies and the powerful chant of multitudes singing. Music and dance empower both individual and group. We sing in unison in choirs, or dance together to the trance of drumbeats. Or, we simply absorb the enchanting melodies that we hear at symphonies, at concerts, on the radio, or from our electronic devises. We listen to music as we fall asleep and it carries into the reverie of our dreams. **Music is to life, as life is to life.**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The book series on Rejoining Joy owes much to my teachers, some of the best of whom have been my clients. It is their stories that have inspired me. Often, it is their ideas and solutions that I put into written and visual form. Often, they are like psychologists, and I simply facilitate the dialogue that they are having in their own minds about which course of action to follow, which advice to accept, and so on.

Another special set of teachers has involved my family, including my mother (Rosalind) and my late father (Samuel), my wife (Lelia) and our children (Carina, Joy, Victoria). They have been great teachers about children and parenting, as has been our first grandchildren, David and Osher. In turning to rehabilitation psychology, I owe much to Stephen Swallow, who was an excellent supervisor and mentor. Other important teachers whom I have had in my student and professional life have included: Jim Alcock, John Crozier, Thérèse Gouin Décarie, Neville Doxey, Michael Lewis, Edward Meade, Ronald Melzack, Gert Morgenstern, Marvin Simner, and Peter H. Wolff. To all these people, I say a hardy THANK YOU.

I would like to thank the following people who have helped put together the book series. Orden Braham of e-promotions completed the computer graphics following the hand written figures that I gave him, and he turned them into

the professional quality so clearly evident. Beth Crane of WeMakeBooks.ca worked diligently setting up the pages in their attractive format and provided timely advice, as well. Moreover, she greatly improved on the organization of the contents of the figures. Kim Monteforte set up the pages for the sayings book. Also Cindy Cake expertly put together the child alphabet book, which has been placed on the website for the book series (rejoiningjoy.com). Finally, Heidy Lawrance contributed to the last phases of preparing the book series for the website. The website itself is an excellent one, thanks to her work and that of Nathan Lawrance and Donna Lam, who worked so creatively on it.

Carina Young Rock had worked arduously on the first draft of some of the graphics, and Arthur Demerjian has helped her in this regard. More important, Carina Young Rock has provided photographs for the book series, the excellent quality of which is noticeable. These are, first, from the holy land and its nature preserves. Also, she took pictures in New York State. Brian Rock has added wonderful pictures of Switzerland. Joy Young provided the pictures of Toronto. Not to be left out, I added pictures from my visits to the San Francisco area and the Phoenix area (where conferences took place). Carina Young Rock and Joy Young have contributed some artwork to the series (Carina: the introductory art to Volume IV; Joy:

Figures 29.11 and the loon in Northern Bird in Volume V). They collaborated in writing the essay entitled, "Harmony."

Polly's parents have given kind permission for me to reproduce her epitaph (text for Figure 29.11) and the Foreword to the sayings book.

Editors and proofreaders must have patience, and, and I give Joy Young, Carina Young, Victoria Young, Catherine Leek, and Shayna Buhler many thanks. Jessica Chan and Darcy Winkler provided pertinent advice. Don Bastian provided incisive feedback from an editor's perspective that led to improvements in the final draft. Finally, a colleague, Andrew Kane, provided feedback on the essay, "On Psychology," demonstrating his effective writing skills.

Joy Young and Candice Rubinstein undertook the noble effort of struggling through my handwriting to type the manuscript. They had help from Regina Altarkovsky, Jessie Amaral, Melissa Canastraro, Kaitlyn Chambers, Jessica Chan, Joyce Chan, Aline Demerjian, Bonnie Donaldson, Hilary Downes, Paula Druzga, Ilana Gorodezky, Michelle Greisman, Urszula Jasiowka, Natalie Kardasopoulos, Ko Khaira, Vanessa Kissoon-Singh, Simone McMillan, Kathy Raufi, and Darcy Winkler.

I wish to thank Plenum Publishing Company (now called Springer Science & Business Media) for their kind permission to use full or adapted versions of material from my 1997 book, entitled *Adult Development, Therapy, and Culture: A Postmodern Synthesis*. The material forms the basis of the following figures in this series: E2-2, E2-3, E2-4, 7.5, 18.4, 26.5, 28.10, and 29.9. The poem entitled "A Healing Poem" is repro-

duced from that book, as is the essay "Reflections for Adults in Transition or Crisis." The art piece introducing Volume IV is taken from the cover of the Plenum book. Springer gave kind permission to take excerpts from chapters in my 2006 and 2007 books for the appendix in the book of essays. The first appendix is constituted by an excerpted, condensed version of a chapter by Young and Yehuda (2006). The second appendix is mostly constituted by excerpts from a chapter by Young, Kane, and Nicholson (2007), and by excerpts from an undergraduate BA research thesis by Janice Dias, written under my supervision, and published with permission by the authors. Parts of the essay entitled "Rehabilitation Psychology" are based on an article that I published in 2008 in the Springer journal that I edit, *Psychological Injury and Law*. Springer also gave permission to use material from my book in press for a section of the introductory essay on psychology and for two figures.

Many thanks to Mark Biernacki, LLB, of the law firm Smart and Biggar, for securing copyright and intellectual property rights for the book series and the website.

If you would like to order material related to *Rejoining Joy*, such as the artwork or the photographs, kindly visit www.regainjoy.com.

Gerald Young, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
Glendon College, York University
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
February, 2011

SUGGESTED PROFESSIONAL READINGS

There are many books available for the interested reader. Robert Sapolsky (2004) has written an excellent trade book on the topic of stress. Boenisch and Haney (2004) present a fine book with ways of dealing with stress. In terms of dealing with the psychological trauma after an accident, the reader should consult Hickling and Blanchard (2006). A more academic description of stress can be found in Lehrer, Woolfolk, and Sime (2007). Pain management techniques are described very well in Turk and Winter (2006) and in Thorn (2004). The psychology textbooks that I use to teach my courses at the university have provided me with an excellent fund of knowledge (Arnett; DeHart and colleagues; Wicks-Nelson and Israel). For my own work, the reader is referred to Young (1997), Young (2007), and Young and colleagues (2006, 2007). For those interested in original academic journal articles on stress and distressing, you may consult: *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping; International Journal of Stress Management; Journal of Psychological Trauma; Journal of Traumatic Stress; Work and Stress, Traumatology, Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma, and Psychological Traumas: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy.*

Arnett, J. J. (2007). *Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood: A Cultural Approach* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Boenisch, E., & Haney, C. M. (2004). *The Stress Owner's Manual: Meaning, Balance, & Health in Your Life* (2nd Ed.). Atascadero, CA: Impact.

DeHart, G. B., Sroufe, L. A., & Cooper, R. G. (2004). *Child Development: Its Nature and Course* (6th ed.). Boston: McGraw Hill.

Lehrer, P. M., Woolfolk, R. L., & Sime, W. E. (2007). *Principles and Practice of Stress Management* (3rd ed.). New York: Guilford Press.

Hickling, E. J., & Blanchard, E. B. (2006). *Overcoming the Trauma of Your Motor Vehicle Accident: A Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment Program Workbook*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sapolsky, R. M. (2004). *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers: Guide to Stress, Stress-Related Disease, and Coping* (3rd ed.). New York: Freeman.

Thorn, B. E. (2004). *Cognitive Therapy for Chronic Pain: A Step-by-Step Guide*. New York: Guilford.

Turk, D. C., & Winter, F. (2006). *The Pain Survival Guide: How to Reclaim Your Life*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Wicks-Nelson, R., & Israel, A. C. (2009). *Behavior Disorders of Childhood*. (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

SUGGESTED SELF-HELP READINGS

In a certain sense, there is no competition for this book series because it is unique in the ways described. In another sense, the other self-help books that are presented below do very well and promise to continue to do well. Given that the present book series is unique compared to them, it is complementary to the others, and reader will find it an excellent addition to their self-help book library. Or, for young people, it could be a great way to start in self-help, learn psychology, or otherwise be inspired, learn, and grow. In the following, we review some recent books on the topic that are somewhat related to the present book series. By comparing them to the present book series, we illustrate not that the present book series is better, but that the field is ripe for another self-help book in psychology having the series positive characteristics, as described in the above.

A. The first group of competitors in the field that I examine consists of workbooks.

1. The first one is by Martha Davis, Elizabeth R. Eshelman, and Matthew Mckay called, *The relaxation & stress reduction workbook*. It follows the traditional model of workbooks, with a lot of text and exercises given throughout the chapters. The workbook in the present book series differs from it by having most of the exercises being one page in length, so that there are hundreds of them in the book. Each of mine has a brief introductory text that can stand alone, is interesting to read, and relates to a major theme in the other book in the series. Then, each introductory text is followed by two questions. Both questions are aimed at having the reader learn how to handle the issue presented in the exercise and feel confident in doing so.
2. The book by Glenn R. Schiraldi, *The post traumatic stress disorder sourcebook*, follows the same model. It covers many common therapeutic techniques to help clients deal with their traumas. It also covers the effects of trauma on many aspects of daily life. The present book series covers the material in Schiraldi, but in a more concise way, allowing coverage of many other topics.
3. The next book is *Mind over mood*, by Dennis Greenberger and Christine A. Padesky. It is a workbook that deals with cognitive-behavioral therapy, for example, for depression. Many of the workbook exercises deal with standard cognitive-behavioral techniques. In comparison, in my book series, although it is based on a cognitive-behavioral approach, it is not strictly on that approach. It is more expansive in how it deals with problems, yet nevertheless it is grounded in the cognitive-behavioral approach.

4. The next book is by Margaret A. Caudill and it is called, *Managing pain before it manages you*. The title shows a similarity with the present approach because a lot of what is done in the present book series is aimed at helping people manage their problems. The Caudill workbook is written in the standard workbook format, with a lot of text and exercises. It includes chapters on communication and problem solving. The comments for this book are similar to those of the others—it is well done but it deals with a limited range of difficulties that people confront after trauma and in their daily lives.
5. The same can be said for the workbook by Martin M. Anthony and Richard P. Swinson, called, *The shyness and social anxiety workbook*. Comparative analysis reveals that most likely at the scientific level, this workbook is the best one. It emphasizes that we are the experts and it intends that we generalize from what we learn so that we can deal with future difficult social situations. Once more, it is noted that the present book series covers a broader range of material, and is complementary to this one.
6. *Mindstorms* is a book written by John W. Cassidy, and it is a guide for families living with traumatic brain injury. It gives suggestions to families and patients, but it is not a workbook, *per se*. The present book series does not focus on traumatic brain injury, but it can

help patients and families dealing with the stress, emotional upset, and effects on daily living that accompany traumatic brain injury.

To conclude, all these workbooks that I have reviewed are complementary to my own, but, given its advantages, mine will gain a fair share of the market and prosper in sales.

B. The second set of competitor books that are examined are not workbooks, but are more general ones, mostly with text, rather than exercises.

1. The first one is by Barbara L. Fredrickson, called, *Positivity*. Positive psychology is a recent, fast-developing field, and Dr. Fredrickson builds on her concept of “broaden and build” to construct a helpful book. In her book, she ends up with suggestions for increasing positivity and flourishing, and offers a helpful toolkit of ideas. She does not have workbook exercises and does not use visuals. Given this contrast, the present book series is different and unique. At the same time, although it is not called a book directly on positive psychology, it is steeped in this approach.
2. The second book is by Stephanie McClellan and Beth Hamilton, who have written a book called, *So stressed*. It explains very well from a scientific basis the negative effects of stress on our body and on our psychology. It develops a stress detox program and indi-

cates how we can build resilience and regain peace of mind. There are a lot of similarities in the present approach in dealing with these matters, although the present book series is medical than them and deal with many more issues than just handling stress. There are also the other differences described in the above that make the present book series special.

3. James Hollis wrote a book on, *What matters most*. In a certain sense, my own book deals with similar issues. He considers love and living fully, wisdom and spirituality, adopting new ways of living, finding meaning, and creating our own paths and journeys. The present book series deals with these topics, as well, as it is not simply just about handling stress and emotions on a momentary level. It is also about living a full life, and it reflects my basic philosophy that life is about responsibility or taking on responsibilities that make sense to us and about continually re-dedicating ourselves to these responsibilities. Our responsibilities might include raising children with love, living with our partners in love, and studying and working with dedication and application.
4. Another book about daily living and change has been written by David Posen, called, *Always change a losing game*. It deals with making the right choices, avoiding traps, strengthening beliefs, and so on. As with these other books reviewed in this section, it consists mostly

text. Not only does the present book series deal with the themes in this book, it also deals with them in the unique ways indicated.

5. Ronald D. Siegel has written a book on the very influential approach of mindfulness, called, *The mindfulness solution*. Mindfulness is a kind of meditation that is simple to use and apply. As explained by Siegel, mindfulness can help deal with anxiety, depression, pain, and stress. Also, the book discusses areas of daily living, such as romance and parenting. Mindfulness can help us break bad habits, change, and grow.

The reader will notice that the present book series deals with all of these, although it does not refer to techniques as mindfulness, *per se*. Rather than teach one technique, the book series offers an array of choices to the reader and they can combine them in ways that are effective for them, while adding to them other coping resources. The approach of the author to psychotherapy and counseling is not about technique. Nor is it about theory. Rather, the present book series is about learning about oneself and growing, on the one hand, and about genuinely meeting the person in context at the individual level, on the other hand.

6. Finally, there are self-help books with catchy titles and contents, such as written by Leil Lowndes, on *How to instantly connect with anyone*. The reader will appreciate that the book series includes

hundreds of sayings in the margins of the text pages, and has gathered them into a book fully dedicated to presenting them. In addition, the present book series has put in bold font hundreds of sentences in the text that are catchy and that are worthy of emphasis. However, the approach of the author in writing these sayings and sentences has been to be educational and instructional,

and not only wise, humorous, inspiring, and realistic. Dr. Young wants the reader to remember and act on the sayings. However, more important, he would especially like the reader to remember specific behavioral and cognitive techniques and other strategies that have proven through psychological and scientific bases to lead to constructive change in the ways of living.

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CONCLUSION

Readers should note that the book series may not apply fully to them. Some parts might strike home, while others may be too advanced or may not address personal situations. On the other hand, readers may find that some parts have raised points that they have avoided. A good response would be to say to oneself, "I didn't realize that this book series could help me with this situation. I will keep going in my reading to help me with it."

Throughout the book series, I use some humour, irony, and other means of inducing smiles or laughter. When clients first enter my office, the use of humour is not appropriate. However, humour can help as sessions proceed, as long as it is used sensitively for helping clients move forward.

Note that in this series, I have protected the confidentiality of my clients. In this regard, at the few points when I do refer to particular clients or case studies, their background characteristics, situations, and issues have been altered in order to protect their anonymity.

In summary, I have written a self-help book series with unique features. There are eight books in the series, and the total pages across the books that are available to the reader number almost 2,000 pages. The book series should be appealing to the general reader, as well as mental health professionals and their patients. It will have a long shelf life, so readers should keep it on their reading list for years to come, and consult the full series, available at

www.rejoiningjoy.com. We look forward to your feedback.

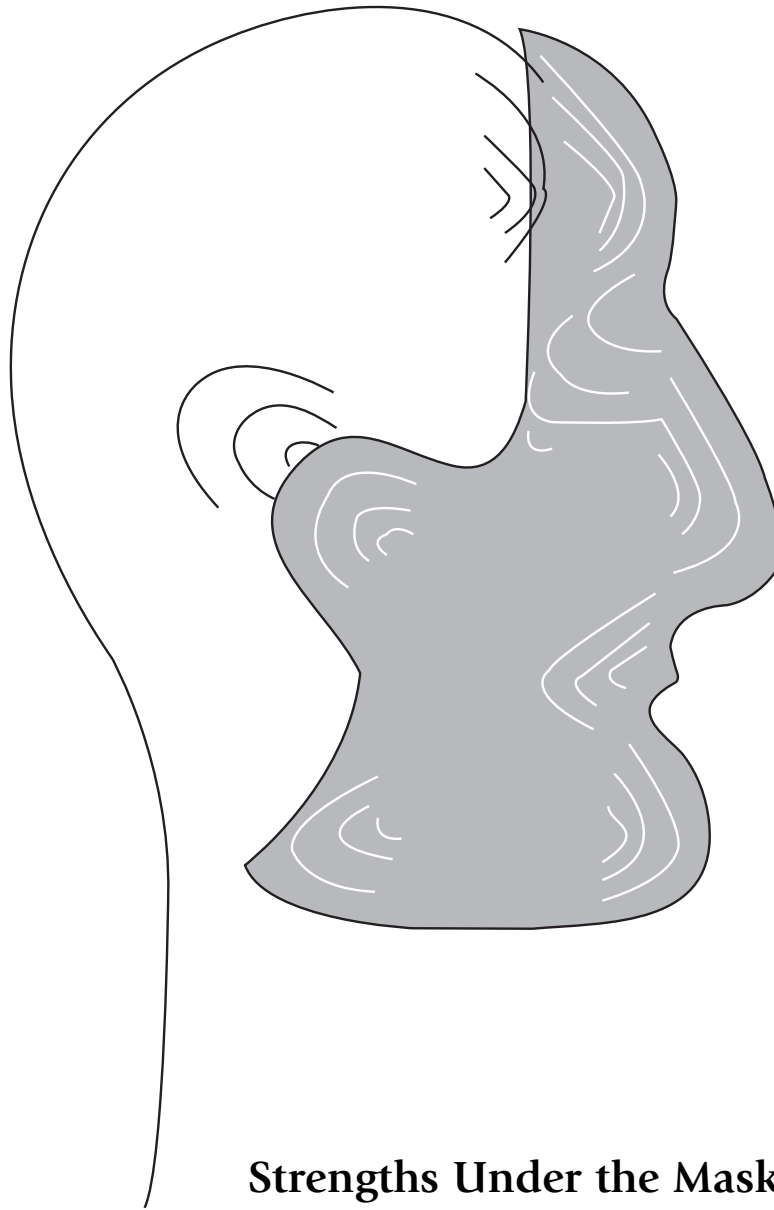
From Science to Practice and from Practice to Science

[Summary of an article published in the *Trauma Division Newsletter* of the American Psychological Association, 2009]

Evidence-based practice concerns application of sound scientific empirical investigation of psychological interventions to the treatment of patients. Moreover, it includes the capacity to engage in critical thinking, using scientific principles, in analyzing the quality of the research and in applying it to the patient being treated. Evidence-based practice adjusts to the wide individual variations in the population and the limits of the research.

Ideally, psychotherapy is a dynamic encounter of the therapist and patient, as they strive together to establish pathways to empowerment and improvement in the patient. Psychologists are trained in according to schools of thought, but often prefer eclectic and individualized approaches. We treat people for their symptoms rather than treating them for how they fit into schools of thought and learned techniques.

For a scientifically informed approach to psychotherapy published in the journal, see: Young, G. (2008). Psychotherapy for psychological injury: A biopsychosocial and forensic perspective. *Psychological Injury and Law*, 1 (4), 287-310. (www.asapil.org)



Strengths Under the Mask

Each of us has a unique set of core strengths that make us special. Each of us has weaknesses that can be improved by self-exploration, social support, and good advice. What others see in us is not a measure of what we know to be true of ourselves. At the same time, we may be confused about who we are, what are our strengths and virtues, and where we want to go and grow. **When times are difficult, we need to know that we have positive psychological anchors that can help us stabilize, preparing constructive change.** These can be found by being vigilant to our depths. By seeking inside, we will find constructive paths to the outside. By taking constructive paths on the outside, our inside anchors will grow.

VOLUME IV — INTRODUCTION TO DAILY LIVING

The present book, deals with issues that arise in our daily lives. First, there is a chapter on the self but, inevitably, as well, the chapter deals with others. The next five chapters concern the basics of family life. These chapters deal with communication, children, and teenagers. Together, the chapters deal with issues that may arise with one's partner and one's offspring. Next, a chapter applicable to work follows. Later chapters concern more advanced topics, such as change and inspiration. The last chapter examines major perspectives in psychology, especially the biopsychosocial model, which understands behavior as complex and the result of interacting systems.

This book might appear to be a smorgasbord of diverse topics, but there is one central theme in them—by learning to destress and to deal with our emotions, we can pass through the problems, issues, and crises of life with our head held high and our family held together.

Life forms a complex system of interacting parts and actors inhabiting a vibrant and ever-changing context. It can appear so overwhelming, when we get caught up in the large forces of stress

that daily life may bring. There are dangerous undercurrents that sometimes we do not realize are present, and sometimes enormous problems for which we need solutions. Buffeted by too much stress, perhaps we cannot imagine stabilizing our lives. However, eventually, we act on the stress, and our lives can once more become tranquil and our mind becomes more at ease. We persist in rejoining joy and navigating well through the other stresses.

Moreover, in the stresses about us, when we keep as calm as we can in the middle of the turbulence, somehow our calm may influence others with us. Sometimes our serenity and our will to destress provide a good role model that acts on the exterior, facilitating others' success in dealing with stresses encountered.

A major goal of the book is to help us not only deal with stress and emotions that are experienced on the inside, but also to better adapt to the social and other contexts in our daily life on the outside. The book may help the reader to better achieve these goals. Moreover, it provides material that may help readers develop towards increased psychological change, growth, and flourishing.

Which

**Whichever way we
decide to go, we
need us to decide
to go.**

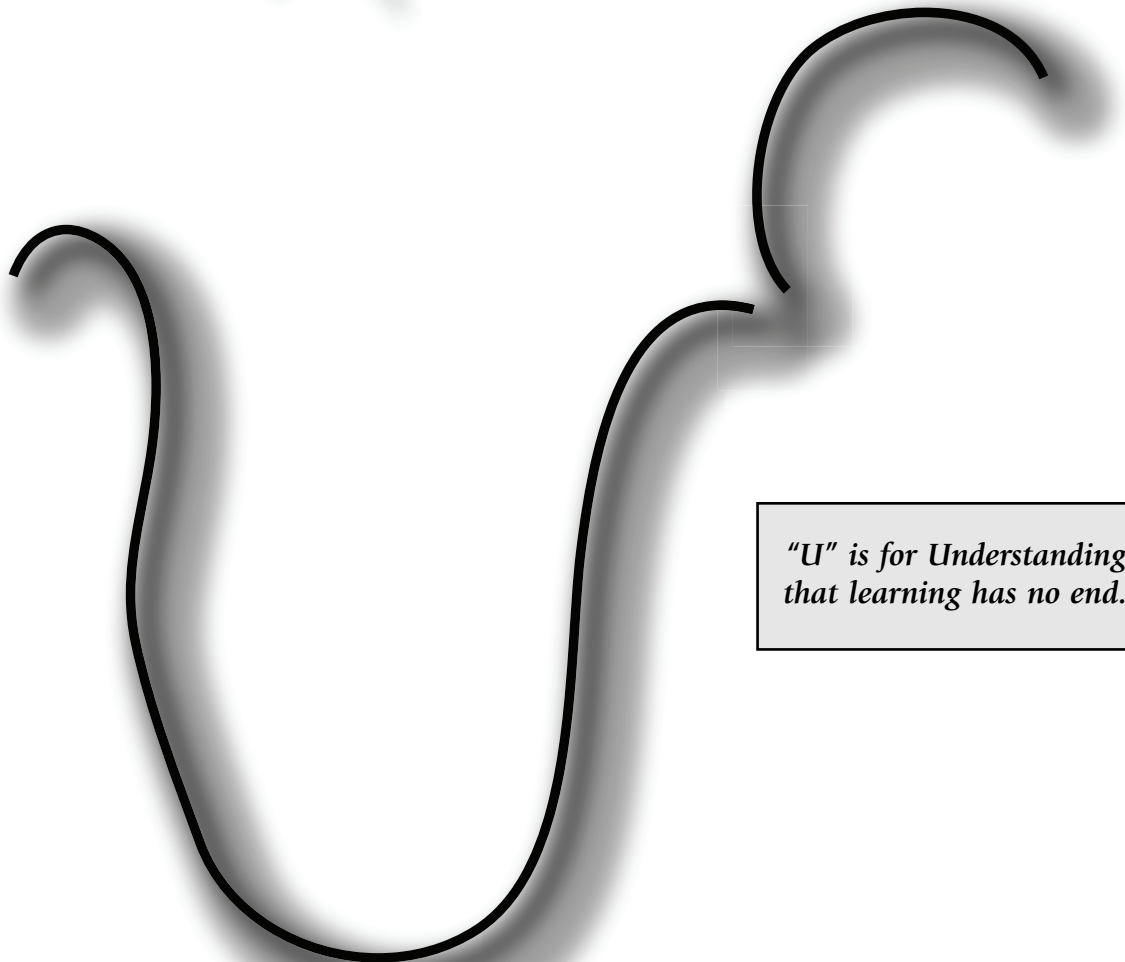
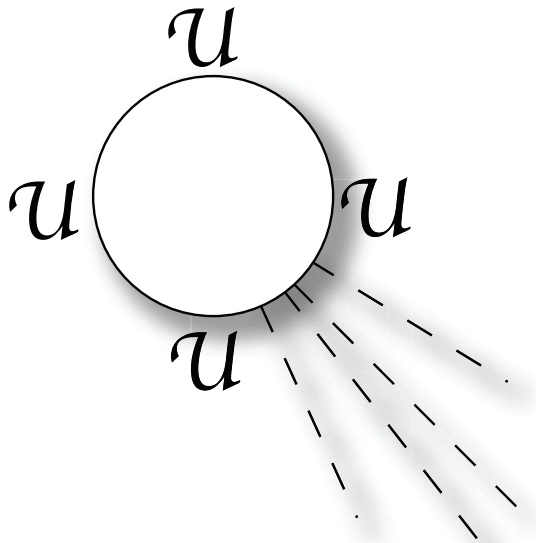
Daily Living

Part 1

*In these six chapters,
I deal with the self,
the other, and children.*

Chapter 21

Self Construction



*"U" is for Understanding
that learning has no end.*



.....
*When people tell you that
you cannot do it anymore,
tell them that they cannot
tell you that anymore.*
.....

.....
*Life is not fair—when
we do not try our best.*
.....

In this chapter, I examine self-growth. The concept of the self is a complex psychological notion. It refers to our subjective sense, or feelings, of what we are and the collection of objective evidence about who we are. It includes both our own opinion of ourselves and the incorporation of what we perceive of or know of others' opinions about us. The self is composed of both a personal identity—what we feel are our personality, values, intellectual skills, and emotions—and a social identity—what we feel are our social skills, family relations, personal relations, social networks, and functions in our community and culture. The self is an evolving, ever-changing, dynamic perception of us that takes the form of coherent cognitive and emotional structural systems. It is composed of many parts, modules, faces, subsystems, or partial selves, such as beliefs, attitudes, roles, and personae that vary in context, but that are integrated into a whole.

The glue to self-integration lies in others. The self develops more cohesively and coherently when the person is raised in a nurturing environment. Further, the self expands through contact with the wider social world of friends, relatives, school-mates, teachers, co-workers, and so on. The self does not grow in a vacuum—it absorbs and reflects; it is responsive and shares; it contributes to and nurtures the selves of others. In this sense, the self is always social. It could be named a co-self, because it is collaboratively and cooperatively constructed out of the stuff of daily social encounters. It could be named an integration of co-selves, because of its multiple personal and social natures. The self never stops growing, which is consistent with what happens with all of our psychological characteristics. The self learns from each experience, whether in terms of hardening and closing or in terms of softening and opening. When stresses overwhelm the self, when social support or buffers are not adequately in place, the former option prevails.

The self always seeks outlets of growth, no matter how dire things seem. It beckons us and calls us to beckon others to free its growth toward softness, to openings, and to others. It is the master organizer of our internal harmonization and external adaptation. The self possesses an awareness that it exists; that is, it has a self-monitoring function, facilitating its integration and growth. It is like an orchestra conductor who gracefully balances the diverse players and instruments

of a symphony into melodic rhythms of music. It persists and smoothes out rough edges, deals with interference, and coalesces the parts into a whole.

The garden is always more than its flowers, music is always more than its notes. Similarly, we are more than ourselves but, at the same time, our “selves” are more than our behaviors. The self can be the supreme listener, listening not only to our messages, but also to those of others. The self can also be the supreme narrator, telling captivating tales to others. The self can grow multiply, differentiating into an exquisite collection of skills, attitudes, relationships, and stories. We should do our all to promote this growth, both in ourselves and in others. We should seek the necessary internal and external resources when we cannot promote our self to arrive at optimal levels. **The self is the ultimate proof that we are more than our biology and our environment. Its potential stories can take us way beyond both.**

Figure 21-1 illustrates an important theme about how the self can change. In nature, phenomena often exist in pairs that are complementary, even if opposite. Examples include white and black, animal and plant, left and right, and clockwise and counter-clockwise. Each is partially defined by the other. The same applies to human nature. Opposites or complements form symmetries. For example, yin goes with yang, introverted with extroverted, and individual with society.

When problems arise in our lives, we may experience a negative downturn. Motivation is lacking, we feel stuck, and we cannot see a future. Positive feelings and ideas are overpowered by our pessimism. However, the positives are still there waiting for their flame to be lit. Optimism is pessimism’s handmaiden, for it always tags along with it no matter how extreme is our pessimism. Though it may be hidden, optimism is not forgotten. Though struggling to reveal itself, optimism can be seen.

For example, in the weird but wonderful world of quantum physics, subatomic particles can exist at once in two complementary states, and twinned particles proceeding in opposite directions submit to the same forces even if those forces act directly only on one of the particles. Also, particles such as electrons are not considered actual mass, but are considered clouds of probability trajectories orbiting around nuclei of atoms.

The best information that we can be told is that it is up to us to decide what to do with any information that we are told.

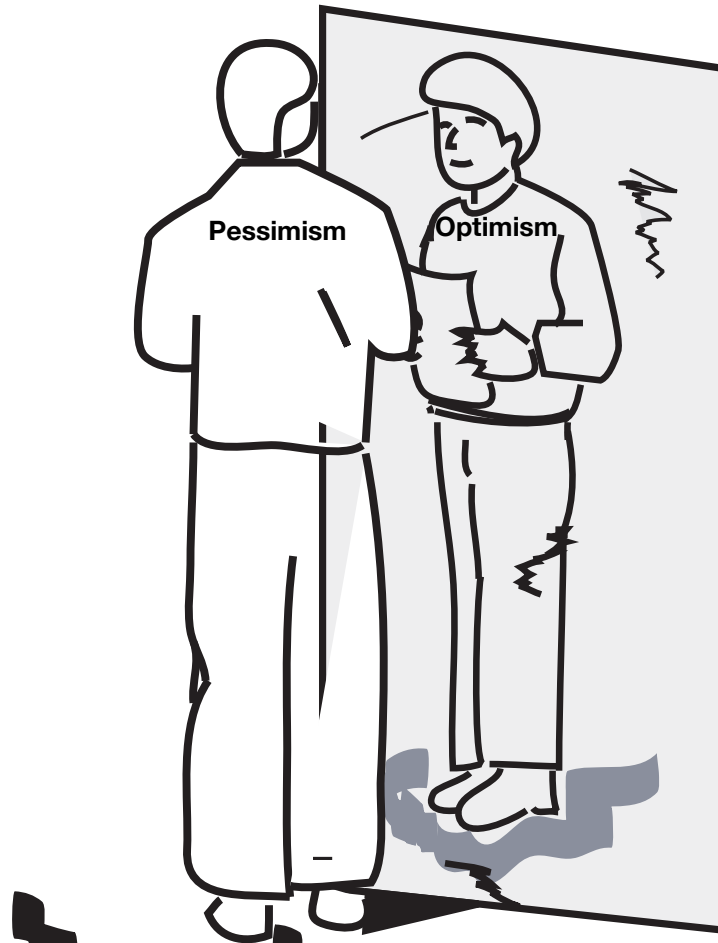
If pessimism takes hold, give it a head lock.

Thinking can turn negative thoughts to positive ones— if we let it.

Figure 21-1

Optimism is essential for our well being, both psychological and physical. Optimism enlarges our reflection in the mirror toward more health and hope. For example, a state of optimism before surgery helps the recovery after it. Optimism is the best booster against stress. So give it a shot.

For Every Reaction, There is an Equal and Opposite Action



This state of affairs can serve as a metaphor for self-transformation. When we are stuck and uninspired, our motivation still can be found, no matter how low we feel. The self may have developed old ways of reacting to problems and to stress that turn us away from the positive in us, but the self has multiple stories it can tell, and one story that it can tell is that turning away does not make the problems or stress go away. Rather, by turning away, the problems or stress may get larger.

.....
*When we think that
we cannot, we need to
look for the knots.*
.....

However, by turning to confront and deal with the problems and stress, especially if we display as much calm as possible, they are understood better and can be resolved better. The possibility of being able to take a leap of faith to a more optimistic, competent, problem-solving, calm, stress-handling, and positive self is part of the condition of having a self. The self can create great symphonies.

The self is never one-way; it exists in correlated states of positive and negative, of two possible directions, and of many possible trajectories. In any one situation, multiple responses are possible, no matter how much we may limit ourselves to the negative through our old habits. Quantum physics is only a theory but, at the level of the self, it fits observations.

In this regard, **a state of a lack of motivation and pessimism can transform to a more positive state in an eye blink and easier than we think.** When stress persists and weakens us, it is important that we are able to call upon our positive resources, the optimistic side of ourselves. We need to look deep within ourselves to find the best of us so that we can see outside of ourselves from the base of the best of us.

In **Figure 21-2**, I emphasize that, at least some of the time, for much of what we do in our daily lives, we have constructed good habits and should feel good about our choices. The self needs to know that it is built out of a matrix of intellectual, emotional, and behavioral consequences of endless small decisions that usually are made in good faith. We should rejoice in most of our daily choices because, often, they are sound and, moreover, we should return to these basics whenever we feel overwhelmed. **The sum of our good choices in the minor issues of our daily lives indicates a deeper level of wisdom that can take hold and flourish.**

.....
*"No way" is a prelude
to "Know way."*
.....

.....
*Self-definition is not a
sentence but a novel that
we write lifelong.*
.....



Figure 21-2

By valuing the right choices that we have made, we can increase their presence in our lives. Optimism, belief, and hope about the future happen best when we deal with our issues from the past with the goal of living better in the present. The best choices are the ones that are made for the best, for both ourselves and others.

Choose To Choose

Check off those sentences that apply to you. Despite our difficulties, we have all made good choices in our lives. We should value those choices and our ability to make them.

Q

&

A

- I take care of myself by getting a good night's sleep.
- I know what it takes to relax (music, good friends, pleasant activities, etc.).
- For the daily stresses of life, I do quite well (getting off to work/school; listening to what people are saying; finding time to eat some healthy food; tidying up at home; talking things out, either with others or to myself).
- I like to be active, and do what I can (walk, contribute to chores, exercise, shop).
- I have demonstrated self-control before. I don't like to overdo things, although this happens. If I ever overdo things, I have back-up plans, even if it's just waiting things out.
- There are times that I could be angry, but I'm not. I do know how to walk away, change things around, and get out of difficult situations.
- When I get down, I don't stay that way the whole day. I try to get out of it. I'm good at distracting myself.
- There are some things that I do well, even very well at times. I recognize these things.
- I know how to have fun. Even when I'm worried, there's still time for fun.
- I've solved problems before. I did the right thing, thought things out, and found the answer.
- I know that there are other problems that I can solve. And I know where to look for help to solve them, even if it is simply asking someone for help or reading about the problem.

Always Often Sometimes

Always Often Sometimes

Always Often Sometimes

Always Often Sometimes

Always Often Sometimes

Always Often Sometimes

Always Often Sometimes

Always Often Sometimes

Always Often Sometimes

Always Often Sometimes

Always Often Sometimes

Figure 21-3 underscores the need for us to have a softer side of the self. Often, we feel that a strong self is one that must be filled with bravado, daring, a macho attitude, not holding back, and so on. We feel that we are weak if we back down or turn toward quiet activities, such as classical pursuits and artistic expressions.

However, by expanding the serene side of ourselves, we stop running relentlessly and recklessly toward exhaustion and fighting through every situation. It is enriching to enjoy

.....
Sometimes the calmest things are the most exciting.
.....

.....
The most important trips are those between our mind and the moment.
.....

Figure 21-3

Wholesome activities start with seeking inner psychological peace in order to help extend beyond ourselves to shared activities with others.

Quest... Pleasures

Quiet
Universes
Establish
Serene
Trust

Music
Uplifting films
Creativity
Hobbies

Social life
Others
Family, friends
Teamwork
Extended family
Relations

Play, passion
Leisure
Extracurricular
Activity
Sports
University or other course
Recreation
Exercise
Singing

a full range of activities, including quiet pursuits, so that we can make appropriate choices about which activities and acquaintances are best for us. **The more serene is the mind, the stronger is the self.** When we are like this, calm on the inside rather than rough on the outside, we become stronger in our self, in the sense of having a sense of self that is calm and that increases admiration by others.

.....
*When we get a handle
on optimism, we should
open ourselves to its
possibilities.*
.....

Figure 21-4 examines the way the self can be reconstructed or reworked, through the modality of appropriate stories that we can tell ourselves. There are many parts to the self. Some of the most important components are listed in the figure. There are our bodies and brains, our emotions and minds, our behaviors and core selves, and the overall meanings or messages that we tell to ourselves and to others. These areas of self-development may be saturated with enslaving old stories that are pessimistic and negative.

.....
*Determination gets us
going; Enthusiasm keeps
us going; and Effort
gets us there.*
.....

The self can rework the stories to be more optimistic and positive. Script writers are not born, they are made. Life does not have to be a “B” movie or a horror story. We are the producers of our life script, and we can start writing better stories for ourselves. Each of the old story lines that were written for us can be rewritten by ourselves as a new script. The endings may not be entirely happy, because life’s movie is not a fantasy or fiction. However, the endings to our stories, once we take charge of writing them, can always end in dignity and growth. **The stories of our lives may not end in material riches, but they can always end in the best of rewards—inner peace and outer joy, inner calm and outer determination, inner destressing and outer resilience, and an inner satisfied self and an outer satisfying self.**



Figure 21-4

The self is so complex that only straightforward, honest stories about it and others keep it working well. We can take away negative ways that we may have had in looking at things, and find positives. The past may be written in stone, but the future is written in imagination.

Writing a New Future

	Old Story Line	New Script
Body	Muscle tension, upset stomach, headache	Relaxation release, breathing exercises, visualizations, muscle relaxation
Brain	Organizational problems, poor memory, cannot read	Compensation strategies, writing things down, reading over
Emotion-Feeling	Depression (loss), anxiety (worry), anger, fear	Coming to terms, solving, resolving, moving ahead
Thought-Expectation	I'll never, reach those heights; I'll never work again	Not seeing the worst; thinking things will work out; taking one step at a time
Self Image	Pessimistic, resigned, poor self-esteem	Optimistic, wanting to re-invest in self
Behavior-Action	Unmotivated, disinterested, withdrawal, frustration	Hobbies, music, getting back into things, socializing
Story	I'm a failure. It was a terrible thing. I have no control	I'm trying my best. Everything is an opportunity. Control is something inside

.....
*Change can be for the better
 or worse—until we decide to
 change for the better.*

.....
*To get far in life,
 stay near the books.*

Figure 21-5 illustrates that change does not take place automatically and continuously, because change requires a will to grow. Self-change, or any type of change, does not happen instantaneously. Rather, change starts with resolution and it ends with evolution but, in between, there may be crises or, at least, challenges. After the desire for change takes hold, we need to nurture it, so that the emerging parts of our self are nurtured, in turn. Change can happen quickly, like wildfire, but such change may be ephemeral, or only at the surface. Deep change requires deep commitment, work, faith, and participation in life.

Change is a time of transition toward the better, and when it is fully embraced as a principle to follow, it never stops. Indeed, trying to stop change dams up good motives, and bad habits may develop out of displacement. When change stops, stagnation sets in. When change stops, we stop. However, when rumblings of change dominate the status quo, this may be a precursor to a commitment to change. Moreover, when change is regressive, it, too, may be a precursor to an upswing toward such commitment. **When change starts, we can extend it. When change is positive, it extends ourselves.**

Figure 21-5

When we are stuck in old ways and in constant conflict, both internal and external, a period of turbulence may ensue while we prepare for change. If we nurture change, the turbulence is temporary and easier to handle, and the results are more satisfying.

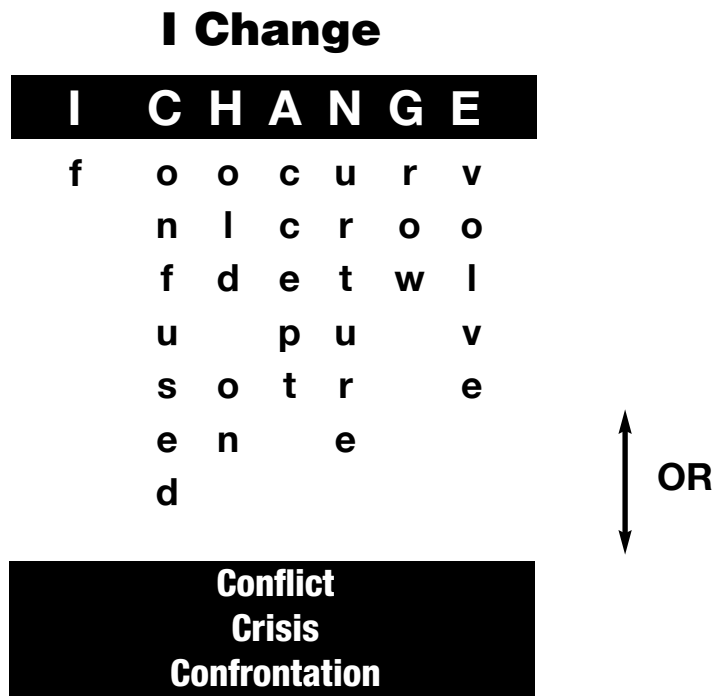


Figure 21-6 looks at the question of self-confidence. Self-confidence should always be a question. If it reigns too sure of itself over us, it can lead to the mistakes of over-confidence, arrogance, insensitivity, or impudence. It grows best when it is somewhat uncertain, rather than being too great or too low. Self-confidence should reflect a balancing act between opposites, occupying the center.

Optimally, self-confidence should be more than assertion of will no matter what the circumstance, because it is also insertion of sensitive action into circumstances that call for our help. It is not only an internal feeling, for it is also an external activity.

Self-confidence is not only about success in life tasks, because it is also an aura of being while doing any task, no

.....
There are two sides to every story that we write, the one for the reader and the one for ourselves.

.....
Life is like an elevator. It stops at the level that we select.

Figure 21-6

Often, life is characterized by paired opposites in feelings, thoughts, and actions, and it is best to find balance. For example, each developmental acquisition brings not only challenges, but also potential difficulties. In another example, each part of our self has its inverse, such as found with masculinity and femininity. By forming wholes out of the parts, our overall self becomes whole.

Self-Confidence Means Accepting Differences

Concept	Complement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal concept • relaxation • reflecting • self • mind • dreaming • flexibility • creativity • innovation • struggle • reserve • thought • self-doubt • self-esteem low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other's concept • responsibility (work, school) • doing • other (family) • body • realism • organization • logic • application • accomplishment • expression • emotion • self-knowledge • self-worth

.....
*Self-confidence is a question
of having the answers to
questions provided
by preparation.*
.....

Usher was being ushered out by his partner. He understood he had to undergo changes in himself. Chapter 21 underscores that the self and other form a we, an us. Usher is now upbeat.

.....
*Be kind to yourself—
give to another.*
.....

matter what the outcome. It is a feeling that the self is maintaining control no matter how much things feel out of control. Self-confidence reflects our dreams or creativity, even as it is grounded in context, problems, and seeking their solutions in the situations at hand. In this sense, self-confidence involves more than ourselves but, at the same time, it should never involve lording over others. Self-confidence is always ours to define but, in the end, we will find that it is defined greatly by our participation in social encounter and action.

There is never a direct transmission from what we hear about ourselves to what we think about ourselves. Of course, we listen to what others may say about us, as we build impressions of ourselves. The best way to avoid the dangers of listening too closely to what others think of us is to know ourselves. **The best way to know ourselves is to immerse ourselves in daily life, and to do the small things well, such as when we are with a person in conversation or alone in a task.** Then, it becomes easier to both perceive well ourselves, our situations, and others and to function from the large-scale dimensions of our lives, such as in social relationships and in acquiring increasingly moral, underlying values.

Trees start as the smallest of seeds, then the most fragile of saplings. The life of a tree is a metaphor for the growth of self-confidence. Trees finish as stately members of the ecosystem in the forest. Similarly, our self-confidence marks the ecology of our psychological attributes. The life of trees passes through the cycles of the seasons. Trees are dormant but protected in the stress of winter, then, vital in the spring and vibrant in the summer and, finally, rested in the fall, stronger and ready for the next cycle. Self-confidence also can cycle in growth, such as found with trees, from nascent spark to mature wisdom.

Figure 21-7 is an imperfect figure and I am willing to accept it that way. It was made to help an anxious client who worried incessantly about making mistakes, wanting to be perfect. Of course, vicious circles would develop—he would panic and make the simplest mistakes. He worried so much about how he would be judged, because he was judged so harshly as a child, that he inadvertently created situations that evoked negative judgment. However, the people who

Figure 21-7

When we live in constant dread of making mistakes, we intensify or worsen our reactions to them and the reactions of other people to them. When we begin to see our positive attitude, positive effort, and successes, we begin a process of self-renewal that places the positives in the core us, and the negatives, such as our errors, outside of our concept of our core self. When errors become, simply, other problems to solve, we become, simply, ourselves.

To Err is Not Inhuman

PERRSON

OR

PERSON



WHEN I MAKE A MISTAKE	I CAN DEAL WITH IT
<p>I think people will feel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will not like me • They will disapprove • They will see me as stupid • They will think that I'm incompetent • They will notice that I'm nervous • They will wonder what's wrong <p>I will feel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depressed, helpless • Worthless, useless • Humiliated, shamed • Like my parents described me • At a loss • Pessimist, hopeless • Anxious, stressed • Panicky, fearful <p>Worst case scenario</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will be yelled at • I will be punished • I may lose my job • They won't respect me • I won't know how to react • I'll keep worrying about all my past mistakes, and the ones I'll make in the future, and so I won't live in the present 	<p>Social strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and act to demonstrate competence • Compliment others for their competence • In turn, you'll get compliments <p>Personal strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's OK to make a mistake • Mistakes are opportunities for learning • I forgive myself for my mistakes • I forgive others for theirs • I have realistic expectations, so that not everything becomes a potential mistake <p>Best case strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be in moment • Notice when I do things right and feel good about it • Do more things at my level of competence, or slightly ahead; change how I do things, if can; enjoy things I do • Also, group work should be at group's level, or slightly ahead

.....
*Love, liberty, and the pursuit
of others' happiness.*
.....

.....
*Be positive. The path
you save may be yours.*
.....

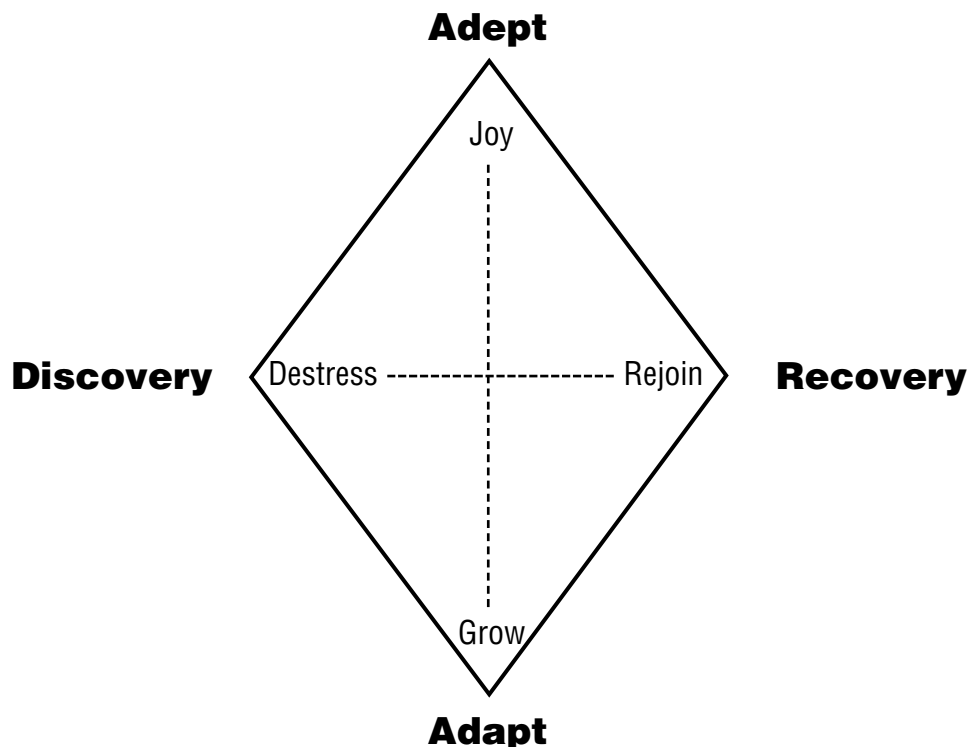
judged him as an adult were not as judgmental as he thought. They did not think or feel as negatively as he thought they would. The worst-case scenarios never materialized. I tried to point out to him that his expectations were too high, so he was always worried about mistakes instead of being present enough in the moment in order to minimize them. Moreover, he became so fixated on himself that he forgot the social basics, such as complimenting others for their good work. The advice I offered to him was simple: **when we accept mistakes as a normal part of living and work on them, we end up making less mistakes.**

Figure 21-8 examines how the self adjusts to alterations of its life course. Life never proceeds exactly as we would like it, despite our best preventative and preparatory efforts. Life has a bad habit of dealing us blows. Stress is part of its agenda. Sometimes, it tests our most basic self, overwhelming

Figure 21-8

On the pathways that we choose, there are constant challenges, crises, changes in direction, and risks of falling by the wayside. But, whenever these turbulences arise, we have a deeply ingrained, adaptive, flexible growth motivation that helps recreate our whole.

Dealing with Altered Life Path



us, but the self has built-in mechanisms to seek balance. The process is called self-regulation.

The process of self-regulation is an automatic search by the self for equilibrium after its system has been upset or perturbed. The system may bend with the impact of events but, then, it seeks self-righting so it can adapt. As it tries to re-establish a sense of control and hope for the future, the self may refer to its deepest parts, and try to enlist the help of others. The more it has handled stress well in the past, and the more optimistic it has been, the better it can find its balance again after major stress arises. The more knowledge and flexibility it has, the better it can re-adjust to the disequilibrium. Even though stress may bring out our bad habits, the more our self is buttressed with good habits that can answer to the call, the more the bad habits are contained, controlled and, finally, minimized. The process of self-regulation can help return us to our rightful, positive path in life.

Figure 21-9 offers a chart that outlines our typical daily responsibilities beyond any work obligations. I developed the chart in order to help a brain-injured client structure the daily routines of his life. There has to be some flexibility in how we tackle our hours free from work; our non-working time cannot all be scheduled like clockwork, such as when we are at work. Yet there are constraints on what we can do with our non-work time—it cannot all be free time, because there are things like chores. It seems that there are too many demands on us and that our self is pushed and pulled in many competing directions. This may end up creating a paralysis of inaction. We have many things to do in the course of each day and, if we neglect them, we neglect ourselves. **A well-rounded approach to the tasks of the day adds up to a well-rounded self.**

*Trust who you are,
what you are, what you
learned, and what
you are willing to learn.*

*We build the self
to build the other.*



Figure 21-9

By filling our time constructively in our free time, life after work becomes lively.

Daily Living Chart (Beyond Any Job)

[For example, 15–30 minutes of each in each day]

Personal		
Self-Care (to feel good)	Physical Exercise/ Walking/Going Out	Leisure/Hobbies/ Pastimes
<u>MTWTFSS</u>	<u>MTWTFSS</u>	<u>MTWTFSS</u>
Responsibility		
Messages/Chores/ Cleaning	Special Tasks/Projects (upgrade)	Helping Others (family, friends, volunteering)
<u>MTWTFSS</u>	<u>MTWTFSS</u>	<u>MTWTFSS</u>
Social		
Friends (talk)	Family (share)	Relationships (develop)
<u>MTWTFSS</u>	<u>MTWTFSS</u>	<u>MTWTFSS</u>
Self-Improvement		
Relaxation Exercises	Mood Exercises (self-control)	Studies/Self-improvement (school, course)
<u>MTWTFSS</u>	<u>MTWTFSS</u>	<u>MTWTFSS</u>

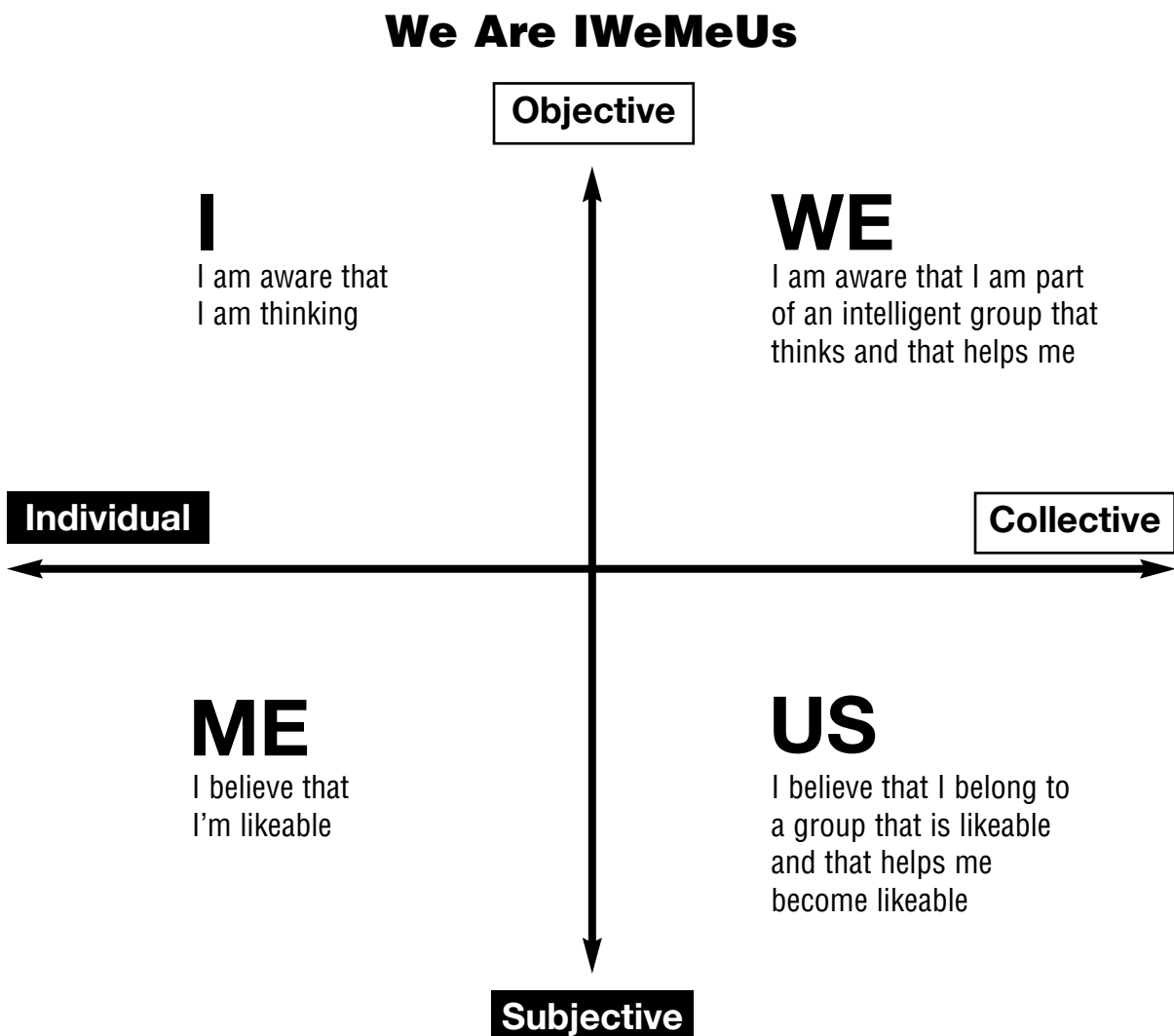
Figure 21-10 examines how we form self-concepts out of the interactions that organize our daily lives. To borrow from William James, self-identity is more than our self-consciousness (the “I”, or our subjective self), for it is also based on our evaluations of ourselves (the “me”, or our objective self). At the same time, I would add that the self is not only individual, and a product of our mind, but also it is collective, and a product of our social interactions. In this sense, as much as the self is concerned with the “I” and the “me,” the self is also concerned with the social, aware “we” and the social, evaluative “us” (see Young, 1997).

The self is the “me” in the “meeting” ground with others.

Shortcuts short circuit.

Figure 21-10

The I is not alone. It has a Me, a We, and an Us. Our Self is a collection of parts helping us in the collective of people with whom we live our daily lives.



.....
*When we think that we
finally got there, it is time
to go somewhere else.*
.....

This model of the structure of the self tells us that the self is not only a private, unchanging experience. To the contrary, the self grows in the social world of sharing, and it changes as our experience in that world changes. The self is not alone; it is dynamic, responsive, and growing, and seeks its way in the world. **Identity is social and, at the same time, the social forms identity.**

In order to capture the concept being presented, I have coined the term "IWEMEUS." It indicates that one's self, the I and the Me, is more than a singular self, for there is also the WE and the US, and we are all in it together.

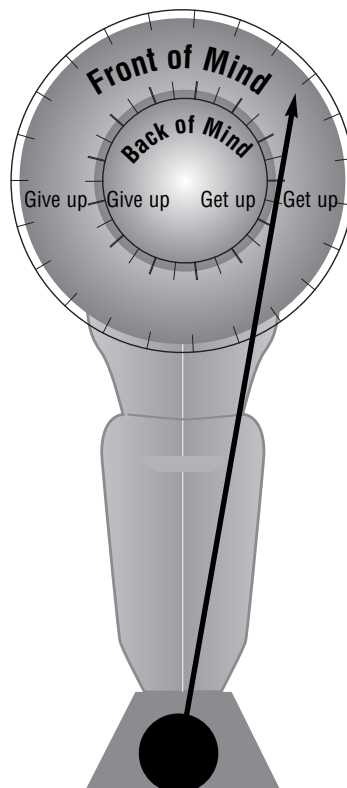
.....
*When we increase self-
confidence, we gain the
other's confidence.*
.....

Figure 21-11 asks us to find balance in self-talk. If we feel that we are in extreme self-doubt, we must remember that some positive self-confidence always remains. When we learn this lesson well, we can boost our self-confidence and obtain tools to keep it from getting low. **By learning when we have an adequate self-confidence, we give it stability**

Figure 21-11

Self-confidence varies, and is higher when we value our self. Valuing the self cannot happen without valuing the other.

Self-Reassurance Meter



and increase the speed and depth of its growth. Systems tend toward growth and equilibrium, especially when we contribute and guide them along.

Figure 21-12 indicates that self-confidence can be built up through our own efforts and by approaching things differently. On the negative side, we can withdraw from the stresses of life or react aggressively to them. However, with the right positive attitude, we can approach stress directly and try to deal with it. However, our positive will to positive action needs an engine. That engine is self-confidence, or having assertiveness with a positive attitude.

The figure contrasts the approach of being assertive while having a positive attitude of self-confidence with the approach of being assertive while having a negative attitude without self-confidence, but with irritability instead. Both are expressions of outward action, but they do not lead to the same results. Self-confidence inspires cooperation. Irritability does not inspire in a positive way. It puts people on guard. When there is anger, the self can never really relax—true self-confidence can never develop. However, there are solutions

.....
*Self-confidence is a figment
of your imagination.
Visualize it growing.*
.....

.....
*Drawing back to reflect
is not a drawback.*
.....

Figure 21-12

Self-confidence can be improved, and the effects of its lack, such as irritability, can be lessened. It happens through growth; it happens through motivation; and it happens through learned techniques. Assertiveness, self-confidence, and being oneself are natural accompaniments of positive growth.

Assertiveness is Trainable

OR



SELF-CONFIDENCE	IRRITABILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeing the whole • Keeping control • Feeling strong inside • Quiet inner reserve • Investigating fear • Showing resolve • Communicate needs • Insisting as needed • Sensitive to other • Chipping away at barriers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blinded by anger • Lose cool • Act strong on outside • Ask to be served • Invigorating fear • Vicious circles revolve • Demand satisfaction • Insisting as a lifestyle • Sensitive to self • Chip on the shoulder

.....
*When we see beyond what
we are told what to do,
we start being beyond
what we are told who we are.*
.....

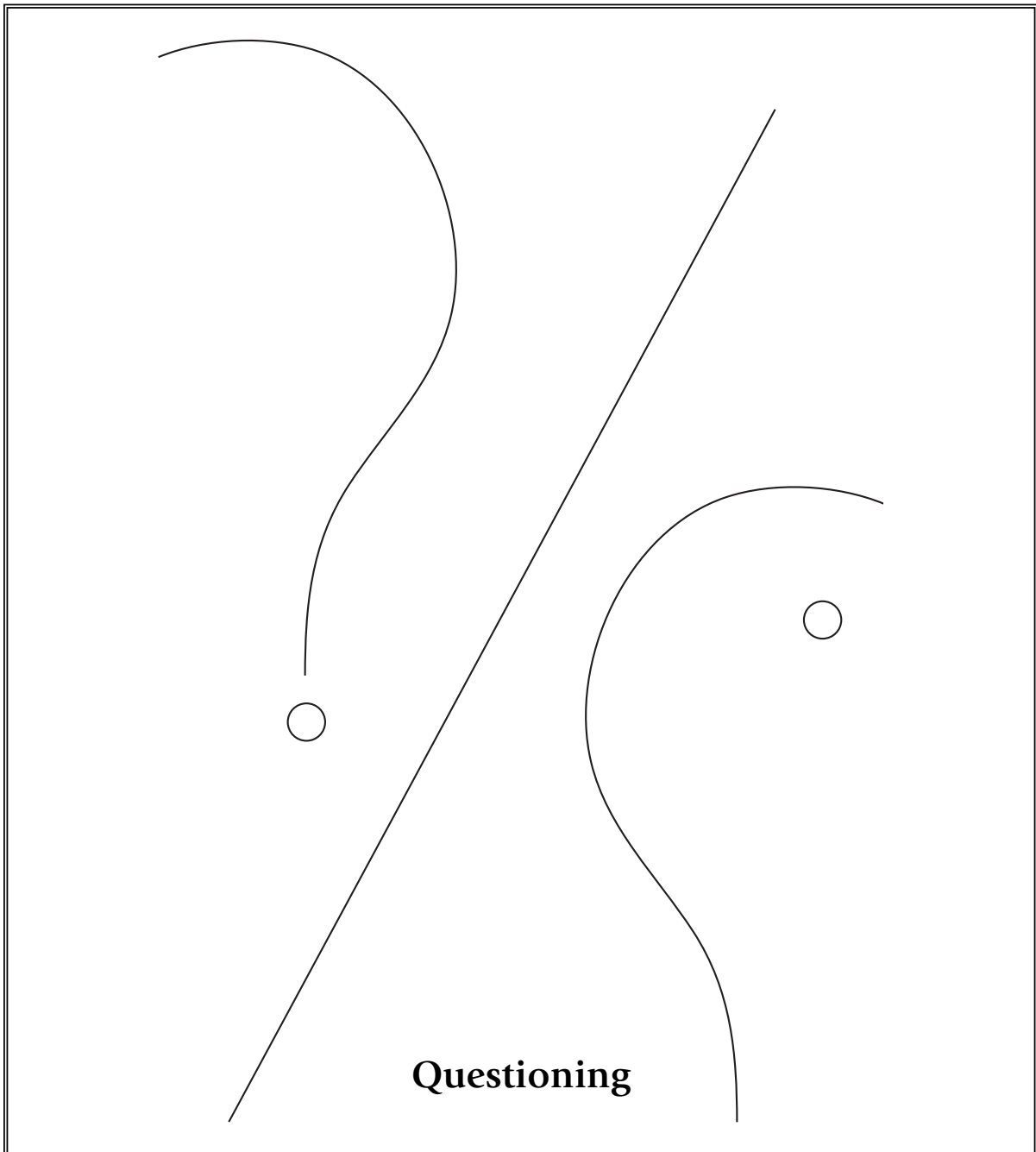
to irritability masquerading as assertiveness, and they start with ourselves.

Self-confidence and positive assertiveness can be constructed, trained, and improved. When we control interference in our will to the positive, we activate easier the positive. **Good habits can develop when we decide to make them a habit.**



The self is a complex phenomenon, and boosting its self-confidence is cardinal for destressing and rejoining joy. However, self-growth is not just about the self. The self grows best when it is invested in helping others. This may seem paradoxical. If the self is defined only in terms of our mind, there would be no room for experience to alter it. Moreover, the most growing experience takes place when we help others grow. **Helping others is a Self-fulfilling prophecy.**

.....
Each other is a brick in the building of our self. Build them well.
.....



Unwin wanted to improve his social skills. He always felt that it was hard to understand people. His friends said that he was naive. He estimated, however, that he was just too honest, because he would blurt out what he thought.

Unwin's best friend tells him that he should study more why people do and say things. He seeks out a book much like this one.

Tell the self to be itself.

If you know that sometimes the self that you show is only for show, the show can go on.

We may be able to fool some of our selves some of the time, but we can never fool even one of ourselves for all time.

We have many selves but one maestro.

When we think that our personality cannot change, we take away its capacity to do so.

Be rigorous in thought, not in flexibility to change.

The self is not for painting by numbers by others but for drawing by ourselves free form.

The self needs to be calm and composed by yourself.

Like a building, a self should have a steel frame with many windows to the world outside.

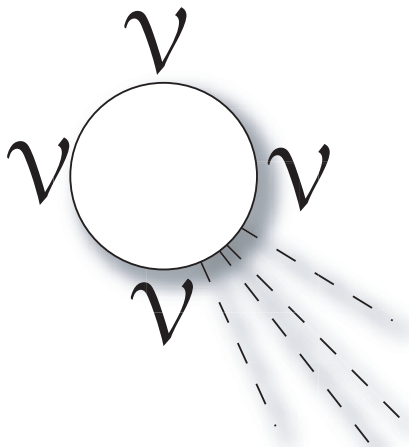
Buildings are built with bricks and mortar. The self is built with what sticks and morals.



The degree of our energy determines the degree of our synergy.

Chapter 22

Communication: Part One



*"V" is for Vision of
what needs seeing.*





.....
*Communication is to
relationships as vaccination
is to good health.*
.....

.....
*Helping someone think it
through makes the person
think of you.*
.....

Chapter 22 deals with the process of communication between people. It would seem that communication should be so easy to accomplish. For example, we all know how to talk. However, talking is not necessarily communication. Similarly, hearing is not necessarily listening. When we announce our needs and our wishes to the other without sensitivity or without taking their needs and wishes into account, we are talking and not communicating. When we pay attention to the words that we hear only for how they serve or interfere with our needs and wishes, we are not really listening. Genuine communication starts with validation of the other and requests validation of the self. By increasing our communication skills, communication lasts longer, proceeds better, and ends more in mutually desired outcomes. **When we make communication work well, we earn the best profits.**

Figure 22-1 emphasizes that romantic relationships lacking in genuine communication inevitably will require corrective measures. To get good communication, we need good will. Good communication is collective, cooperative, co-participatory, compatible, and corrective. It respects all others involved and all their voices, selves, faces, and parts. In the same way, it springs from all of our voices, selves, faces, and parts. Communication is best when it is dialogue, not monologue, whether the communication is to the self or to the other. The goal of communication should be to facilitate information exchange, problem solving, affective sharing, and the promotion of good. There are good habits that we all use at least some of the time. Difficulties arise when bad habits get in the way, especially in the area of communication. When communication falters in a relationship, love falters. The right mixture of listening, engaging in a dialogue, sharing, giving, and being affectionate can bring back the good habits and the love. **Love's labor replenishes love's favor.**

Figure 22-1

Communication is about sharing words, ideas, feelings, and activities. Communication is dialogue, not monologue. Finding balance, the middle ground, or compromise is about meeting someone half-way so that we can continue the other half together. Communication allows full expression of all our parts and encourages the same in the other.

A Cure for the Common Cold (in Relationships)

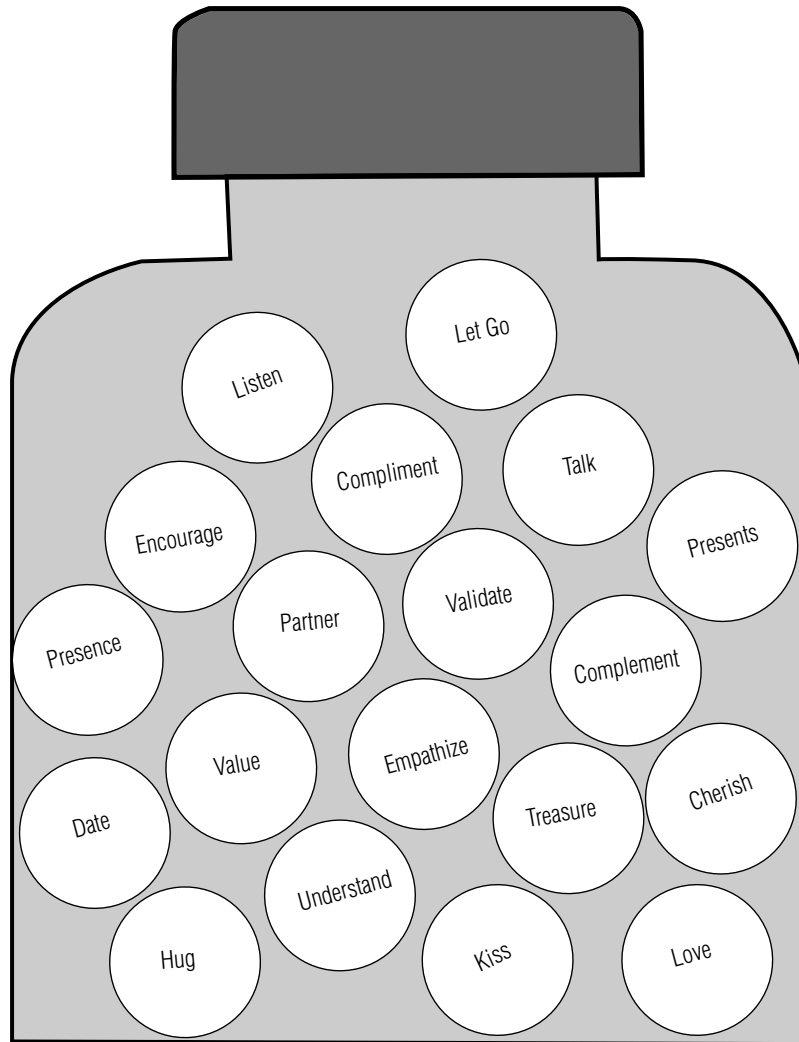


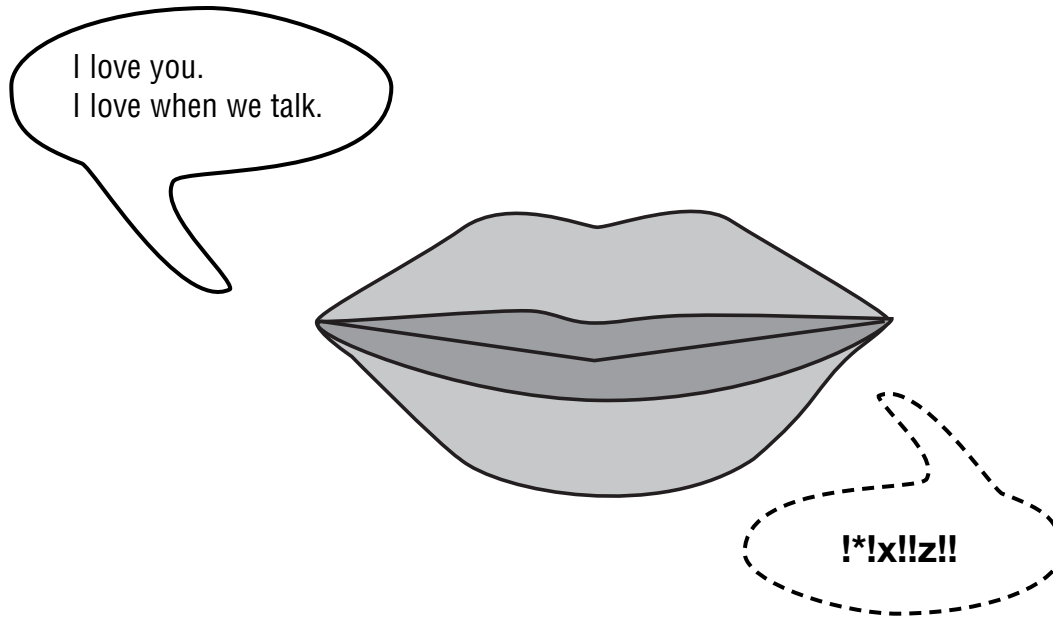
Figure 22-2 and Figure 22-3 emphasize that sometimes the best words communicated are the ones never said. It is easy to make a verbal mistake and let words slip out that we will regret later. It is harder to repair the damage. Most of our interactions with our romantic partners, for example,

If your partner heard every word you wanted to say, you'd be out on your ear.

Figure 22-2

Communication does not mean that, simply, we say everything on our mind. Having respect of the other will help us find the right way to say the most difficult ideas.

Sometimes the Best Words Are the Ones that Do Not Come Out



.....
*In relationships,
losing it loses it.*
.....

.....
*It takes two to tango,
but also two to tangle.*
.....

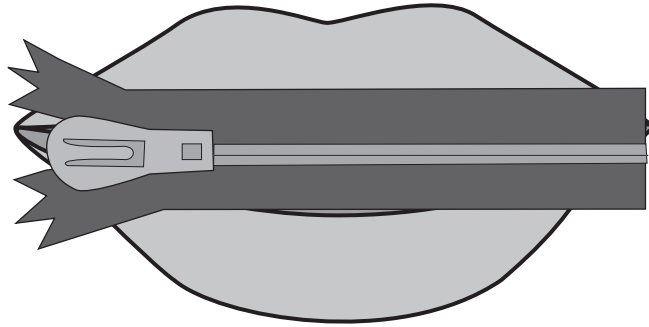
should be neutral or positive, or the relationship is jeopardized. The effects of each dispute last much longer than the duration of the actual dispute. If we learn to control disagreements, logic dictates that there will be fewer of them. Not only that, there will be more room for positive communication. The worst will be over. In short, if we get our adjectives and adverbs right in the grammar of communication, our sentences come out well-formed and not ill-informed. Giving respect to the other keeps dialogue going. **Dialogue can create good outcomes in a couple, so have it come out.**

In **Figure 22-4**, we look at the choice box, which emphasizes that we should communicate our options clearly. Individuals in a communicative dialogue are partly searching for their best interests. The positions presented by the individuals during communication may be quite different. One of the best ways of satisfying both ourselves and others in a

Figure 22-3

Sometimes, the best communications are the words not said. Angry communication discourages any communication.

Zipper Therapy



Lip Stick

communication marked by disagreement is to let go of our initial position, when it is problematic, and to search for a compromise, or a new solution. Many times, it turns out that compromises and new solutions go beyond our initial position and improve it. Or, we may simply alternate between what we want and what the other person wants, or even delay making a decision. All of these various options are better than simply insisting on our way, without consideration of the other. **It is not so much what we say to the other that is important, but how we say it and whether we are open to change.**

Figure 22-5 emphasizes the value of using communication strategies that encourage attentive listening. In effective communication, it is important not to impose orders, but to use strategies that facilitate the cooperation that we seek, such as the use of suggestions. Imposition closes communication; suggestions open it. Others respond positively when given a choice, and the use of suggestions allows choice. For example, by introducing a preferred idea or option with the introductory comment, "Isn't it possible that ...," others listen better to us, absorb well what they hear, and accept the suggestion in full or modify it fairly. When communicating, it is important to be clear, to be concise and, more impor-

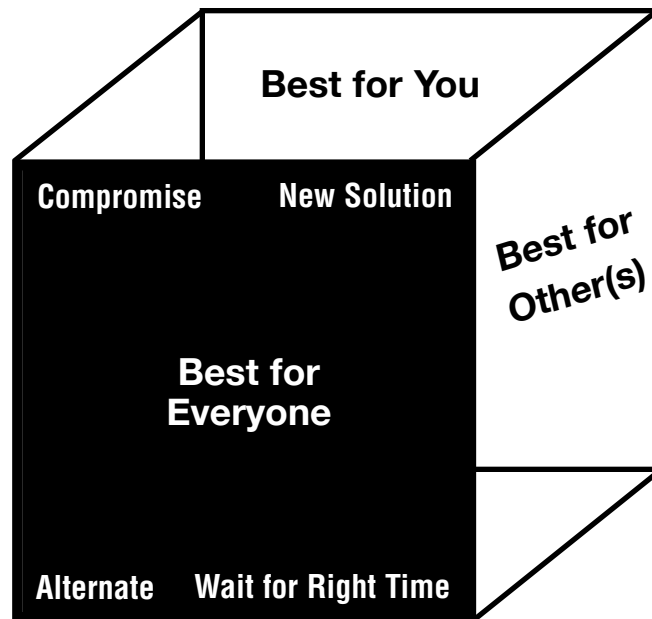
Being a good sounding board—let's you both get on to the music.

May I suggest that masters of communication suggest rather than dictate.

Figure 22-4

Communication is not confrontation. When viewpoints differ, point to different views.

The Choice Box



.....
He who insists only on his way is sent on his way.
.....

.....
Even if we are right, how we communicate could be wrong.
.....

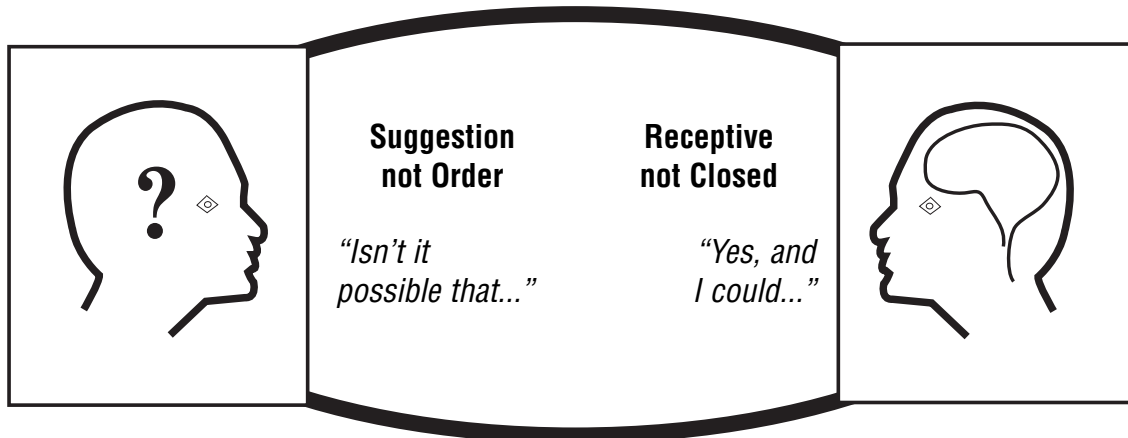
tantly, to work toward goals where all parties are satisfied. When this fails to happen, instead of creating support for our position, the opposite might take place. **Communication depends on an open attitude; when communication is imposed, it risks closing.**

Figure 22-6 explains that when both parties in a conversation are disagreeing, wanting only their own way, this may lead nowhere. The best option, of course, is to find a third way, going beyond the two original ways. In couple therapy, I often use this language. It complements the idea that we have both good habits and bad habits, but that the good habits can be obscured or overwhelmed by the bad ones and the factors that lead to them. In being open to each other, each partner in a dialogue allows that dialogue to unfold in directions unimagined. In not sticking to automatic, old ways of action, each partner in a dialogue allows new ways to emerge, which cannot be foreseen by only knowing the old ways. **New options provide new openings.** A couple

Figure 22-5

Communication is not dictating, at least when we want it to last long and be constructive. The communication style of making suggestions opens possibilities unimagined by the suggestions.

Masters of Communication



If it is a suggestion:

- Receiver is more open
- Receiver will say it back in her own words
- Receiver might come back with an added/better idea

that finds options will find no other choice but to continue their relationship.

In **Figure 22-7**, we see that a vicious circle sets in when we try to impose a point of view. Rather than imposing our ideas, we should offer advice in a constructive fashion, creating a positive cycle. That is, when someone makes a choice under pressure, even if she or he does not openly show anger, the anger may be simmering and have a negative impact. No matter which way the decision goes, the seeds of future discord are sown.

In fact, when a decision is imposed on someone, she or he may end up going the opposite way of the desired direction. Not only does the imposing person get the opposite of what is wanted, but also the other person will not be able to experience learning how to choose in a relaxed and peaceful manner. Moreover, the imposer experiences stress in attempting control and in trying to decide for the other.

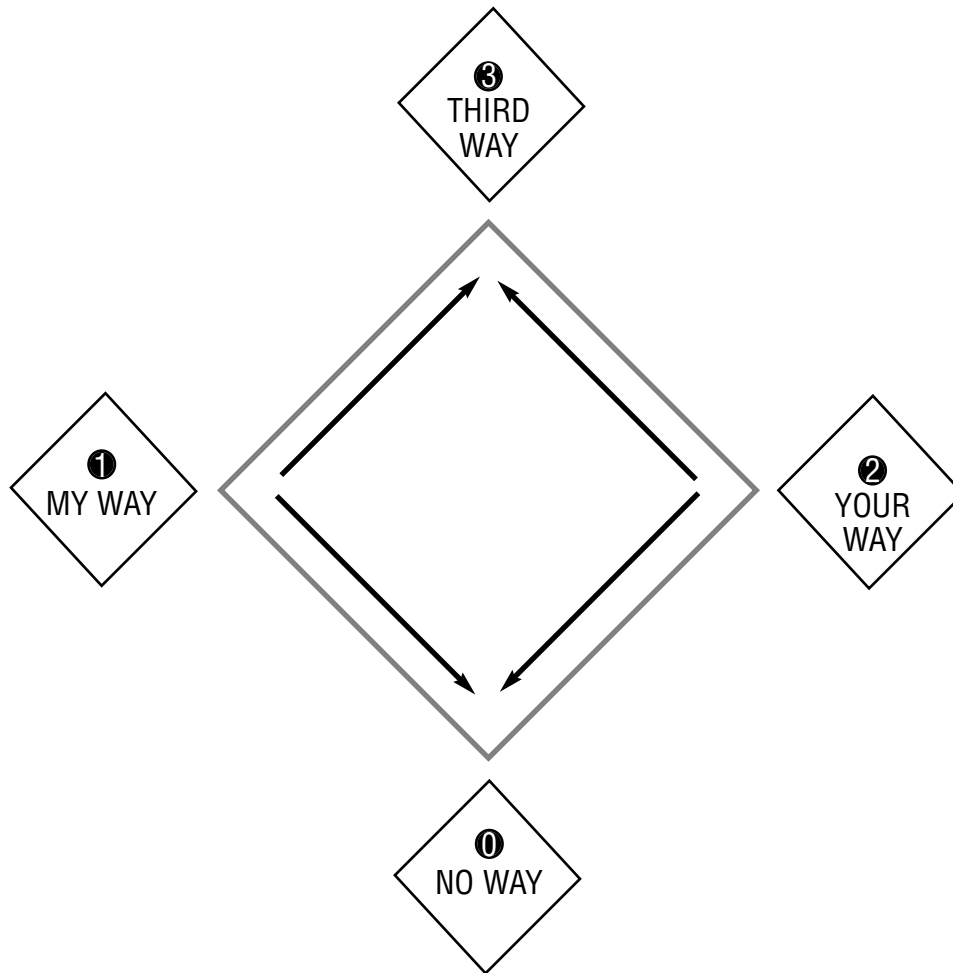
.....
*When decisions are mutual,
both partners are
always right.*
.....

.....
*When we put all our
cards on the table,
both players win.*
.....

Figure 22-6

In a conversation, third, new ways may derive from the original two ways, assuming that they are put on the table in open exchange. In valid, two-way communication, one and one makes three.

Let the Figures Add Up



.....
*Sharing words leads to
sharing paragraphs.*
.....

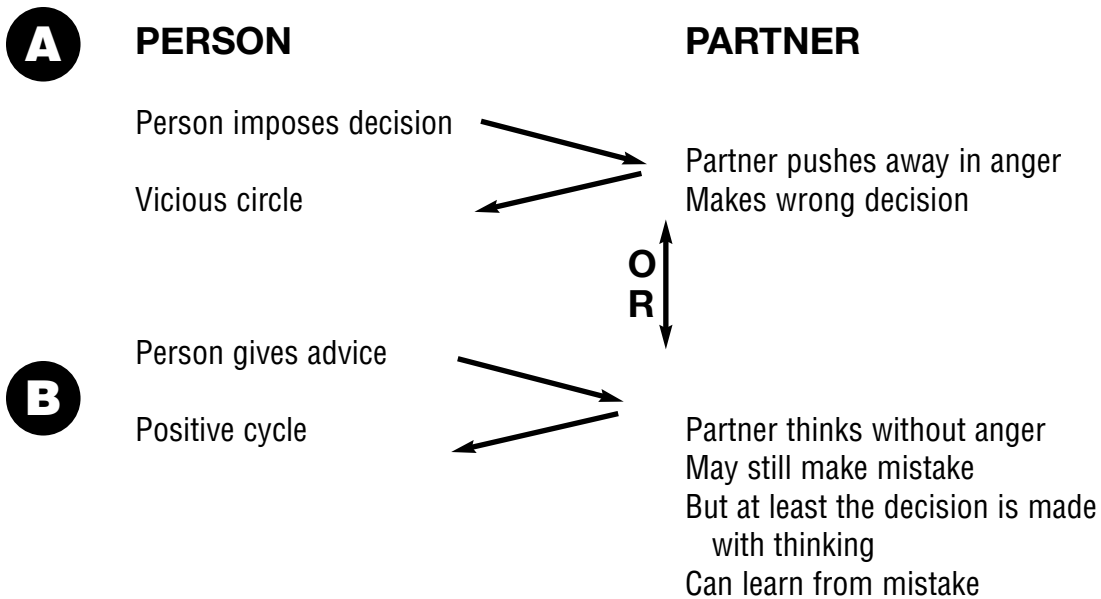
.....
*Words are carried by
intonations, eye contact,
gestures, and being there.*
.....

If this becomes a habitual pattern, of imposing decisions and denying freedom of thought and of choice, the result is that the imposer produces interminable stress for herself or himself, and not only for the other party. In addition, the quality of the decisions made is not as good as would be the case were they shared. Finally, the other partner, who is not allowed to share in decisions, becomes frustrated or apathetic. If imposition in deciding is our unending habit, we should take up the habit of ending it. **When one person**

Figure 22-7

Imposing a decision often leads to its rejection. To decide in anger is not to decide. Vicious circles result, leaving little room for further positive communication and shared decision-making.

Decidedly So



always makes decisions for two, not only are the decisions half as good, but also the decision process is twice as stressful.

Figure 22-8 indicates the importance of using constructive “we suggestions.” Two people who are focused on themselves can turn things around in their communication and can join together to form a unity, becoming a couple. Problems arise in communication when the messages sent only are about ourselves rather than about the couple. Moreover, when communication involves declarations rather than invitations, it flounders. The “I” statement is an example that encapsulates both difficulties in communication.

To foster more genuine communication, we need to go beyond the use of “I” statements. We should learn to communicate with questions. Is it not better when communicating that we make a suggestion, thereby giving others

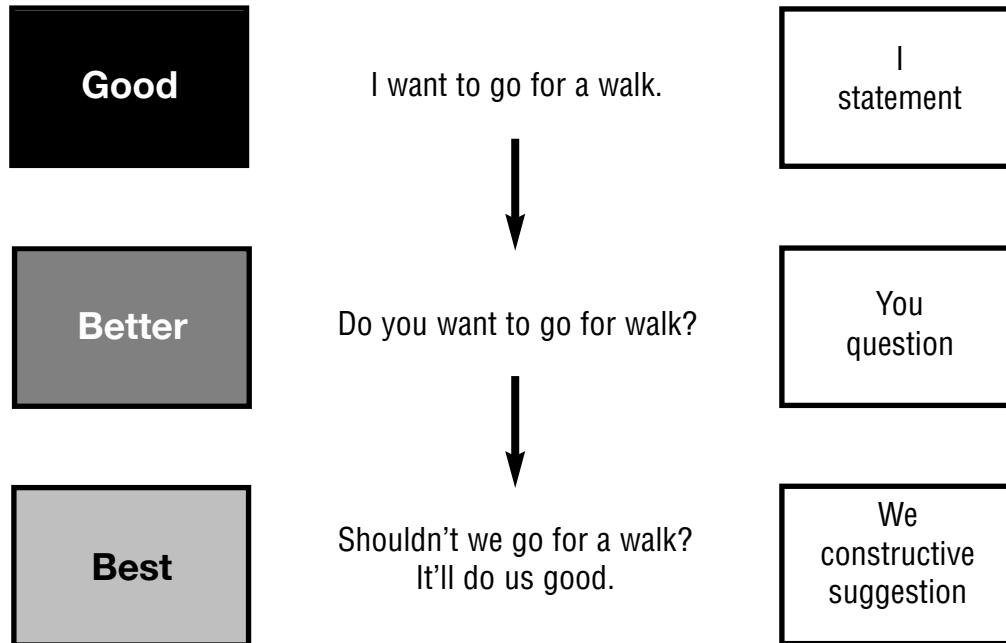
.....
*When talk is mutual,
your fund always grows.*
.....

.....
*Communication is more
style and substance.*
.....

Figure 22-8

When **I** make a statement, **you** can think that a better way is that **we** should talk together.

Turning Things Around and Coming Together



.....
*By letting down our
barriers—people rush in.*
.....

.....
*Staying together takes
work—and gives fun.*
.....

the option of choosing appropriately? Should we not favor the use suggestions rather than statements even when we want to make a direct suggestion and reveal a very strong preference? Is it not possible that we can make our opinion known respectfully by turning it into a question?

To be more specific, when we have an explicit desire, rather than baldly saying that we would like it satisfied, we can be more encouraging of dialogue. For example, if we want to go to the park, we could ask, "Would you like to go to the park?," rather than giving a statement without choice.

Even if we start off communicating with an "I" statement, we can turn it into a question. We could alter into a question the statement, "I want to go to the park," by saying, "I want to go to a park, wouldn't that be a good idea?" **When we construct carefully our thoughts, finding the appropriate way of expressing ideas, we also carefully construct our relationships.**

Figure 22-9

Too often, communication comes from one side of the mouth, presents one side of the story, and ends up with each partner on one side of the room. By finding middle ground, the ground becomes more solid.

Climbing the Middle Solves the Riddle

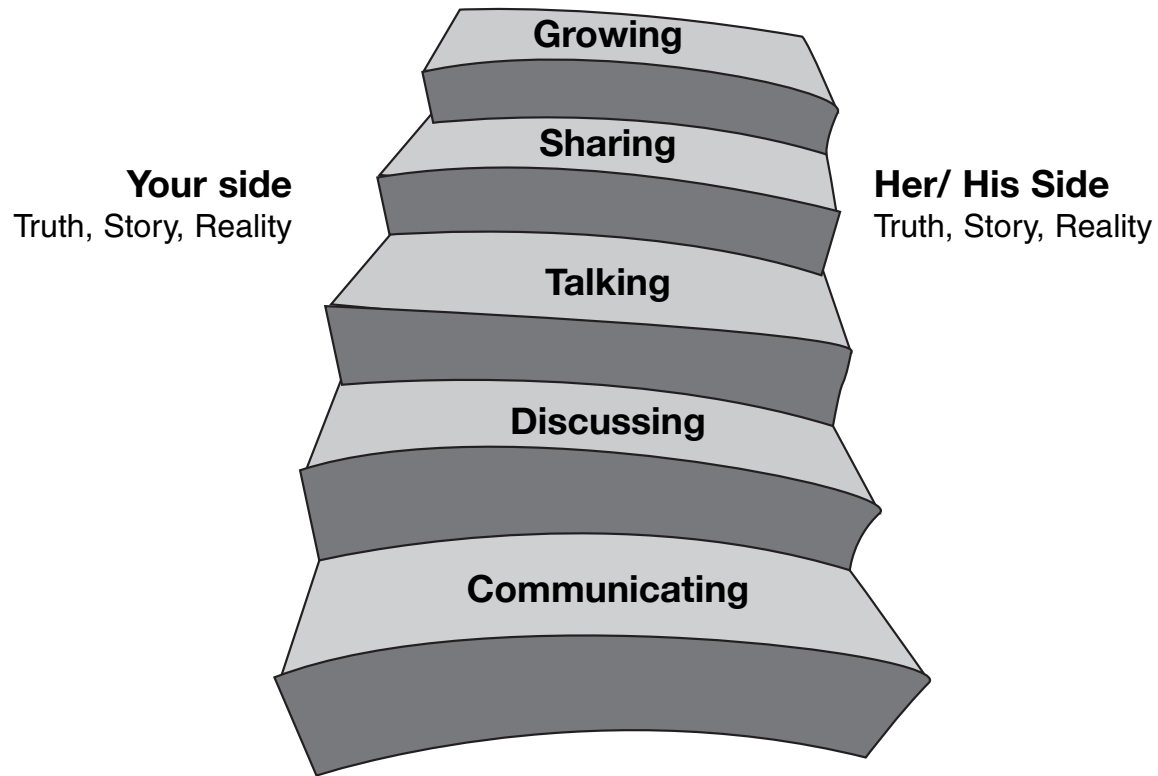


Figure 22-9 reminds us that when partners in communication are fixed in their ideas, genuine communication cannot take place. When partners engage in sensitive communication, they can take the middle path and not lean too heavily toward their own views. Extremist positions paint us in a corner, and we lose in several ways. First, we defend those extremist positions too vigorously and, thus, we reduce our sense of psychological calm. Second, we deny ourselves a valid perception of the other and reduce our appreciation of the other, because we are too negative. Third, we impede our own psychological growth, because we are fixed in a negative mood and a negative perception. We need balance. Moreover, should we be negative, it is never too late to change. Negatives should be preludes to positives. They

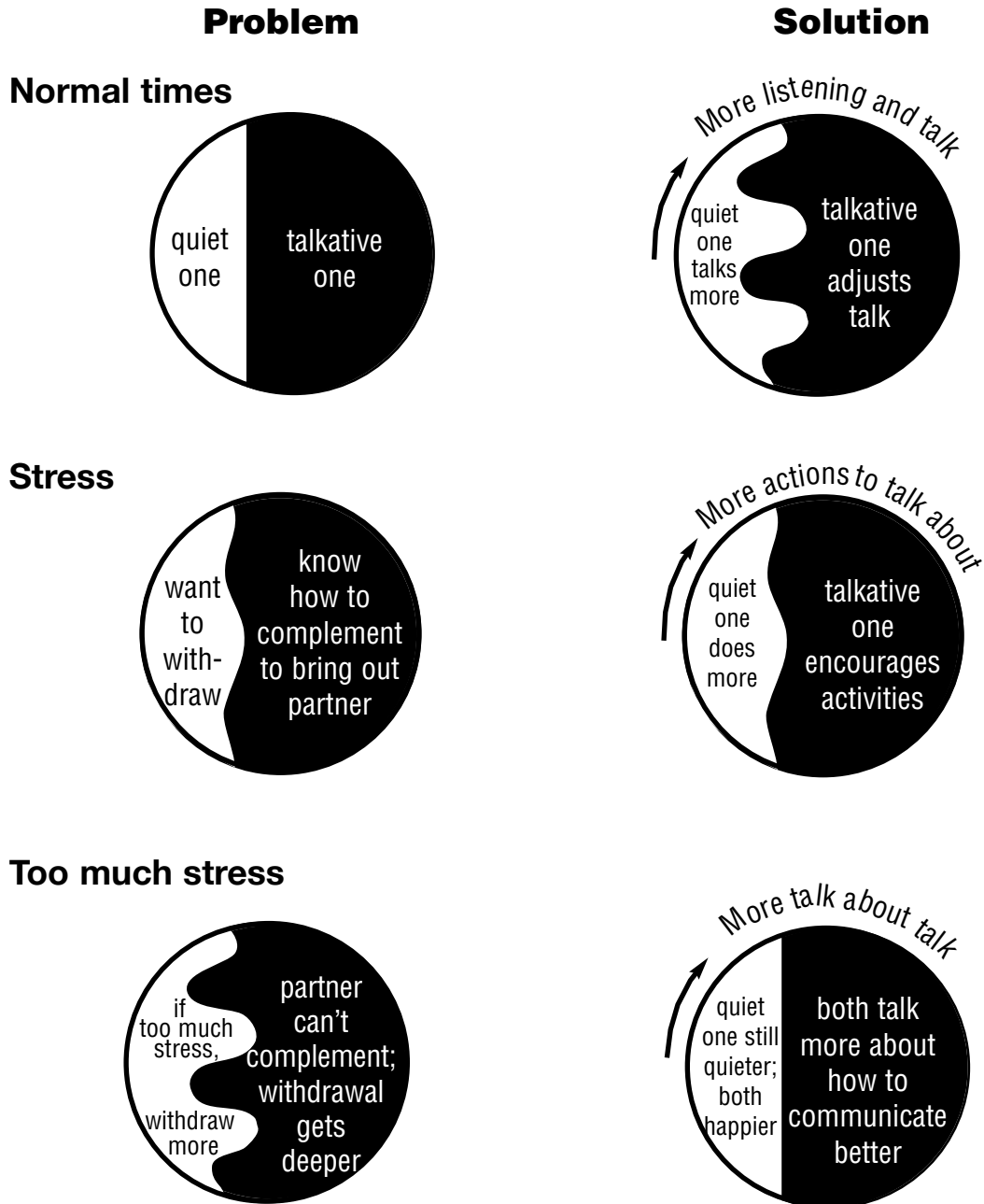
.....
*Dialogues are more than
two monologues.*
.....

.....
*A smile is worth a
thousand swords.*
.....

Figure 22-10

Communication includes talking about communication. One partner may be quieter, but communication can be equal, because the needs of both partners still can be met.

Rebalancing



<i>Sharp words dull talk.</i>	<i>By reading a good book—we can create great conversations.</i>	<i>By putting in the good word—others will follow.</i>
-------------------------------	--	--

should be starting points of change, not centers of resistance. **By finding the middle ground, the couple stays in the middle of the room.**

Figure 22-10 shows two things. First, often in a couple, there is a more talkative one and a quieter one. Often, people choose their complements—opposites attract. They are balanced in their differences or are equalized in their imbalances. When stress hits the couple, they know how to deal with it together. For example, the quieter one may become even quieter, but the more talkative one brings the partner back. Or, the more talkative partner may become even more talkative, and the quieter one will know how to recreate a space for herself or himself. However, when there is too much stress on a couple, the quieter one may withdraw too much and the talkative partner may not know how to deal with it. Or, the more talkative one will not leave any space for the quieter one.

The solution starts with good listening and readjustment of communication. Also, the more either partner acts to balance talk, the more reciprocal talk between them becomes possible. Finally, the more the couple speaks about the process of communication and how to improve it, the more good communication becomes probable. When a couple answers the question about whether they know how to communicate by giving the answer, “No, how?,” it is time they get “know how.” **Equality in communication is not based on the number of words exchanged, but on equal knowledge of how it proceeds well, how it can go wrong, and how it can be brought back on track.**

*Talking about talking
should be part of talking.*

Work it out—then work out.

Victor validated poorly. He communicated vacuously. Victor learned to communicate better by reading Chapter 22. He values good vibrations.



*Problems are
communications
waiting to happen.*

The next chapter continues to discuss communication. **Our task is half done, just as speaking without listening is only half of communication.**



Inner Vision

Victoria felt that her children were too rebellious. She feared what would happen when they became teenagers. Her nephew was having behavioral problems at school, and she did not want the same thing to happen to her children.

Victoria asks a neighbor for advice, who indicates to her that a book much like this one had helped her with the same problem.

*Smoothing out our
rough edges makes it easier
to get in a word edgewise.*

*A dividing wall of words should
become a house of shared stories.*

*Dialogues are like travelogues—
both lead to roads well traveled.*

Sharing Words Leads to Sharing Paragraphs.

When partners are on the same page, their book gets thicker.

*Be kind to yourself—
Treat others well.*

*Lifting the weight of books
builds the power of the mind.*

When we give the silent treatment, it gets pretty lonely.

Couples who want to start on the right foot hand it to communication.

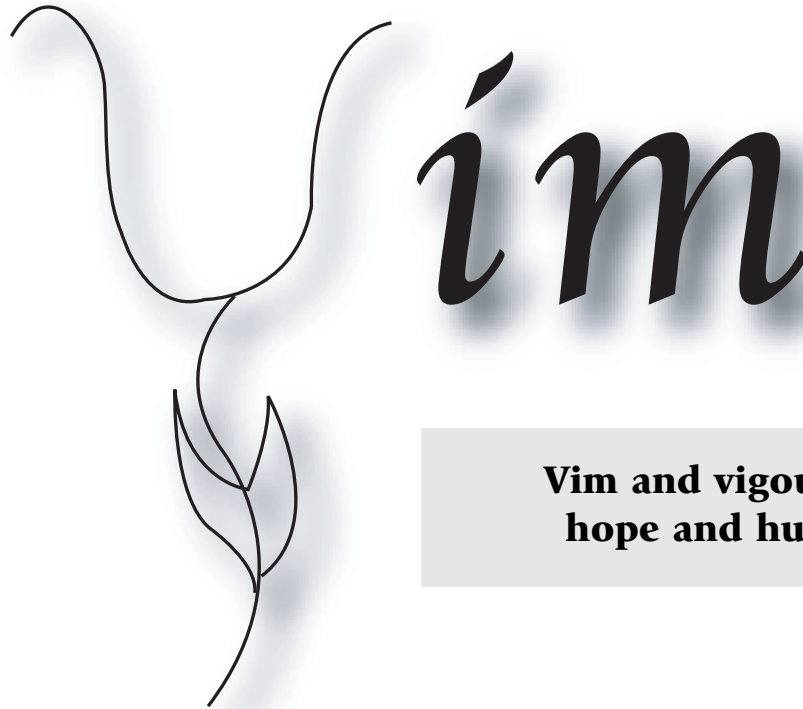
*The brain forms ideas.
Communication forms the brain.*

Ideas are dialogues in formation.

Hurting the other while saying it like it is—is an alienable right.

In a couple, stonewalling builds walls between the partners.

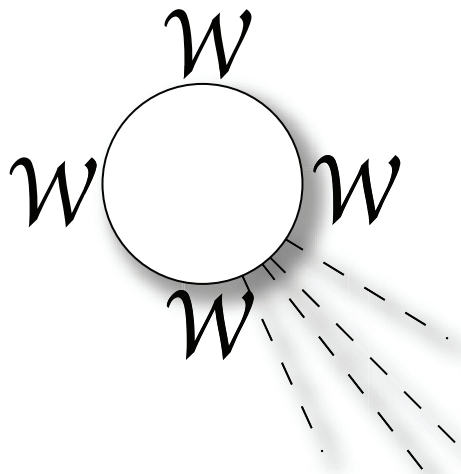
Clamming up leads to closing up.



**Vim and vigour need
hope and humour.**

Chapter 23

Communication: Part Two



*"W" is for finding
a way to Will.*



.....
*By having fun at home,
we reduce stress at work.*
.....

This chapter continues the topic of communication. The reader will have to establish a relationship between this one and the last one. **Forming links is the beginning of creating a whole.**

Figure 23-1 illustrates the complexities of communication. For example, there may be a tendency to be controlling, or we may proceed to the worst extremes in order to maintain control of the conversation. Communication is more effective when it is equitable. We should listen to each of the other people involved, not only to ourselves. Questions and answers should be taken at more than their face value. Any one question may involve other non-spoken questions. Or, a question may not be what it seems according to the particular words. Similarly, answers may be only tips of icebergs, with hidden concerns. Finally, conversations always end up being more than their beginnings and, often, this happens in unanticipated ways. We should accept that communication can lead to new positions. **When it is effective, communication opens hidden worlds of possibility and promise. New ways are really old ways waiting for transformation.**

Figure 23-1

When we are not communicating, we ask ourselves the wrong questions and find the wrong answers. Solutions found together, usually, are more creative, novel, and effective.

Question the Question

Q: Why is What I'm Doing Not Working

A: Are you asking the right question?

- It never worked before and will never work.
- No one is to blame; and blame backfires anyway.
- We're living a problem together. We need to live the solution together.
- We have gut reactions to every hurt; they can cause problems more than the initial problem.
- Work on cultivating an internal calm instead of those gut reactions.
- Fill free time with constructive actions (quality time).
- There will be less room for the gut reactions and more room for calm.
- The best way to stop an old way is to start a new way.
- Nothing new about that!

Figure 23-2 underlines that effective communication can include getting through difficult moments by promoting change. All the advice in the world cannot help us to avoid the occasional dispute. Each partner should be able to read the signals of the other in terms of their frustration levels. When one or the other partner enters the trigger zone, communication needs to be tapered down in order to avoid blow-ups. Confrontation would serve no purpose other than making conflict inevitable. A patient waiting game would help, although it is not the only answer. Eventually, the right attitude should bear fruit and the dispute should be deflated. When we know when to re-engage in a simmering conversation, we can start to communicate effectively. Communication gets us back to the higher level, not the trigger level, and more options are available to the parties. Change results, and leads to more communication. When communication becomes problematic, it does not have to end. When we trip

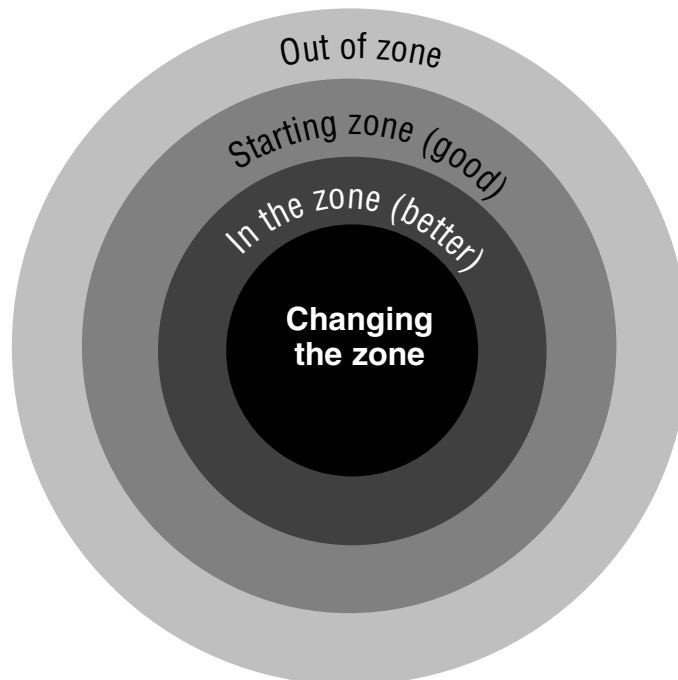
Families are systems that can change, but only when the family changes as a whole.

William wanted a better way with words. Women wanted him to have a better way with them. He learned to communicate better by reading Chapter 23. Now he has the words, the woman he wants, and wedding plans.

Figure 23-2

When communication always stays the same, it may stagnate. To keep communication vital, we need to constantly revise our goals, our means of getting there, and what we share with others. Change feeds communication.

The Ozone Layer



.....
*Houses need open concepts.
Homes need open
communication.*
.....

on our own words, we need not fall down. When the desire to communicate is present, there is always a way to navigate less desirous moments. **Being in a fighting mood does not mean that partners cannot fight the mood.**

In **Figure 23-3**, I look at the question of denial. In the figure, I am being ironic, trying to point out that denial really refers to a turning off rather than to an opening of communication. **The hardest problems to solve are those that are not acknowledged as problems.**

Figure 23-3

Some communication strategies deny communication. Are the ones currently being used genuinely communicative or absolutely aversive?

Deny Denial

Before The Dispute

- I don't deny anything. Why should I deny?

During The Dispute

- I'm so angry. I'm not denying any of your faults.

After The Dispute

- So she left me. That'll teach her.

There's No Disputing

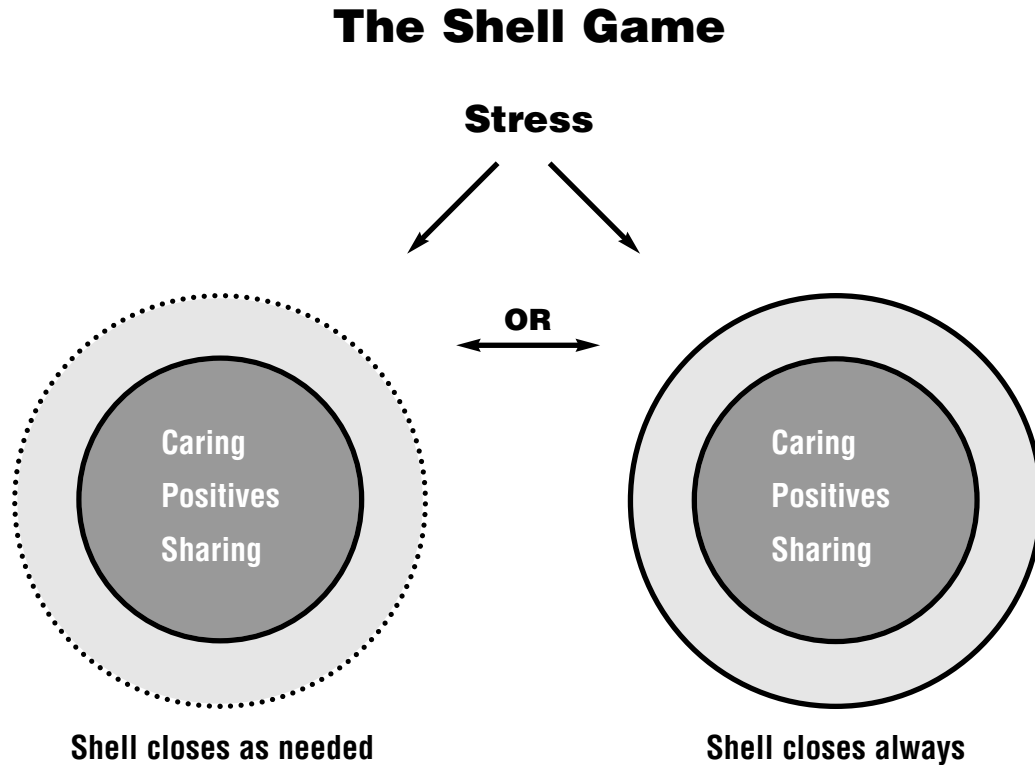
- Denial is the best way to deny a relationship.

.....
*Shells protect us,
but hide our positives too.*
.....

Figure 23-4 underscores that each of us has protective psychological barriers that we deploy as needed. They may help us become focused, and keep out distractions in order to get the job done. When things get too emotional, we can carry this process further by pulling a shell around ourselves to make sure that we can solve better the problem at the source. However, this protective mechanism can degenerate into a defensive shell that keeps out a positive attitude, or, an open mind. Also, defensiveness can block both the information that we need in order to solve the problem and the other people around us who may be able help with their ideas.

Figure 23-4

We put protective shells around ourselves, and these may be defensive ones, which act to keep everything out, including our positive parts. Stress adds to the tendency to be defensive. However, when our core is solid and positive, it is harder to build defensive shells around it.



Defensive shells also block out the availability of our own core positives, or our strengths that normally we can use adaptively and flexibly. Moreover, in being defensive, we block out our availability to other people; we block out our caring and sharing part that normally we use in good will, and that can lead to the creation of good will in others. Major stress can lead to major problems, to be sure, but the more we can keep our wits about us and remain ourselves, the less the stress can get to us. By maintaining our composure when we are under stress, we can avoid lapsing into a defensive shell that is counterproductive. **We need to fence off defensiveness when that is required.**

Figure 23-5 examines what happens when we are too controlling. Over-control is an insidious, destructive force that is overused. We all want some control in our lives, and we do not want to feel out of control or that we are being

.....
*By pressuring your partner,
your relationship
will be squeezed.*
.....

.....
*When family control is
balanced, individual
moods do not swing.*
.....

Genuine communication is never a Command performance.

controlled. But over-control has limited advantages and serious disadvantages. It may produce short term gains but, in the end, it hurts both the controlling person and the person being controlled. **When we over-control, it ends up controlling us.** We become its victim, reversing what we had hoped for, for ourselves. Instead of being free, we end up chained, the opposite of what we had wanted. Over-control may seem to keep others in place, but can people who are controlled by us really stay in place?

A fully present mind cannot get stuck in the past.

A first step in dealing with over-control is to explore its origins. The next step is to begin to return to more positive ways of engaging in communication. **When one-way control is put by the wayside in communication, optimal two-way control is facilitated.**

Smiles are words' ladders.

Honesty brings on "Honey."

*Couples holding hands
entwine hearts.*

Figure 23-5

An overbearing attitude inhibits positive communication. When we act to overcome overcontrol, positive communication is facilitated. As positive communication grows, there is less room for negative communication. To get your bearings in communication, get over being overbearing.

Control Over Overcontrol

Overcontrol Strategies	Having Control Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controls other, but controls self, too • Protects self from hurt, but hurts other • Hides wounds, but creates bigger ones • Meant to keep loved ones, but loved ones move away • Looking for love, but lose love • Overcontrol demands respect, but respect lost • Used to avoid rejection, but end up being rejected • Used to avoid pulling back, but get farther from the self • Used to avoid giving in, but end up not getting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave issue of control and find issue of trust • Open self to hurt, and find others who protect you • Expose wounds and find healing • Let loved ones be and find loved ones • Give love and gain love • Open to giving respect and respect earned • Allow the possibility of rejection, yet maximize its absence • Get closer to the self and to others • Fair in negotiation, often leads to receiving

Figure 23-6 examines the dynamics when communication becomes controlling. In the behavior of the particular family graphed in the figure, the mother had spent so much psychological energy attempting to control the older children to the point that they felt helpless and submissive before her, which lead to the rebound effect of resistance. In contrast, the mother had been much more lax with the younger children. Instead of feeling a sense of powerlessness, these children felt quite powerful and did not take seriously her attempts to control them. Through the family dynamics engendered by the mother's changing attitude toward control, both the older and younger children experienced developmental repercussions in their actions, thoughts and emotions, but in different ways.

.....
*We can learn how to
 be better in control and
 how to better control.*

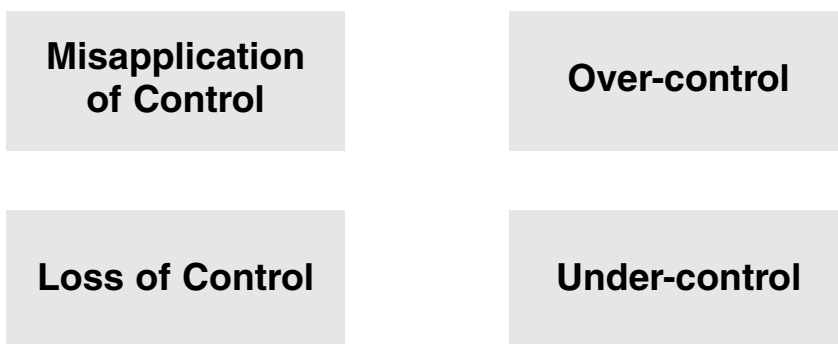
.....
*When awareness precedes
 words, they mean it.*

Figure 23-6

Being out of control develops either out of a loss of control or experiencing a misapplied control. It is hard to find the right balance of control, and we can overuse it or underuse it. However, we also can help ourselves, get support, and find mutual control. To enter the arena of balanced control, we need to find the right entrance.

Fighting Control or Control of Fighting

Fighting Control



Control of Fighting



*When one partner boils,
the couple gets cold.*

The older children found secondary outlets for their negative experiences of maternal control, for example, in over-concern about eating the right foods and cleanliness. But just as the mother had oscillated in her life between too much control and too little control, so did the children. The older ones felt confused, would let go, and engage in binge eating and messiness, and then would feel guilty. For the younger children, eventually, they developed some poor sense of control and engaged in some class-clown behavior. They became somewhat controlling themselves of their classmates and family members, where they could. In contrast to the older children, they experienced no guilt when things went wrong.

When we examine further the intergenerational dynamics in the family, the developmental pathway in the mother began with a pattern of problems in control in her family of origin much like the ones she had been applying to the younger children. Thus, we see an inter-generational transmission of control issues. Nevertheless, the client improved once the family pattern became clearer to her, and appropriate strategies for equilibrating both her sense of and use of control were applied. **When communication is aimed at maintaining power, it is doomed to end weak.**

*When two people stick
together, they
do not get stuck.*

Figure 23-7 illustrates that communication involves more than listening and talking. People in conversation may be paying attention and may be providing information to each other as they exchange words. However, genuine communication is more than a passive mechanical flow of ideas and comments. There needs to be an active participation, where the partners in the dialogue feel mutual support, sharing, and a readiness to respond with constructive action when it is needed. Communicators must not only sit in front of each other to take in what each has to say and set out their concerns. They must also engage in caring, empathy, and appropriate behavioral responses. **When communication involves the whole person, the whole message is received.**

*The best solutions are
rarely the first.*

In this regard, communicating can go wrong at two levels. First, it could be barren, consisting of empty words, and not having genuine support as its goal. Second, it could be negative or even destructive, with words expressed in anger, perhaps even with the goal of harming. Although, technically, this is still communication, it is disabling rather than enabling.

Anger disqualifies communication. When words are meant to hurt others, they ricochet back to hurt us. When anger dominates, we are dominated. But there are solutions to an angry communication style. When we feel angry, wherever possible, negotiation and reconciliation should replace uncontrolled reactions. Communication is a tool that we can use to construct better ways of dealing with anger. **Talk to anger to get it down instead of letting it talk.**

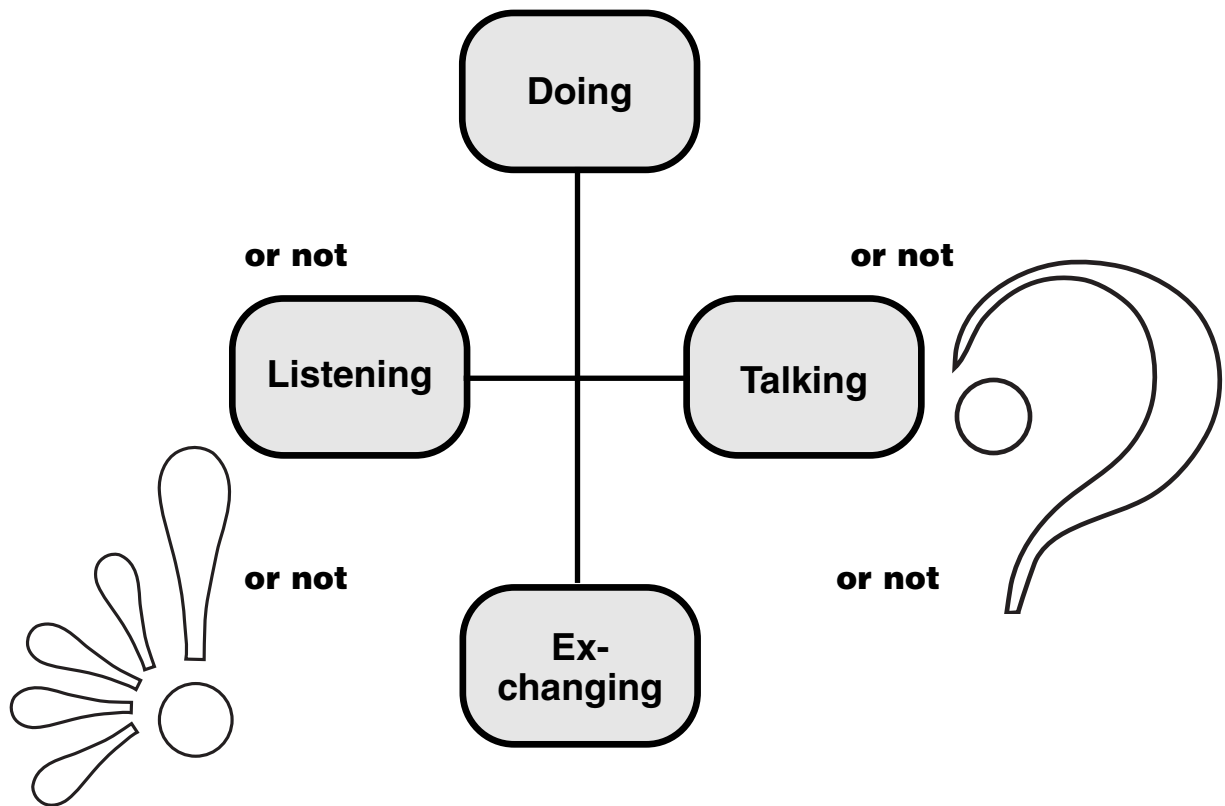
Blocked hurts block words.

Genuine communication is more empathy than emphasis.

Figure 23-7

Communication involves simple skills, such as listening, exchanging words and ideas, and acting for each other. What makes communication so hard is that complex people are the ones doing it. When partners communicate as one, they stay won.

Communicating



He who listens is heard.

Talking up in a civil way should not be interpreted as talking back.

Communication can create what had been unimaginable.

Telling someone like it is in a likable way can get someone to like you.

One kind word can bring endless communication.

The more "whys," the more ways.

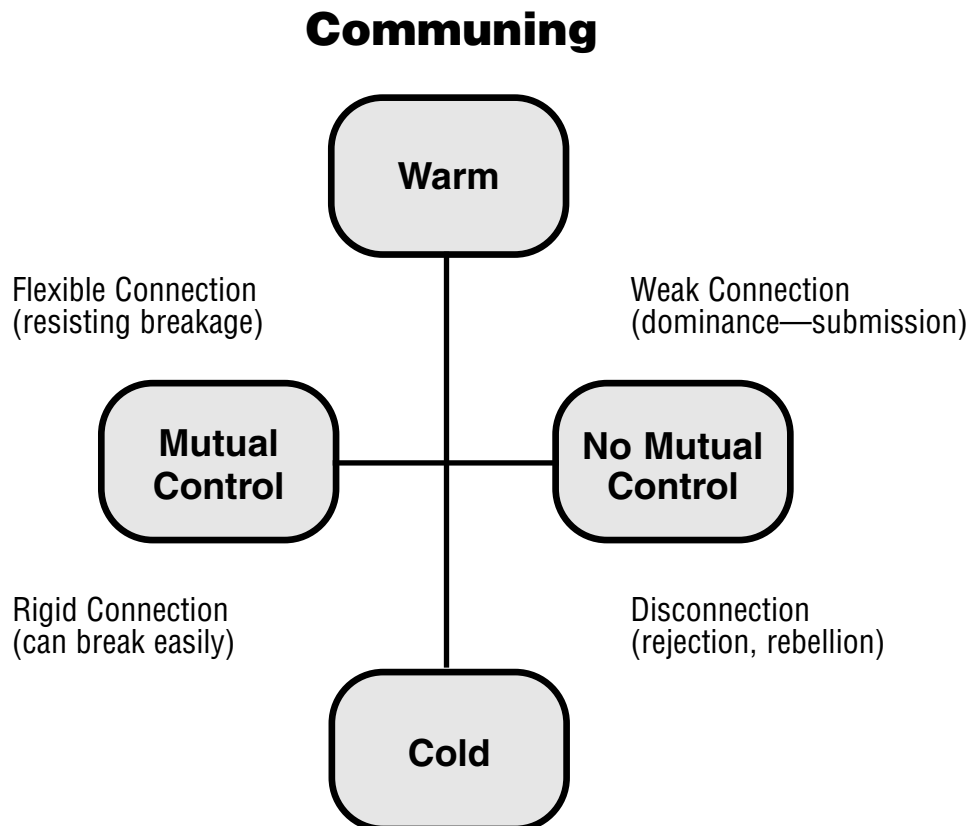
.....
Good connections with people start with good connections in our attitudes and habits.
.....

.....
Persuading people is the art of being human.
.....

Figure 23-8 indicates that genuine communication allows communion, or flexible connection with the other. When communication is governed by mutual control, which really means coordinated give and take, and reciprocal warmth, difficulties in communication that may materialize do not lead to breakage of the bond underlying the dialogue. When there is neither mutual control nor reciprocal warmth in a couple, the conditions for disconnection ripen. Information may be sent or received, but one partner or the other is not ready, or is even engaging in disruption or cessation of communication, perhaps with irritability or revolt. When either mutual control or reciprocal warmth alone governs a couple, but not both, conditions are still less than ideal. The communication is either rigid or weak (control only or warmth only, respectively), and is not optimal and dialogic. It may break off; or it may continue, but without openness,

Figure 23-8

Positive communication reflects a good combination of warmth and mutual control. When either warmth or mutual control is absent or opposite, positive communication is absent or opposite.



in an imbalance that needs correction. When communication includes communion, with both reciprocal mutual control and reciprocal warmth, the dangers of types of less adaptive communication are greatly reduced. **Good balance in communication means that the couple does not totter.**

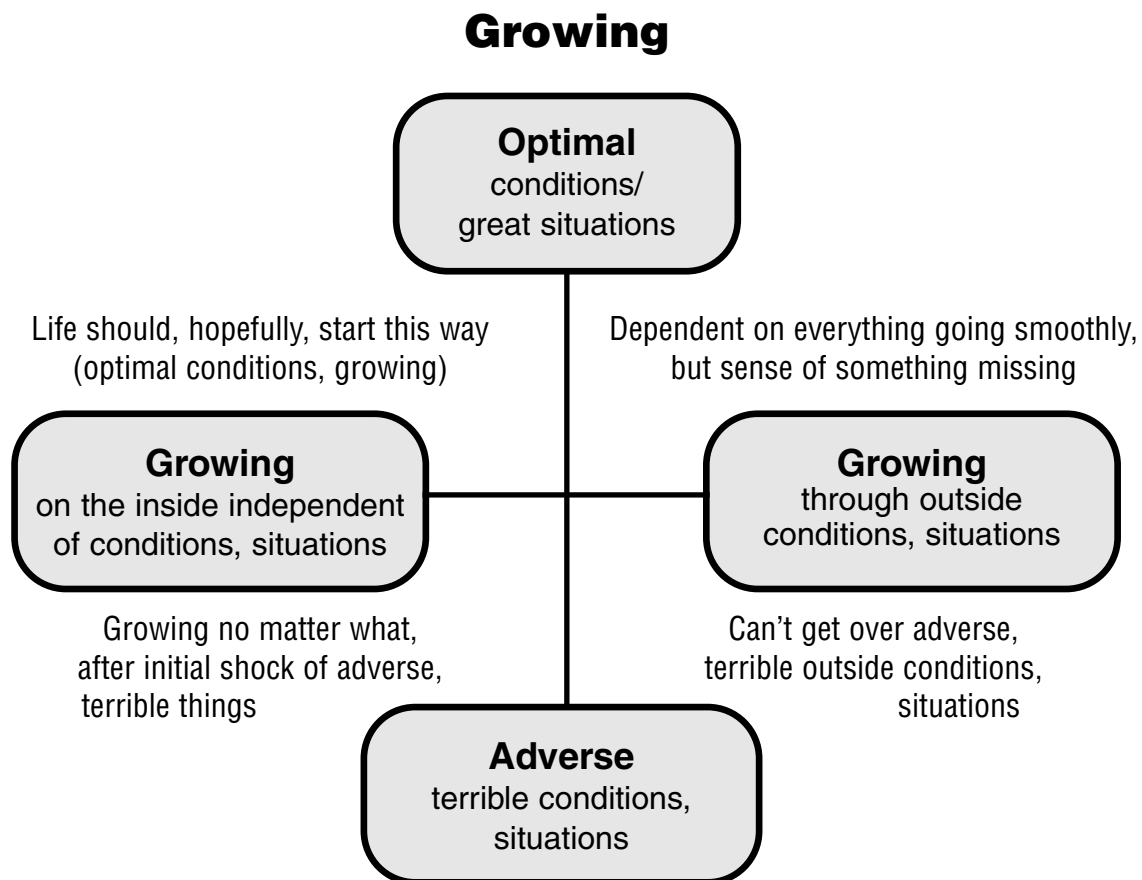
Figure 23-9 underscores that the capacity to keep growing psychologically may take place even in the hardest and cruelest of situations. Communication and communion provide support and fellowship that can buffer even the worst events possible. Humans are capable of surviving the worst catastrophes; they find an inner strength and resilience and they seek out others to share their anxieties, depressions, stresses, frustrations, and fears. They come to perceive disaster as points

Closing up in communication ends up ending it.

Feeding her will leave you starving to get her back.

Figure 23-9

Development occurs both through an internal force and through contextual support. The context can be supportive or not, but we grow no matter what because that is who we are. When our growth imperative is weakened, or when the context is not supportive at all, our growth may occur more than we think possible in these circumstances. We need to reach out to helpful friends, partners, family, or professionals, and begin the discovery of communication and sharing that will help make growth happen.



.....
When the other is right in an argument, to prevent the ground from shaking, use the "It's My Fault" line.
.....

.....
*Stress reduces us.
Destressing reduces stress.*
.....

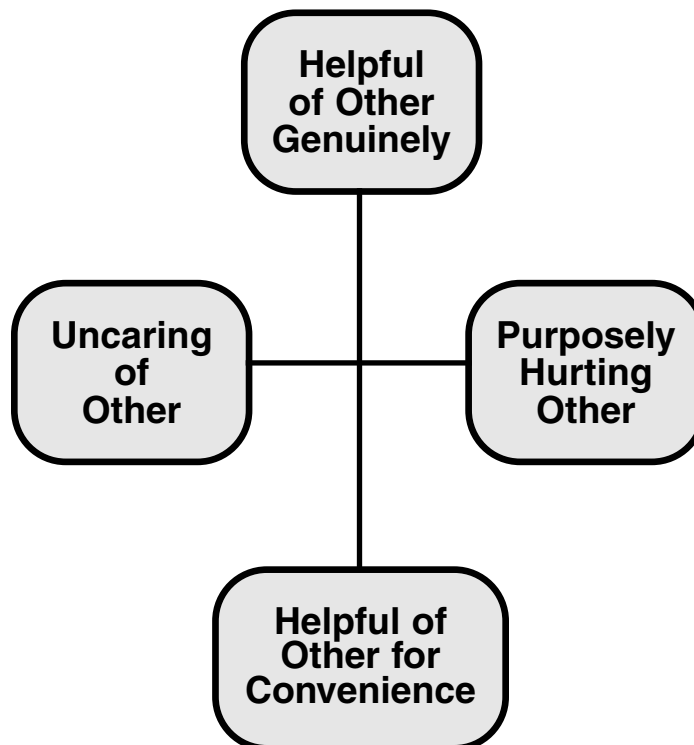
in time that they can attempt to overcome or accept, and they succeed in doing so to the best of their abilities. However, to achieve this goal, they do not live in isolation from others, nor are they too dependent on others. They find the right balance. This balance allows them, in turn, to help others to survive their disasters and tragedies. When communication becomes part of communing, then growing becomes part of living. Life pulls us to the most mature forms of growth and, in our turn, the life in us pushes us there. When we fully engage in the growth of life, we fully engage in the life of growing. Our internal growth process has given us an unstoppable growth motivation, one predicated on communication and communion. **Our growth cannot be blocked for longer than parts of us wish it.**

Figure 23-10 speaks to how we can reduce stress by genuinely helping others, and elicit cascading positive repercussions on others and on ourselves. Helping others is its

Figure 23-10

Helping others in a genuine fashion always ends up helping ourselves at the core. By demonstrating and applying our best human qualities, we become better people.

Helping or Hurting Others



own reward. When we give to another, the other benefits, grows, and is in a better position to give back one day either to us or to others, in turn. However, when we help out of convenience, or because it is easy, our motives may not be genuine, although this type of helping may be a start.

Of course, being uncaring, or hurting someone on purpose, not only hurts the other but, in the end, also hurts ourselves. **The worst punishment is not being able to grow psychologically**, and when we cannot grow psychologically because we have blocked ourselves through our own selfish or hurtful actions, we can only blame ourselves as the source of our punishment. We may think that we have gotten away with something when we act selfishly, hurt the other, and so on but, in reality, all that we have accomplished is to have gotten away from ourselves.

Communication is about more than words. It is about ideas that can lead to action and improvement in the relationship between the communicators. In addition, communication improves especially when we ask what we should want together as partners in communication. **In a relationship, the best communication begins in words, moves to actions, ends in giving, and solidifies the couple.**

.....
*When you let her be Queen
for a day, you might crown
its end quite well.*
.....

.....
*A man who shares at home
makes his bed to lie in.*
.....

.....
*Being calm
means being.*
.....

.....
*Problem solving is
couple saving.*
.....

.....
*Be kind to yourself—
Treat others well.*
.....



*A good couple is
"less action, more talk."*

*Communication is a two-
way, eight-lane highway.*

Figure 23-11 emphasizes that communication is a prelude to change. In a couple, the exchange of words is not the goal, but change of each other for the better is the goal. In communicating, if we expect our partner to change without considering how we may need to change, as well, the communication rests on shaky grounds. **When we search for psychological growth in our communication, it changes for the better.** Wanting and helping the other to grow is the best growth experience for us, as well.

Figure 23-11

We often ask the other to change without looking at how we can change. Or, we expect ourselves to do all the adjusting because we know the other will not. Change that involves only one partner goes half-way, is half as effective, and does not last. One-way change shortchanges the couple. Two-way change leads to two-way exchange.

How to Change for the Better

Change	How can I change	How can (s)he change	How can we change
My opinion	<i>c</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>a</i>
Her/ His opinion	<i>n</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>e</i>

**Let's work on this table together
to make our relationship better!**

Sharing is a giving for the taking.

*Intonation has no vowels
or consonants, but it
explains words well.*

*Speech is a product of a part
of our brain and communication
is a product of all of it.*

Not giving choice is not an option.

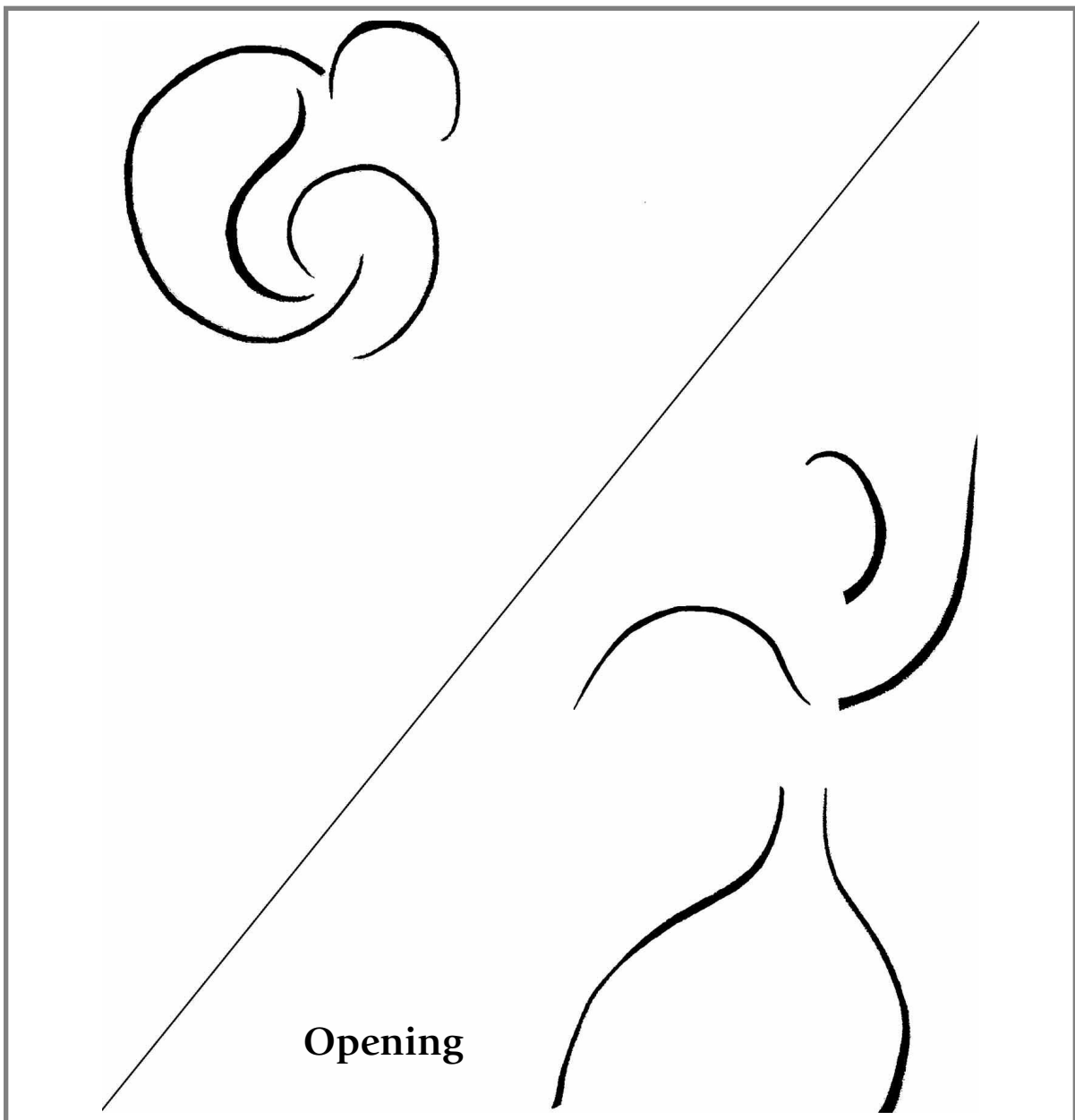
*Challenge the statement,
not the person.*

*He has a way with words. It is
better he has ways to communicate
better with his partner.*

To conclude Chapter 23, I ask what happens when romantic relationships sour. How can the romantic feeling be turned back on? Sharing is the basic challenge of life, and our whole psychology as humans is oriented to sharing. It is as necessary for our survival as is breathing, and it enhances immensely the quality of that survival. Sharing begins with communication. **Communication is the cement of our relationships.** It is the glue that brings us closer together. We need to develop it to its maximum capacity for our psychological peace of mind, for that of our partner, and for everything that it brings to both.

.....
*Giving good reasons invites
receiving good vibrations.*
.....

.....
*The art of communication
lies in drawing good
conclusions.*
.....



Wendy was losing it with her teenagers. Increasingly, they would not listen to her. She tried being firm with them, but they would do what they wanted anyway. She tried being super-nice with them, but they would take advantage of her.

Wendy's husband finds a book advertised on the web, much like this one, and orders it.

Communication is meeting the other in the creative space of letting the conversation become.

By always going along for the ride in a conversation, we risk never getting to drive it where we want it go.

One word from her and one word from him make a lovely sentence.

Communication takes place at many levels and at many intensities. To find the highest of the first, use the lowest of the second.

She tries everything to get his attention, from screaming to yelling. He does everything not to listen.

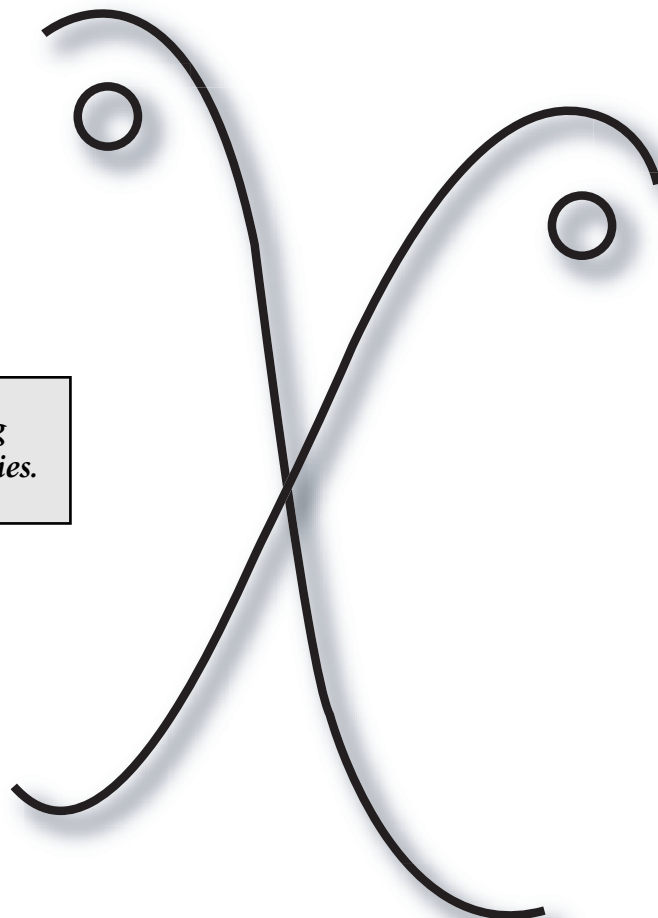
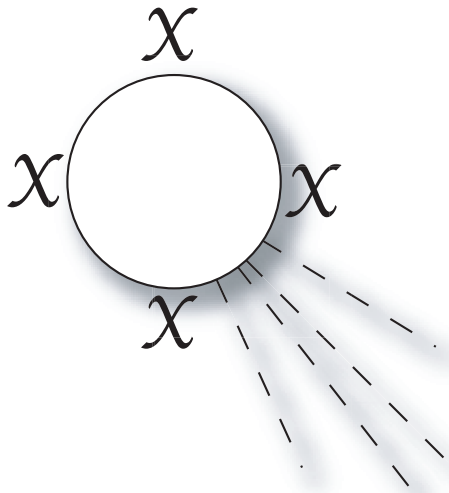
To highlight what we mean as we speak, we should underline the colouring that we give to the words.



We must do more than do unto others. We must be unto others.

Chapter 24

Children



*"X" is for extending
beyond one's boundaries.*



.....
*Children respect limits
delivered respectfully.*
.....

Xaviera exclaimed, "Help". Her twins, a son and a daughter, just turned 2. She excelled in being overwhelmed by them. She reads Chapter 24. Now she knows how to exercise restraint with the twins.

The next two chapters examine the growing human person. Children and adolescents need both affection and appropriate discipline. Children and adolescents provide the greatest joys, but also the greatest challenges. In two short chapters, we can only begin to deal with the range of material needed to raise adequately children and adolescents. When the chapters mention "parents," it is understood that the messages written apply to all types of families, from the nuclear, to the blended, to the single-parent or guardian situation. **When we hug a child, life hugs us back.**

Figure 24-1 examines children's needs for affection and appropriate discipline, or for warmth and limit setting. In taking care of plants, we need to give them appropriate nutrients early in life so that they can grow quickly and healthily but, at some point, they also need pruning so that they can grow in a well-formed fashion. In many ways, taking care of plants serves as a metaphor for raising children. In parenting, there are two major components: **1.** providing warmth, love, affection, and support, and **2.** providing appropriate limits, discipline, and firmness. When these two aspects in childrearing are provided at the optimal level to children, taking into account family and cultural background, children can develop well.

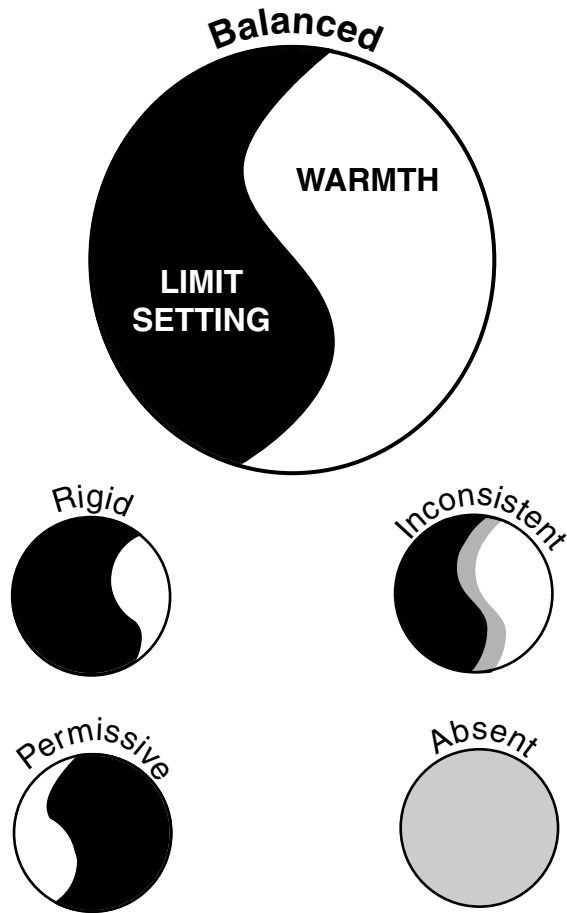
There is no one formula in raising children with respect to the appropriate balance in providing warmth and setting limits, and there is no simple recipe for what ingredients go into warmth and setting limits. Without a doubt, affectionate nurturing is important, especially in the early years. Also, children will better learn to respect the limits placed on them when the affection that they receive as they grow is optimal.

As for appropriate discipline techniques in parenting, when a family is too focused on setting limits, rules, and regulations, then family warmth may be sacrificed. At the other extreme, if a family is too permissive, either because the parents are unconcerned or because they believe that, in order to provide affection, limit-setting should be sacrificed, the family may be detracting from the development of self-control in its children. When parents alternate or are inconsistent in the kinds of affection that they offer and in the rules that they provide to their children, their children may end up confused, like their parents, thus, compromising their development. Finally, absent parents, either in the physical or psychological sense, who

Figure 24-1

Good parenting is based on a good balance of warmth and limit setting. If there is too much of one or the other, the parent is more rigid or permissive. The parent could be inconsistent in behavior or even be neglectful and absent.

Parenting Styles



provide neither of the components of adequate parenting, either directly or indirectly, are putting their children quite at risk.

In the end, discipline in children works more easily when children want to absorb the lessons and limits, because they are receiving positive nurturing, they are exposed to good role models, and the limits being set are fair and appropriate. **Children love to listen with respect—when they receive love, are listened to, and are respected.**

.....
*What the child learns,
the adult teaches.*
.....

.....
*Children need praise,
not pennies.*
.....

Children can learn that they are good and that habits can be bad.

Children learn to read and write. Teens learn to think right.

Figure 24-2 presents an effective way of dealing with problem behavior in children. The figure indicates that, to deal with a child who is expressing problem behavior, in order to facilitate self-control and change, techniques should be used to externalize the child's problem. Using a label for a problem places it outside of the child by giving a name to it. This way, it becomes easier for the child to deal with the problem, because the child sees the problem as something different from herself or himself. I asked a 9-year-old boy who was finding himself in trouble because of his rude behavior to call this problem behavior, "Mr. Rude." He frowned when I asked him what happens when Mr. Rude runs the show. His eyes lit up when I asked him what happens when Mr. Dude runs the show. We then proceeded to make a list of all the possible opposites of this nature that might come into play in his life. We gave an externalized name to both the problem we wanted to try to control and the positive behavior that we wanted instead.

The goal was not only to have his behavior regulated, but also to have the child regulate his own behavior. Is it not possible that any parent can use similar language with any child exhibiting problem behaviors interfering with positive behaviors? When children learn this language of giving a

Figure 24-2

Children understand very quickly when we refer to a difficulty that they are having in terms of a label such as "Mr. Rude." They understand when we say, "Could you tell Mr. Rude to leave, because he is getting you in trouble, and so you will not be able to watch TV." Children can get control by learning to use self-talk this way.

What Happens When Mr. Rude Runs the Show?

<p>What Happens When Mr. Rude Runs the Show?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I get in trouble• I get grounded
<p>And Mr. Dude?</p> <p>I get an extra half hour of playing time</p>
<p>Other Names You Can Use</p> <p>Mr. Trouble Mr. Nice</p>

problem a label, when the problem comes back, it is easier to remind them that they have had control of the problem in the past and can do it again. When children are given a label to represent a problem, the problem behavior is being attributed to sources outside themselves. **Children more easily gain control of a problem when they are not considered the source of the problem but the source of its solution.**

Figure 24-3 shows how to use a series of steps to get a child to cooperate, based on the concept of externalization, or giving the child's bad habit a name or label. For example, we might say to a child, "If Mr. Trouble keeps being the boss, he is going to get you into trouble and you won't be able to play. However, if you tell Mr. Trouble to leave, you know that you will be able to play. So you have a choice. Which one do you choose?" When telling this to the child, it helps to add, "I know that you know how to choose. I know that you have chosen appropriately in the past, and I am sure that you will again. Everyone is going to be happy when you choose appropriately."

.....
By talking about children's good habits, they can join in.
.....

.....
Children did not choose their parents. Parents can choose how to raise their children.
.....

Figure 24-3

By giving a label to a child's difficulty, we externalize it, or have the child feel that the difficulty is a part of him or her that can be controlled, told to leave, and so on. When the child has difficulty complying or otherwise behaving appropriately, there is an increasing level of pressure that can be applied using this type of language, but it should always be used in a constructive manner.

Putting "Bad Mood" in its Place

Use the following hierarchy, starting with the first steps

1. Ask nicely.
2. Explain the situation (e.g., "We're in a hurry"; "It's better if you share").
3. Use the language of "Bad Mood" (e.g., "Bad Mood" came back. Do you want to put it in its place, please?").
4. "I know that you can put Bad Mood in place. You did it 10 times last week. So show me who's the Boss, you or Bad Mood. Show me that you know how to choose."
5. "Maybe you will end up going to your room. It would be easier if you put Bad Mood in place. Which do you choose?"
6. "Bad Mood has to go in your room. So come with me."

Use the following compliment, after any of the first 6 steps are successful

"You see, you know very well how to put Bad Mood in place. Remember how you did it, so that you can do it again. You've chosen well. I'm proud of you."

Parenting is a volunteering experience. To do it well with our children, we have to become their Boy Scout, Girl Guide, Big Brother, and Big Sister.

Education begins with the 3 R's at home—respect, role modeling, and rewarding good behavior.

Praises for children raises them into adults.

With this kind of approach, children are learning to speak to themselves about self-control. **When we get children to stop seeing themselves as the problem, but to see the behavior external to them as the problem, they see the behavior as one that they can control by themselves.** The children develop an internal sense of control as they speak to themselves in this way and as they confront the situations that in the past had lead them to problems. They may realize that they are making the right choice, and say to themselves, “I told Mr. Trouble to leave. Boy, am I getting good.”

So, in effect, as parents, the choice is ours whether to adopt this kind of language and facilitate disciplining our children. This style should help avoid the old styles that may have not worked effectively in the past. Moreover, for two reasons, this style is easier on parents. First, it is easier for parents because the child learns a sense of self-control, learning a language to use when speaking to oneself. Moreover, the child can generalize that control into new situations in daily life that may be encountered.

Second, it is easier for parents because, in using this approach when disciplining the child, parents do not get angry or nervous like before. The parents realize that the child becomes responsible for her or his own behavior. The parents realize that if the child makes the wrong choices, the negative consequences that result are self-chosen. The parents can administer the consequences with calm, saying to the child, for example, “Mr. Trouble got you in trouble. I’m sure that next time you will tell Mr. Trouble to leave instead of listening to him and that you will feel good about doing so.” In addition, because the child’s bad habit becomes the culprit rather than the whole child, in effect, the parent stops blaming the child.

The technique of blaming the child is a disciplinary strategy that has a whole host of negative consequences that is now easier to avoid. By externalizing the problem behavior with a label such as “Mr. Trouble,” the child develops a sense of control of her or his own behavior and a sense of good feeling about the self for having that control. **By empowering the child to make the right choice, parents receive rewards as much as does the child.**

Figure 24-4 reviews the best ways to speak to children when disciplining them. Obviously, on the positive side, we should be giving a sense of security to children and compli-

Figure 24-4

Children respond to discipline strategies that are constructive. By dealing with the difficulty being presented and not coming down on the child, the child can become an ally against the difficulty. By using the language of labels such as “Mr. Fidget,” the child can train her or himself to tell Mr. Fidget, or any such difficulty, to leave.

Appropriate Child Discipline Strategies

Appropriate Positives	Appropriate Negatives
<p style="text-align: center;">Compliment behavior that you like</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hug, hold, give security</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Compliment child when self-control shown, leading to right choices</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“That Behavior is Inappropriate”</p> <p>Create labels like “Mrs. Tease,” “Mrs. Fidget.” Ask her/him to ask the Mister to leave, e.g., “Who’s the Boss, you or Mr. Fidget. Why don’t you ask him to leave?”</p> <p>Give her a choice. “If Mrs. Fidget goes, you get to play. If Mrs. Fidget does not go, which consequence do you choose?”</p>

Consequences

- Child learns to speak to self like this, developing internal self-control
- It is easier on parent. Child cannot easily blame parent for negative consequences that derive from her/his wrong choice

ment them for demonstrating the behavior that we want to bring out. What about when children do not behave appropriately? It is important to tell them something like, “That behavior is inappropriate,” rather than saying something like, “You are bad. I hate what you did.” When we want to have the child change, rather than merely express our frustrations, we should avoid using a very harsh nasty label to characterize the behavior of concern, such as “bad,” and use, instead, a word such as “inappropriate.” Rather than criticizing the whole child by using the word “you,” we should refer directly to the behavior of concern to us (“that behavior”). Rather than placing the focus of displeasure on ourselves as parents (“I hate”), we should use phrases that move the child to develop displeasure at her or his own behavior. By saying that a behavior is inappropriate to a child, we are saying how much we love the child and want them to improve their behavior, thereby opening the child to learning, changing, and growing. This behavior is appropriate.

.....
*To get children to sparkle,
 answer their questions
 with flame.*

.....
*Blood is the gift of life.
 So is caring for a child.*

When we help a child learn,
we write their book.

The type of discipline the
child receives is more
important than
disciplining the child.

The language of creating labels to represent bad habits in children resembles the strategy of telling to children that their behavior is inappropriate. Yet, it carries it one step further, because it speaks to children at their level, and they can begin to use it right away. **When parents externalize a problem with a label, it is easier for children to end up internalizing good habits in conjunction with controlling bad ones.**

Figure 24-5 graphs a discipline strategy to use with children. There are three columns in the chart. The first column lists the normal privileges children may have. The second lists the rules children should be obeying. The third indicates how normal privileges can be reduced or increased, depending on how the rules are respected. Such charts

Figure 24-5

A good way of disciplining a child is to use the language of consequences, and to let the child know that it is the nature of her or his behavior that is determining the nature of the consequences. The child should lose privileges in increments matching the difficulty being presented by the behavior of the child, e.g., 15 minutes is lost from a pleasant activity when the child has been involved in a minor difficulty. Greater difficulties should lead to greater losses. Of course, the child can also earn privileges, gain rewards, get back losses, and so on.

The Win — Lose — ReWin Chart

Normal Privileges	Rules	Losses-Gains
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 hours playing with friends • 2 hours TV • 2 hours video/movie • 2 hours videogame • 2 hours on phone • 2 dollars of allowance • 2 desserts/juices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listen • be honest • homework done • certain mark obtained • don't bug • no trouble at school • clean room • do chores • extra reading • exercise • eat healthy • be home on time • no trouble with friends • show respect • no trouble with siblings • curfew respected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time out given • 15 minutes lost in an activity child likes • If incident bad, can lose 30 minutes or more (e.g., didn't do homework) • Use language of choice, "You have chosen to lose time this time" • Sometimes give child choice about which loss he should get (e.g., TV or videogame) • Grounding possible • Also, child can earn back time lost (e.g., being good, trying hard, doing the homework) • Of course, child can gain extra time if good (e.g., cleans room well, so gets to play with friend more)

should vary with the particular situation of each child. For the particular child for which the figure was created, I suggested to the parents that, in determining the normal privileges for their child, that they work in units of two, that is, in time periods of two hours, money intervals of two dollars, and so on. The child, depending on his behavior, could gain or lose some of these privileges. In losing privileges, the child could lose units worth 25%. For example, if the child's behavior had been inappropriate, the child could lose privileges in 15-minute blocks, in 25¢ blocks, and so on. On the positive side, the child could earn 15 minutes of playtime with his friends, 25¢, etc. Finally, the system we created allowed the child to win back lost privileges. If the child had been deprived of a privilege, but had clearly compensated well the rest of the week, the lost privilege was to be returned. **The goal of disciplining children is not to punish them for the negative, but to change them toward the positive.**

How do we speak to children about choices such as those shown in the chart? When children gain privileges, for example, we might tell them that they have chosen to listen and have put "Mr. Trouble" in his place. However, if children lose

*The glow that we see in
children brightens the
future.*

*When we take children into
their imagination, the
dreams are theirs to fill.*



Give children everything
they ask for from the
deepest of their hearts
—love.

Parents who foster their
children's psychological
growth at all turns grow
themselves at all points.

privileges, we might say that they have chosen not to put “Mr. Trouble” in his place, that “Mr. Trouble” has had too much influence over them, and that they have lost privileges because of their lack of control over him. We can end the conversation by saying that, as their parents, we are sure that the next time they will do the right thing and try to gain back their lost privileges. Children respond to this language because it allows them choice, and it places the decisions on their shoulders. Parents respond because their shoulders feel lighter.

Figure 24-6 describes five ways to try to get children to cooperate when we want them to do something. It also lists the corresponding effects on their psychological development of the five ways that one can use in addressing children.

Figure 24-6

Children can be taught to do what we want by negative or positive means. For example, we can scream at them or praise them. Negative strategies lead to negative results. Children may comply, but they will revolt, resist, etc. They need to develop internal control and a desire to please us, and to comply naturally to our requests and prohibitions. The more positive their relationship with us, the more likely children will accept our goals and the manner that we suggest for them to succeed in achieving the goals.

Getting Results with Children

Options To Get Goal

Behavior	Scream, threats	Imperative style (order dryly; ask nervously)	Request neutrally, relating to rules, rewards	Appeal to something inside child	Relate to child openly; requests are embedded in positive relationship
Example	“You better, or else”	“I’m telling you to ...”	“If you don’t clean, ...”	“I’m sure you’ll choose right to ...”	Child always makes right choice even without request
Outcome	Creates chaotic child who won’t listen well	Creates rebellious child, even if listens (sometimes)	Develops external control, motivates, but resistance probable	Develops internal control, owning responsibility for actions	Child free to fully grow psychologically



In the abusive style, the parent can scream, threaten, verbally abuse, or even physically abuse children. Unfortunately, this approach is more widespread than we would like. Far too many children live daily with this regime. Children are silenced. They can become psychologically chaotic.

In the imperative style, the parent gives orders in an authoritarian fashion. The parent is King. Children learn submission and do not really listen. This type of parenting attitude may induce a rebellious attitude when the children are older.

In the third approach, the parent is more neutral in asking the children for something. The parent puts in place a system of rules to follow and rewards to receive. The children listen, but learn that control is on the outside of them, or that the application of punishment and the acquisition of privileges are controlled externally to them. Later in their search for internal control, they may develop resistance to the parental discipline system.

The next two techniques move control to children's inner self. In the fourth approach, the parent promotes internal control by using techniques that appeal to the children's sense of responsibility. Children are given the freedom to explore the outside world, and learn about the self at the same time. The danger is that when the children get older and can understand more, the parent restricts their exploration about certain matters that she or he, as an adult, have yet to explore. Their children risk turning inward.

The fifth approach shows that when the parent is fully open with their children, when there are no issues for children that are closed for a lack of exploration on her or his part, and when their relationship is mutually sensitive, shared, respectful, and guiding, any request by the parent to the children has a good chance of being respected. Children consider it from the point of view of their whole relationship with their parent. They acquiesce even if they disagree with the request, because they sincerely want to agree for the sake of the overall relationship with the parent and, moreover, they may even appreciate the argument that it is for their own good in the long term. They do not see such occurrences as sacrifices, but as part of their obligations, and even as possible growth experiences. **In being raised with sensitivity and guidance, children develop not only an internal control and curiosity about the external world, but also a**

.....
*Children are very
teachable—when we
learn how to teach them.*
.....

.....
*Children do what you do—
not what you say.*
.....

.....
*Children need wholesome
nutrients. Read them
the whole book.*
.....

.....
*Be good to yourself—
smile to a child.*
.....

.....
*Giving emotional security to
children secures their future.*
.....

profound commitment to their parents and to their own psychological growth.

Figure 24-7 asks what happens when parents get frustrated because of the behavior of their children? What can parents do when they see all their years of sacrifice, hard work, giving, and stress lead to children who can be insolent, uncaring, and snotty, at times, or worse? The problem may require more balance in the life of the parents. Perhaps the parents are so overwhelmed by the collection of their stresses that they blame their children too much for minor issues. Perhaps the time has come for the parents to examine their stresses in the workplace. Perhaps they are so busy at work, therefore, feeling that everything has to be perfect at home, and so decide to do everything themselves because it is easier. Or, perhaps the stresses lie more in the home than outside the home. Perhaps, the parents need to adjust their parenting style to the age of their children. Perhaps, it is time for one parent to let go of the super-parent role and to

Figure 24-7

Parents' goals often relate to having children cooperate in household chores and responsibilities. The more a parent is left to do it all, the more she or he will reach a critical level of stress. Making chores fun helps ensure that they will get done.

Am I SuperMom or PooperMom?

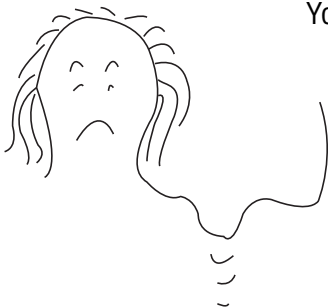
You're Not SuperChild!

You don't wear hero costumes
You don't fly through your homework
You don't move mountains of dirt



You're Not SuperDad!

You don't wear a cap
You don't jump from high mounds of dishes
You don't leap dust with a single bound



So Why Should I Be SuperMom!

And do everything.
Just because I used to?
The party's over.

delegate more responsibility both to the partner who participates less and to the children. As children get older, they can be doing more to help out. Or, perhaps, the parents behave in a certain way because that is how their culture trained them. Further, the parents may have to examine their own relationship. As partners mature, they can grow out of bad habits. **By seeing balance at home, in how parents behave and in how roles are shared, children are more likely to participate in a balanced way of life.**

Figure 24-8 shows a figure that I created for a child to help him reintegrate back into school after his motor vehicle

*Embrace your inner self
—hug a child.*

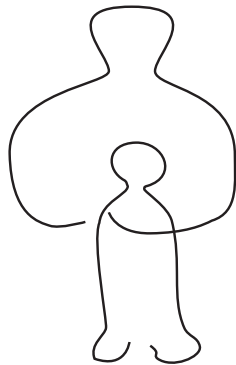
*A hug to start the day
extends into the evening.*

Figure 24-8

Children who are secure in a secure, loving relationship at home bring their joy to school. The love of learning begins with the love received in the home.

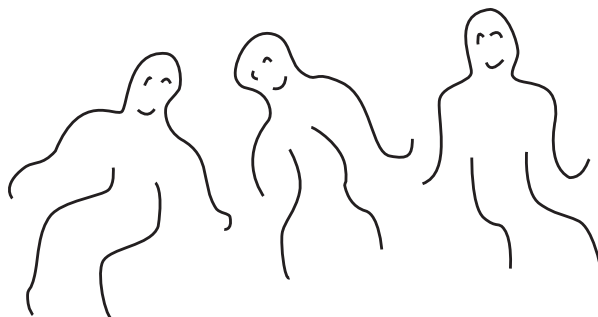
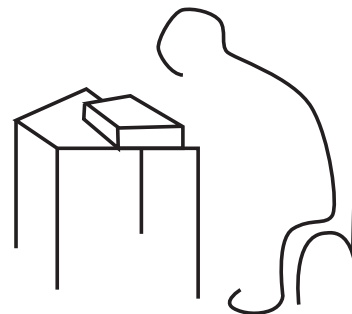
Camille's Happy Meal

A Story



When I get ready for school,
I love to think of all the good times,
learning, and friends there.
Mummy gives me a big hug,
and I never forget it as the day goes on.

It makes me feel good the whole
day, and it gives me strength.



So when I play at lunchtime,
I'm full of energy, and full of joy.
I'm happy the rest of the day.

.....
*When children run,
they sit well.*
.....

accident. It aimed to show him that, for the three major components of a child's life—family, school, and friends—he still had everything it takes to lead a happy life. In the end, this is what we want for our children, and they normally have internal developmental programs leading them to these goals. However, as parents, we have most important roles to play in their growth, especially in the early years. I am not saying that parents are the only influence on children's development, because the quality of their school, and the nature of their friends, neighborhood, and the wider society, with its media, culture, and so on, all play their role. However, life begins at home and grows at home. Children prosper with security, attachment, affection, bonding, and love, especially in their early years. Knowing one's limits and the value of hard work are learned better from such a base. The right friends are more readily acquired and maintained with such a base. Wanting to do homework, and having a good attitude about school, both develop easier from this base. **Children profit from parental concern and supervision, and the dividends reach to the parents, not only to the children.**

.....
*Children are
learning machines.
Turn on their engines.*
.....

Figure 24-9 exhibits how positive and negative learning contribute to a child's development. Learning mechanisms, such as reinforcement (e.g., praise) and punishment (e.g., scolding), usually are used to promote behaviors that are positive and desired. Unfortunately, there are ways of disciplining a child that act to promote negative, undesirable, or bad behavior. Therefore, in the figure, the most important distinction being made is between positive and negative learning.

.....
*Physical exercise builds
muscles and mind.*
.....

When a parent's or other person's reaction is expressed after a child's behavior in order to increase or decrease the behavior, that adult's reaction is called a reinforcer. Positive reinforcement involves some type of reaction or reward that is presented in order to increase a child's behavior. Negative reinforcement involves withdrawing something, rather than offering something, in order to increase a child's behavior. Punishment, on the other hand, is an unpleasant response to a child's behavior in order to decrease it. It also could involve the removal of a pleasant stimulus in order to decrease it. Aside from positive and negative reinforcement and punishment, other learning mechanisms may be activated to affect a child's behavior. These techniques can involve not

Figure 24-9

Positive and negative behavior in the child can be increased or decreased by parental action. For example, the strategies of giving praise and of giving good models to imitate are effective ones. Ignoring cranky behavior and limiting rewards as deterrence are other examples that may be helpful.

Learning For Good

Child's Behavior	Parental Behavior	Parental
<p>Positive (or perceived as positive; Desired)</p>	<p>Increase positive behavior (Constructive)</p>	<p>Additive (e.g., give praise after good behavior)</p> <p>Neutral (e.g., be good (role) model)</p> <p>Subtractive (e.g., withdraw a negative for a good end)</p>
	<p>Decrease positive behavior (Not Constructive)</p>	<p>Additive (e.g., scold child after good behavior)</p> <p>Neutral (e.g., ignore good behavior)</p> <p>Subtractive (e.g., remove food after child good)</p>
<p>Negative (or perceived as negative; Not Desired)</p>	<p>Increase negative behavior (Not Constructive)</p>	
	<p>Decrease negative behavior (Constructive)</p>	<p>Additive (e.g., scold child after he hits, keep in moderation)</p> <p>Neutral (e.g., ignore cranky behavior)</p> <p>Subtractive (e.g., remove dessert after a fight)</p>

NOT GOOD LEARNING

<i>When children need to turn to someone, head straight for them.</i>	<i>When children play follow the leader, lead by example.</i>	<i>Playtime does serious good to a child's brain.</i>
---	---	---

.....
*Being a good parent is
making one giant
step for human kindness.*
.....

responding after a behavior in order to eliminate it (extinction) or modeling or demonstrating a behavior in order that it is increased.

When a parent or teacher uses these various learning mechanisms toward constructive ends, the goal is to increase positive behavior and to decrease negative behavior, in a process of positive learning. To accomplish positive learning, the parent can give praise to a positive (add), stop/remove/withdraw a negative (subtract), or perform a more neutral behavior (do-demonstrate a positive/ignore a negative).

However, when a parent or teacher uses these various learning mechanisms toward less constructive ends, when the intervention is negative or non-constructive, then the learning is negative, so that positive behavior is decreased while negative behavior is increased. Negative learning is facilitated by behaviors used explicitly for negative ends, such as scolding inappropriately, ignoring a good behavior, praising a bad one, modeling a bad one, and stopping/removing a good one. For example, giving in to a tantrum is not constructive.

Children are super learners. They deserve super parents, super teachers, and other adults with super intentions. Too often, negative intentions are hidden from children. They receive mixed messages, or the negative is expressed openly and the environment is hostile. Sometimes, even the best parent makes mistakes. The secret is to keep our parental mistakes to a minimum by knowing about and enabling positive learning to the maximum. By maximizing positive learning, children will learn best.

.....
*It all starts when they're born.
It all stops when you do.*
.....

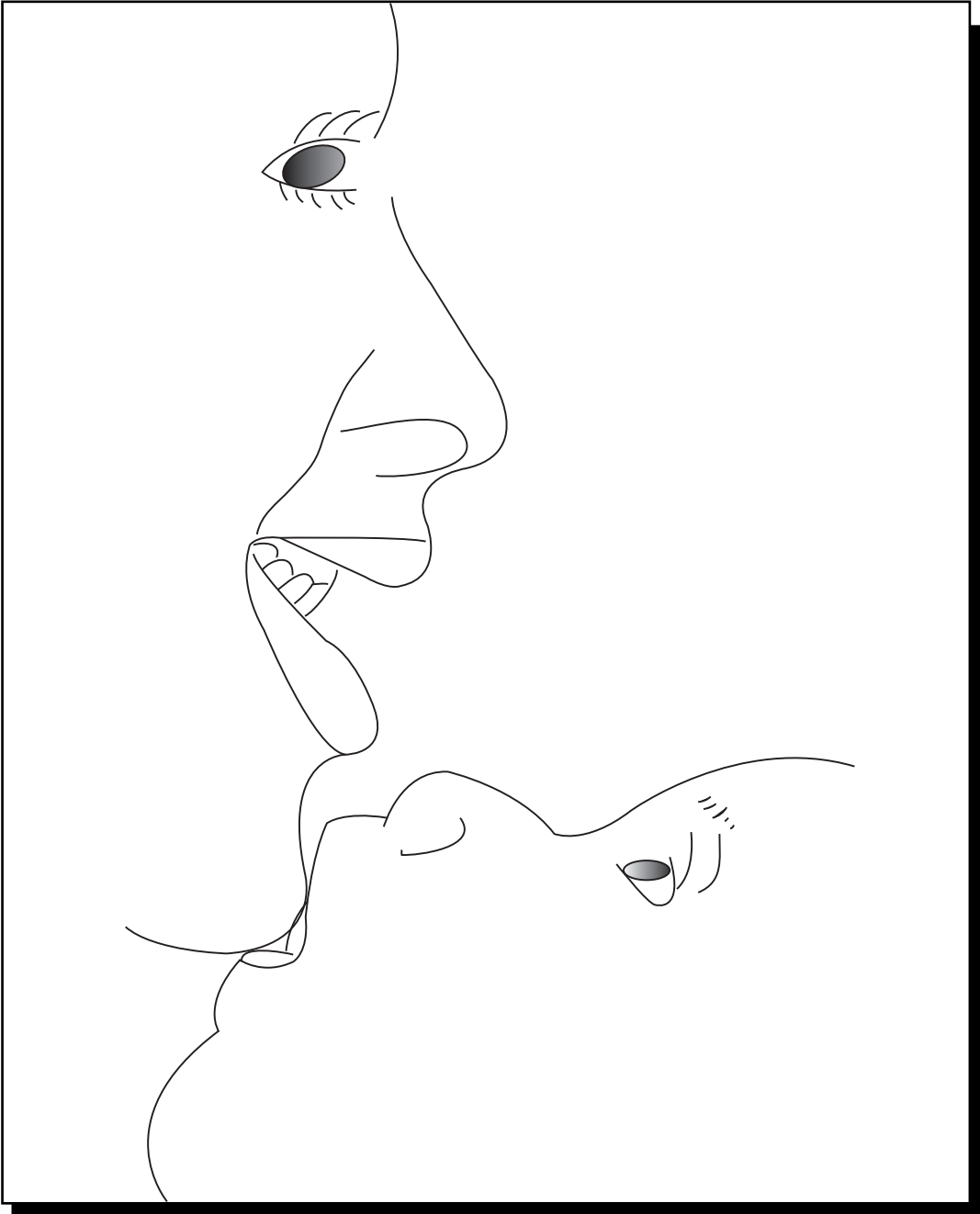
The mother lovingly holds her newborn as she suckles the breast for the first time (see **Figure 24-10**). At first, the newborn performs hesitantly, but then she acquires an increasing skill in sucking because of the opportunities afforded by her mother's tender waiting. The father holds his newborn baby up to his smiling face. The newborn visually scans the sky of his world. In the teeming confusion of forms, the newborn dimly deciphers the map of a face, darting her eyes about to better focus on prominent features, such as mouth, eyes, and hairline. She works like the astronomer focussing in her telescope the stars and their constellations. Through such transactions with the world, the baby learns, changes, and grows. The mind evolves in peace. The emotions are gurgling ones.

.....
*When children can trust our
word, they know what to say.*
.....

Figure 24-10

Joy starts to develop with the contentment experienced in the first months of life in the positive relationship between caregiver and child.

Gaining Joy



*It is never too late to say
that you are sorry,
especially to a child.*

*Children see what we
choose not to show them.*

Through positive interactions from the first moments of life, thinking and feeling are united in structures of exploration and potential. We can call them cognitive-emotional structures. Normally, the stresses confronting the baby derive more from the difficulties of her own efforts rather than from frustrations because the environment is not sensitive. The baby experiences personal, internally-generated stresses more than external ones. Parents organize, with patience, a holding frame or scaffold in which the baby can explore with passion the objects of her curiosity. The parents always remain one step ahead of the baby, never making their behavior or the context in which it is taking place too complex or too boring. In essence, the parents form a conjoined emotional-cognitive structure with the baby. The parents offer to the baby the experience of lived generations, passed on from parents to babies since our species' dawn, and even before, through inherited and experienced patterns.

The stress that the baby experiences is optimal in this scenario. It comes more from a positive push from within, from a personal program of change and growth, rather than



from a negative push from the outside. The world is not hostile, but is an amiable host. Parents and caregivers provide a natural destressing environment in which coping and resilience are acquired. Little frustrations in encounters are monitored, modulated, and smoothed out, or at least contained. The child contributes to this process by actively adjusting, trying out new ways and, eventually, integrating new possibilities into her way of dealing with the world. For example, learning to suckle the bottle after having been fed on the breast becomes efficient and peaceful after an initial period of halted learning in the baby. Watching the smiling face of a parent's friend who plays a lot with the baby eventually brings recognition and pleasure to the baby.

However, for some babies, the world is already hostile even at their tender age. This might begin even before birth, for example, through vulnerabilities created by nutritional and psychological neglect derived from any number of factors. Or, the hostility of the world may come later in smaller doses. Even in ideal circumstances, the newborn does not experience a world without frustrations. Inevitably, stress will come and, hopefully, it is minimal, so that adequate coping skills are acquired and refined, resulting in continued positive impressions of and encounters with the world.

When the balance of negative to positive stress shifts too much to the negative—to hostility, neglect, and abuse—the inborn drive to harmonize with the world suffers. The inner coordination of the exploratory drive with feelings of contentment, satisfaction, and joy is seriously compromised. Thinking does not coordinate with feeling into one entity, because efforts to explore are associated with frustration and because positive emotions are contaminated and separated. A train of development in the child is set in motion that leads more easily to feelings of being overwhelmed by external stresses. The child becomes a vessel of self-doubt and feelings of an inability to cope, multiplying any frustrations offered by the environment. Destressing does not take place in an adequate fashion. This prepares the way for eventual hardship when the world presents major external stresses, as it inevitably will.

It is never too late to begin to learn optimal destressing. In particular, children can learn certain cognitive and behavioral techniques. Moreover, adolescence and adulthood bring new cognitive and emotional potentials that enable us

.....
*Make magic words
a two-way feat.*
.....

.....
*Children love the love
and fight the fight.*
.....

.....
*Hit it off with a child—
don't hit.*
.....

Learning how to learn is class action.

Homework is done work when schoolwork is fun work.

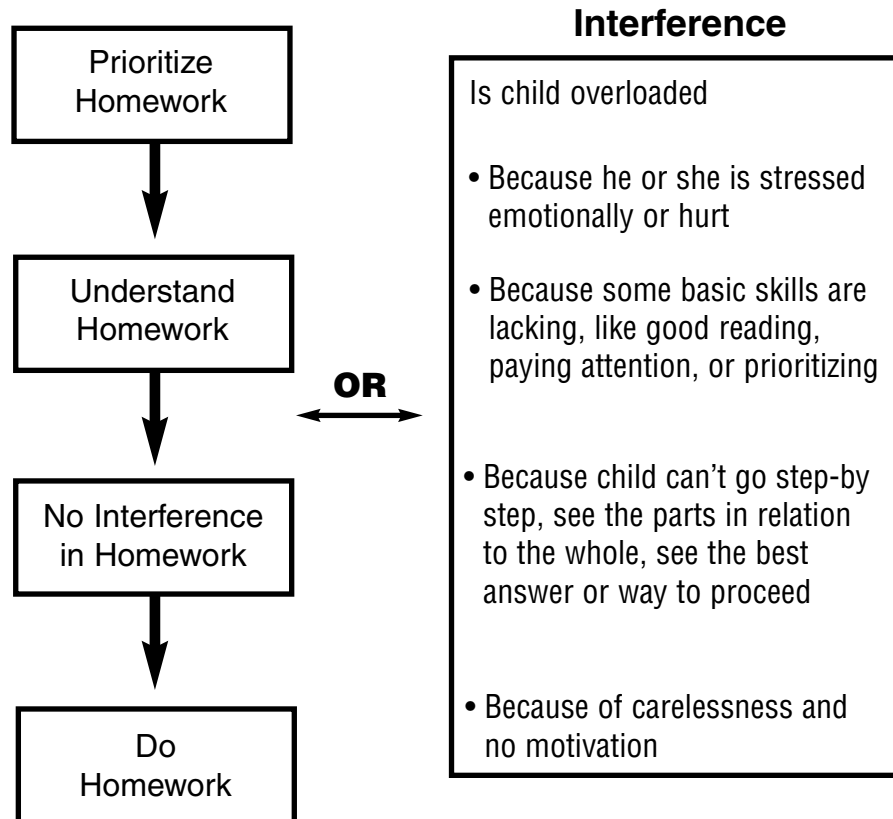
to look back and to learn, retracing the past in new etchings in the future. Learning time can be recreated at any age. New stress management techniques can be applied and have success at any age. The rough edge that bristles when stress calls on our past bad habits can be sanded finely at any age. The future can become brighter beginning at any age.

Figure 24-11 and Figure 24-12 deal with homework and learning. Once we learn how to do homework, it is easier to succeed at it. Once we see homework as part of learning, it becomes less stressful. School is not about marks, but about learning the basics that we need to succeed in life and to reduce stress. Every time we learn for the sake of learning, it

Figure 24-11

Homework can follow an efficient plan after school, except when interference is not controlled. Interference may derive from the child or the context. Such interference can be managed. Good homework begins with good “home work.”

Doing Homework Right is Never Wrong

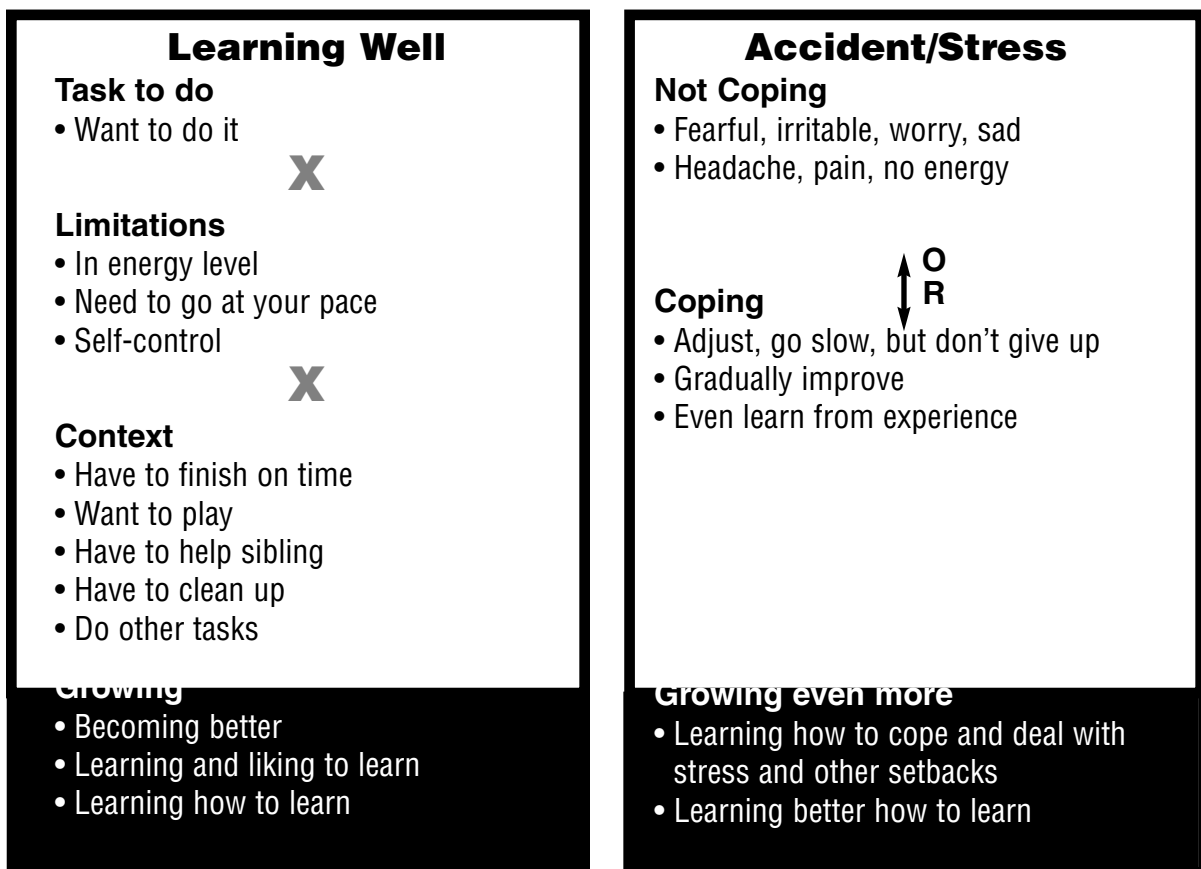


There is no or little interference in homework when parents, teacher, and children work together

Figure 24-12

For a child to succeed on a homework task or other task, he or she needs to be aware of personal and contextual factors. Am I tired? When is the homework due? And so on. As children succeed more, they develop self-confidence. Development continues optimally once it is begun well, everything else being equal. However, external stresses happen, such as accidents. The child may cope adequately and grow psychologically in such moments, or she or he may not. Parental reaction to such events is one important factor in influences on the direction that the child's reaction will take. The message is that, in the right circumstances, stress has the potential not to be a negative but, instead, it can contribute positivity to a child's development.

Learning Need not be Stressful; Stress can be Learning



merges with our whole being and mind, and we do not regret that it may have been stressful or took our time away from other pursuits. When things get in the way of school, we still can have self-control, plan, prioritize, learn and grow. **The real stress is not when the mind has to learn, but when it is blocked from learning.** Homework can be organized efficiently so that it proceeds smoothly despite

.....
*Give a child a helping
 hand—pick out
 a good book to read.*

When the family works together, the family plays together.

any interference. Even when the interference is large, parents, the teacher, and the school can help the child get through the stress involved.

Teaching children chores should not be a chore for parents. Doing chores for children should not be a chore for children. **Figure 24-13** presents a family chore game that I used with clients. The girl chose to do her chores and enjoyed getting praise cards. The boy chose not to do his chores. The

Figure 24-13

Children can play this game and learn the positive consequences for choosing to help do chores, or the negative consequences for choosing not to help. I have used cards such as these to represent praise of the child or disappointment in the child for not doing chores. In this game, the rewards the child can earn by cooperating in chores may affect the whole family. If the whole family plays the game, there is space on some cards for a family member to use her or his own words to express praise or to express disappointment.

Cooperative Chore Game

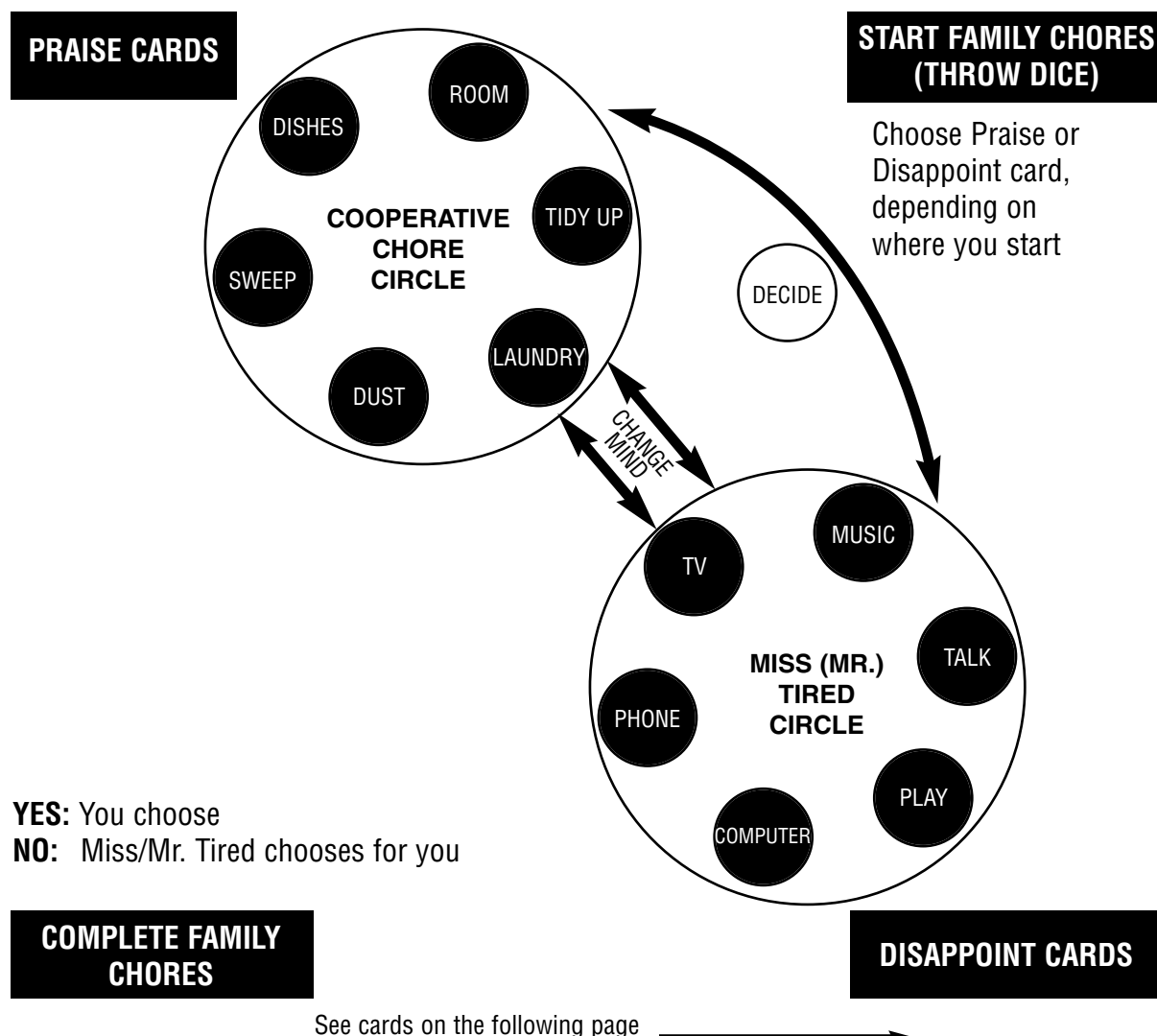


Figure 24-13 Continued

PRAISE CARDS

- 1 Thank you
- 2 Good job
- 3 I love you cooperating
- 4 You are the best
- 5 You chose right
- 6 We get a great outing
- 7 Let's keep it up
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12

OR



Once you decide to go to either the cooperative chore circle or the tired circle, throw 2 dice, to get either the praise card or the disappoint card

After the dice are rolled, if you get cards 8–12, fill in the sayings that you want to tell your brothers and sisters (or parents or other adults). Work on the negatives

Figure out how family cooperation can grow to other areas family life

DISAPPOINT CARDS

- 1 I hope you change your mind
- 2 We're counting on you
- 3 It's never too late
- 4 Cooperation is good
- 5 You can do it
- 6 You want us to cooperate
- 7 I know you want all of us to win
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12

*Nurture your child.
Bring him in the garden.*

*It is natural for a child to
want to nurture nature.*

girl, in order to change the boy, did give him positive messages when she was asked to create them. He understood them, and tried a little harder. The second objective of this game is to encourage cooperation because, in the game, when one child does not do her or his share, the whole family is docked from their reward. Children are experts at cooperating, if we encourage it in them. **Cooperation emerges easily in children when the desire to encourage it emerges easily in us.**



Children want nothing more than to be loved and guided, to be allowed to learn and grow. Each appropriate act on our part towards children touches them; each inappropriate one may scar them. As parents, we have a crucial role in how children develop. **The more we are better parents, the more our children will be better parents.**

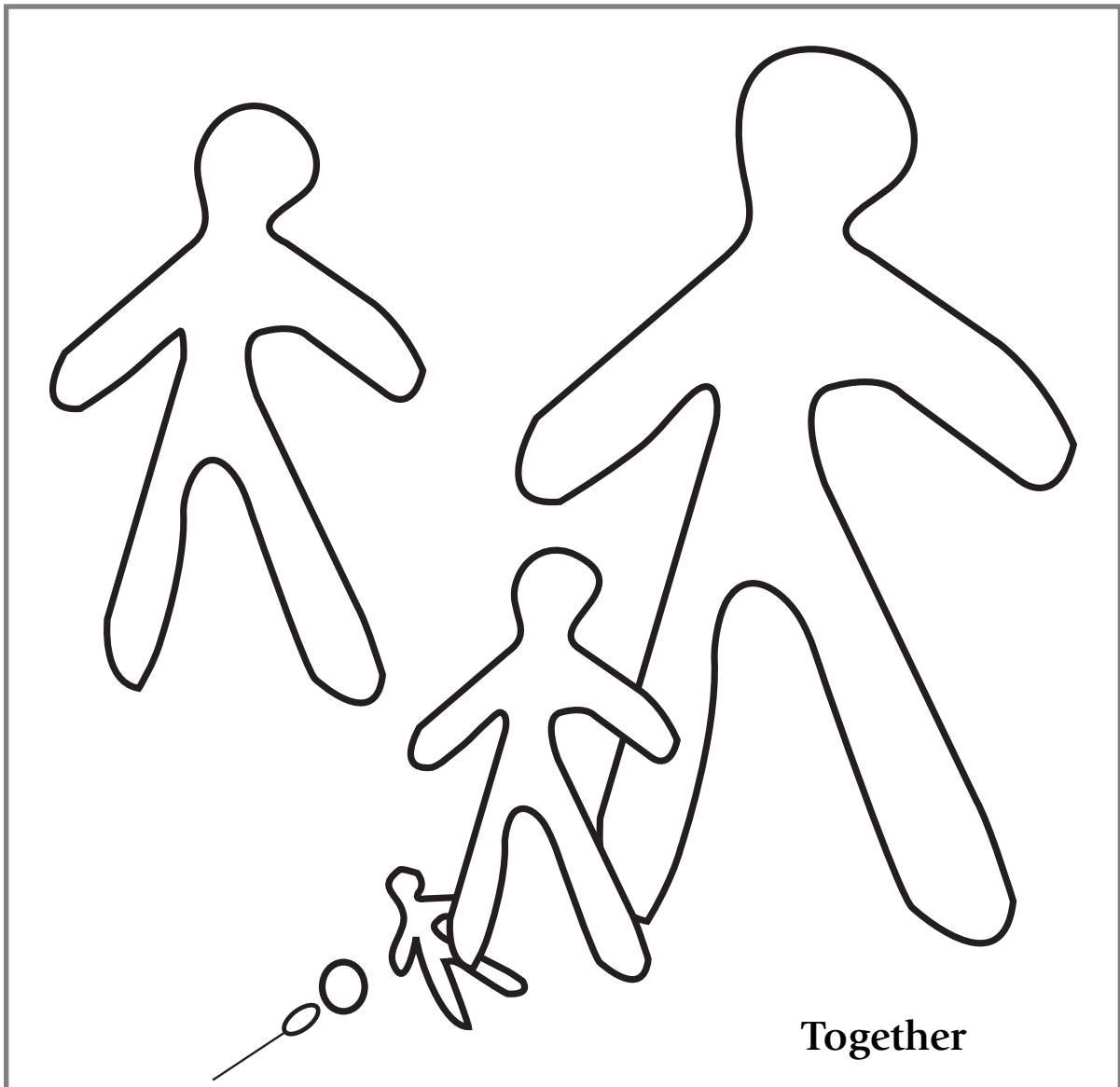
This ends the chapter on children. If you dare, proceed to the one on adolescence.

Teach your child about the environment—by walking with her to the park instead of driving.

*When we hurt a child,
we hurt the universe.*

*Children watch our every move.
Turn on your best programme.*

*Getting thanks gives
the most pleasure.*



Xavier felt stagnated with his life. His marriage was fine, his work not too stressful, and his children had grown up. Now was his time. But he did not know where to begin in finding new activities.

Xavier realizes that his quest is more spiritual and creative than anything else. In browsing in the bookstore, he comes across a book much like the present one.

*Preparing a child for learning
prepares the teacher for teaching.*

*Children are love's answer.
Love is children's need.*

A warm regard is a best reward.

*When our own past is considered a
source of lessons to learn, it is
easier to teach our children.*

Children flourish—in global warming.

*School teaches the letters of the
alphabet. Parents teach the code of
living.*

*Libraries provide children with
infinite books. Books provide
children with infinite ideas.*

*The thought of a child
can make us smile. The smile
of a child can make us.*

Praise earned is priceless.

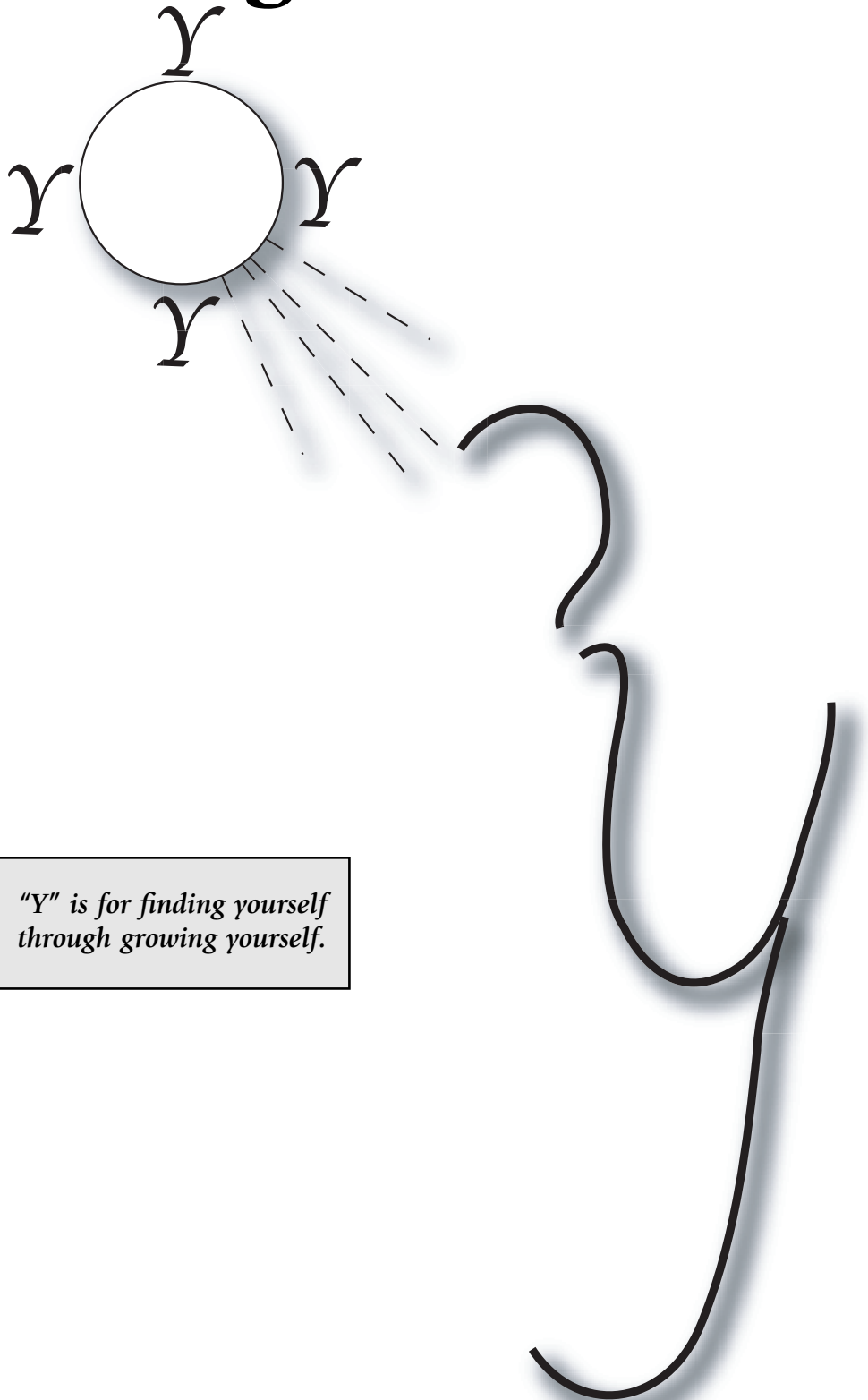


Vivacity

**The more animated the talk,
the longer the walk.**

Chapter 25

Teenagers



*"Y" is for finding yourself
through growing yourself.*



Preteens want to skip adolescence. Adults wish they could.

“Yikes”, said Yolanda; she had two teenagers. She was yoked between them. Chapter 25 taught her how to help her youths find themselves. Say yes to Chapter 25.

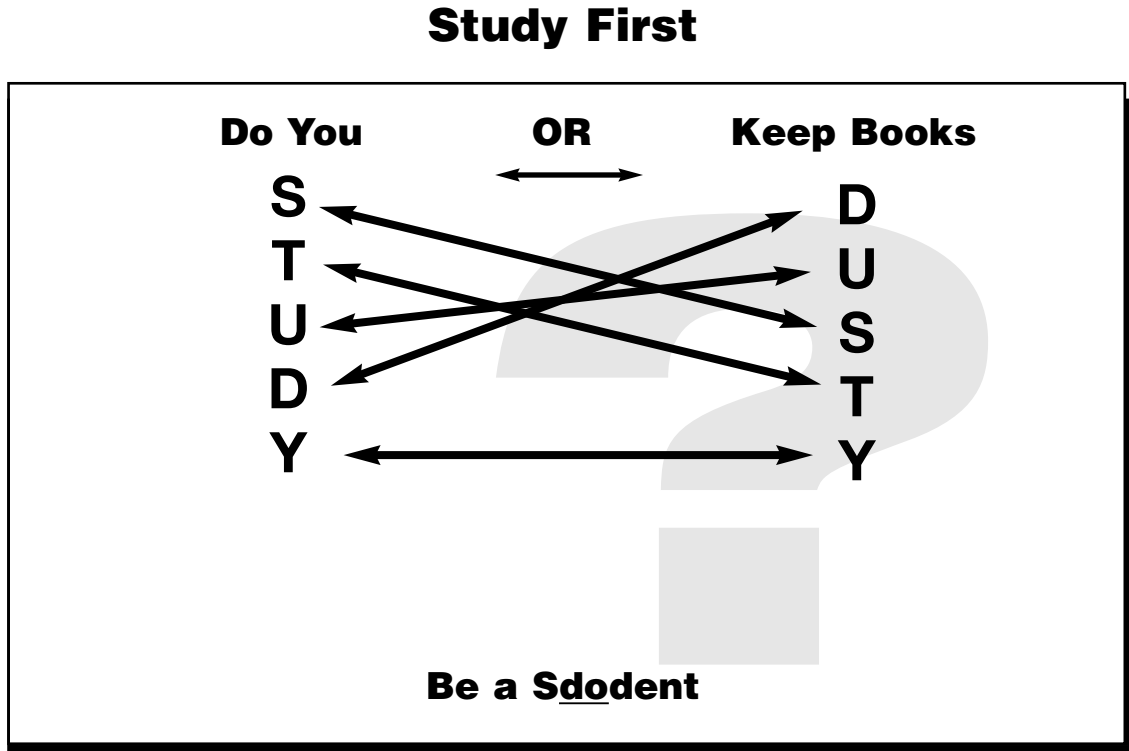
Adolescence brings with it a host of challenges both for parents and for the youth entering this age period. It is an age of transition. Nevertheless, the basic parenting skills of providing warmth and setting appropriate limits, like those discussed for younger children in the prior chapter, are still required. There are new pressures on adolescents, such as peer pressures and increased responsibility at school and, perhaps, at work. There are also new psychological growing points, such as the maturation of puberty and the development of identity and a sense of individuality, which are accompanied by increased freedoms and privileges. Most teenagers navigate reasonably well the difficult times of adolescence. However, teenagers do not always do well in confronting their challenges. Often, adolescence is a time of turbulence, storm, and stress. However, **any regressive change in the developmental trajectory at adolescence does not have to be permanent.** Teenagers can seek solutions themselves and, we, as parents, can help.

Figure 25-1 looks at a basic fundamental objective for adolescents—studying and staying in school. Dropping out of school makes the future that much harder, especially because education is a door to opportunity. As parents and teachers, we know this. Teenagers who are on the verge of dropping out often have issues of self-confidence, poor contextual support, the wrong set of friends, the allure of drugs or quick money, and so on. They either feel that there is no choice, or they make the wrong choice. They are trying to find themselves, or they feel that they have lost themselves. If we could only reach them and let them know that studying and school are the best pathways to reclaim themselves and find the future, we may be able to make their passage smoother. As parents, this is our voice, and it could become their voice if we support them in their efforts in a constructive manner.

With teenagers, we need to become translators, find the right language to reach them, and have them reach for the positive words and messages that they are hearing. We need to become anthropologists, and enter their world in a non-judgmental fashion in order to understand them. We need to become sociologists, in order to fathom their friendships, their groups, or, if applicable, their gang behavior. It would help to become linguists in order to understand their special

Figure 25-1

Teenagers want to explore themselves and the world. They should also keep exploring their books and keep studying. Books open us to the world of words and, in reading, the reader travels the world through words.



language codes. By becoming psychologists, we could help them to find the best strategies to motivate them. Other professions that we could add to the list include becoming music professors in order to grasp their music choices and becoming educators who may understand how to best teach them. Finally, we need to become philosophers and understand our deepest thoughts on the nature of life in order to better communicate with them. Overall, we need to become our best selves and relate to them in all our humanness and in all theirs. If we do all this and they find that we are giving them the right social support, they will respond by studying and staying in school, which will become natural to them. **Adolescents have a particular idealism that, when tapped, can powerfully guide them. We should do everything to unleash it and watch the majesty of their energy.**

Figure 25-2 shows that, with appropriate limit-setting and parental affection, adolescents can develop a sense of

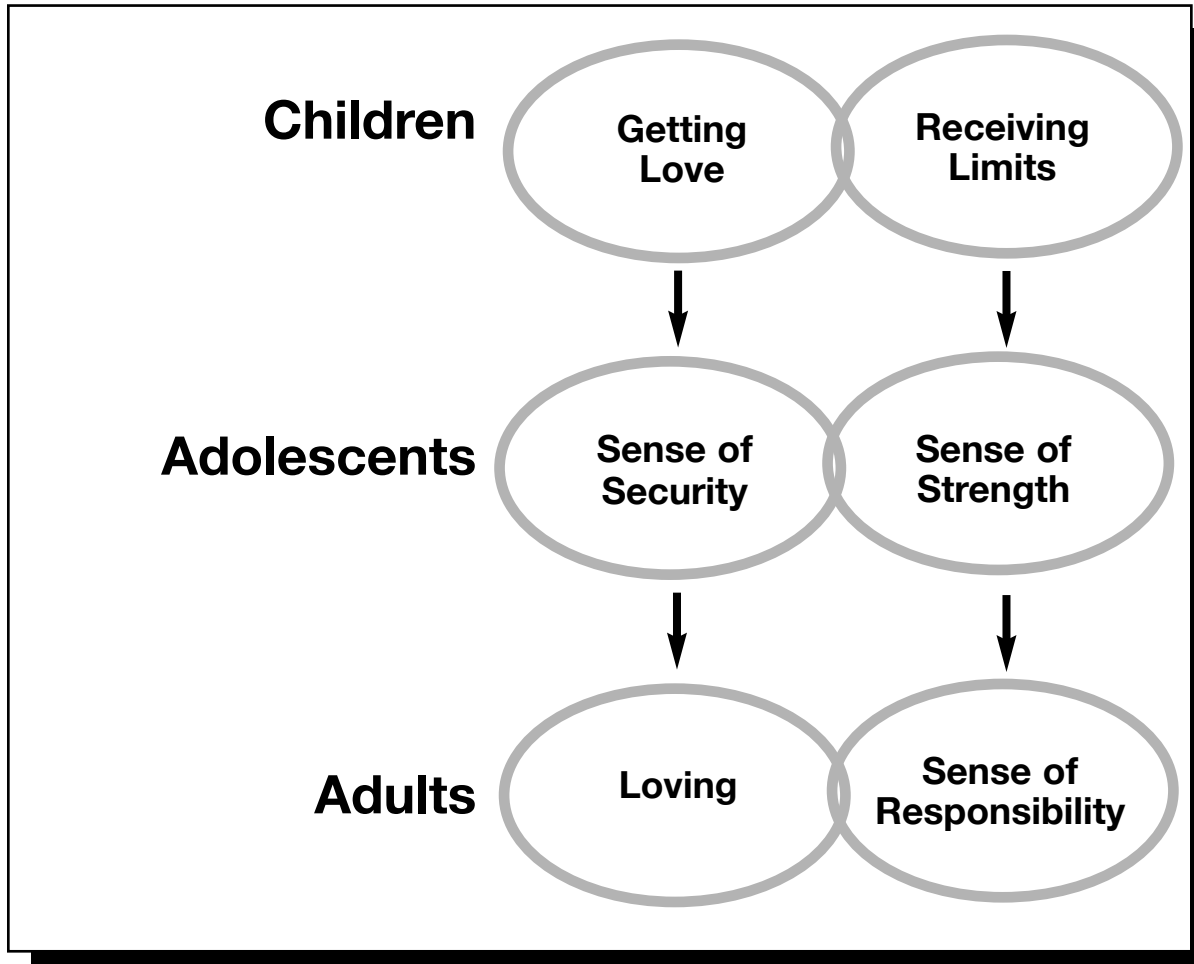
.....
*Teenagers are a sign
of how much progress
adults have made.*
.....

.....
*Each generation has
its gap—so history
does repeat itself.*
.....

Figure 25-2

Adolescents can pass through the transition years easier when they have a secure base of affection that had been developed in the childhood years. Adolescents respond better to the limits that we set for them when we have treated them well throughout their infancy and childhood.

Give Your Children Their Wedding Rings



.....
*Teenagers age their
parents quite well.*
.....

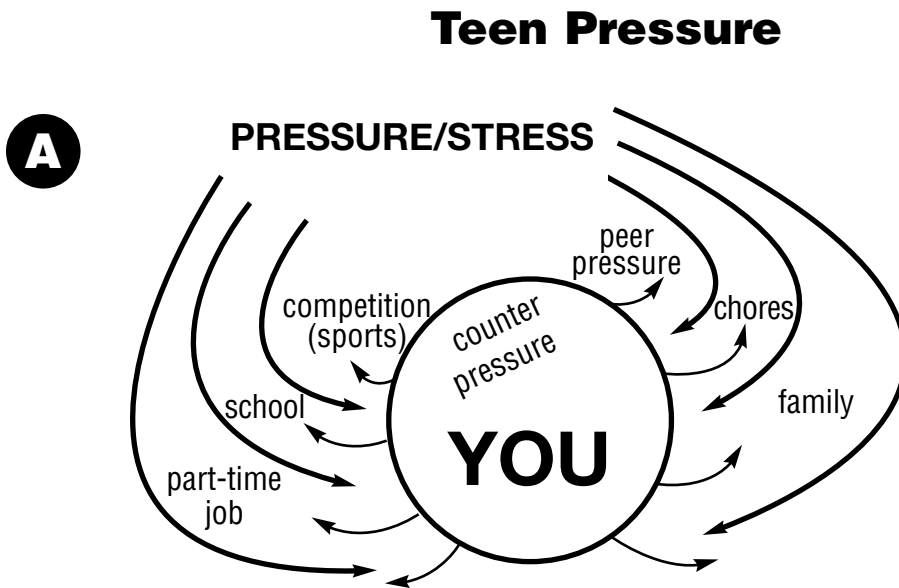
.....
*Go where no man has
ever gone before—your
teen's room.*
.....

strength and security. This prepares the way for them to develop an appropriate sense of responsibility with respect to work and family. Children who do not receive an optimal upbringing can still develop well. Whatever their childhood beginnings, adolescents can develop positively, but hard psychological work may be needed when early experiences had been very difficult. **As parents, we need to work hard at home, because the best savings that we can make concern the future of our children.**

Figure 25-3 looks at the kinds of pressures and stresses confronting adolescents. Peer pressure can be quite overpow-

Figure 25-3

Teenagers are exposed to multiple peer pressures. They need to know how to refuse the worst of them and balance the rest. The more teenagers can control peer pressure, and even offer counter-pressure, thereby serving as good role models, the less effective is negative peer pressure in influencing their choices.



B How do you stay you?

- Deal with it
- Balance the pressures
- Use counter-pressures

For example

- Refuse peer pressure; be a role model instead
- Do homework early and well; so quizzes and papers are easier
- Do breathing exercises before a big game
- Don't spend too much money, so you are not under financial pressure

ering, especially concerning drugs and social behavior. There is constant school pressure and work pressure to perform well, and the complexities of social relationships in the family can have their own pressures. It is important for adolescents to maintain a sense of balance and to use appropriate counter-pressures in order to balance the stresses. For example, on average, they will not succumb to peer pressure when appropriate parental warmth and limits are put in place. In most cases, adolescents may imitate their peers

.....
Teenagers are great educators—they test our limits.
.....

.....
Teens think that curfew is time aplenty.
.....

Pages Inside
the Teenage Brain:

1. I
2. I want
3. I want to learn [delete]

Teenagers are caught
between rock and
a hard place.

with respect to hairstyle and clothes, but they choose their parents' values. **Adolescents mostly understand that peers are for fun and parents are for real.**

Figure 25-4 examines further the difficulties of the pressures that teenagers face. It emphasizes that parents can provide the appropriate counter-pressures and balances to teenage temptations. Teenagers may impulsively wish to explore forbidden territories, but parents can act as firm moral keepers and still be respected. The earlier parents provide moral guidance to their growing children, the more likely it is that their children will listen when they become teenagers and that they will control their temptations.

Most teenagers do not go through adolescent turmoil. It is a myth that adolescence is a time of storm and stress for all of them. For most teenagers, the age period is harder for parents than it is for their offspring. **If parents undertake parenting well before the time period when their teenagers reach the teenage years, most likely, their teenagers will teenage well.**

Figure 25-4

Teenagers resist negative peer pressure when they have positive parental values on which to call. They may try out things, but do learn, especially when parents have already taught them a lot of positives.

Teenagers Know Best, Until They Learn

Problem	Solution
Peer Pressure (their friends tell them like it is)	Family Values (parents tell them like it is)
Drugs	Just Say No (they have it in them to stop drugs)
Sex	Later (let them know it's for later)
Stress (problems)	Search (for solutions)
Block (mental)	Communication (with helpful others)
Future (has too many questions)	You (share the answers)

Figure 25-5 looks at adolescents' search for identity. Adolescents seek to find themselves. However, often the search is superficial. They try out every fad. They want to pierce every part of their body with rings, studs, and other jewelry. They are attracted to the wildest notions, people, places, and things. They think only of themselves. However, importantly, they do not necessarily follow up on all their temptations. They do have the capacity to balance their sense of individuality with a sense of community in their family, friends, and culture. Various constraints, their rationality, and what they have learned all collaborate to rein in

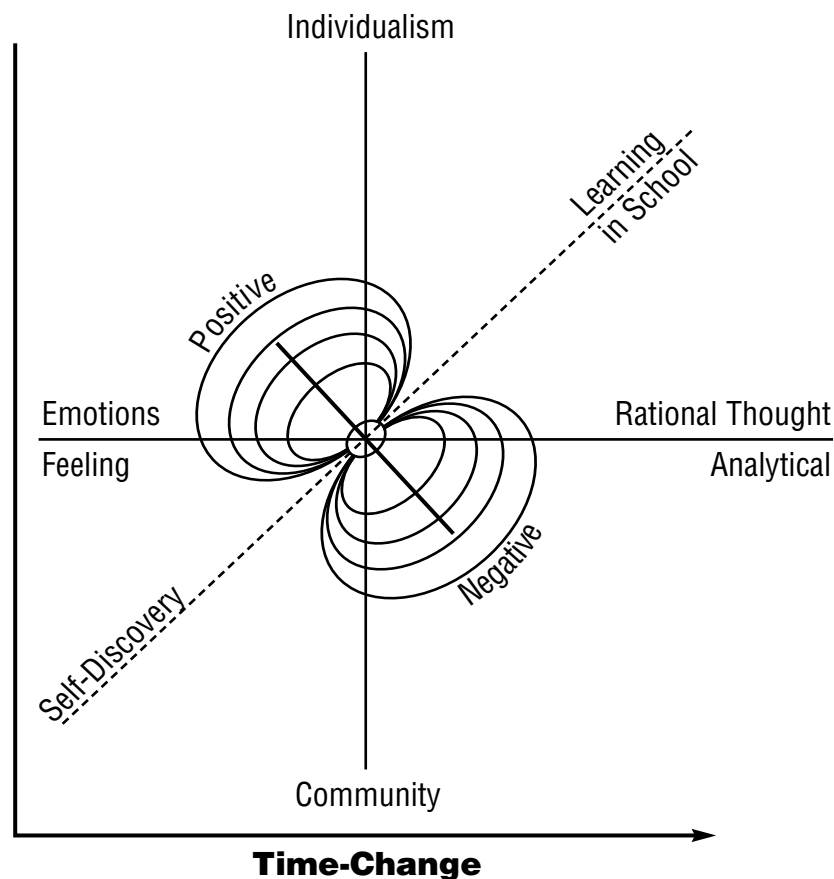
.....
The evolution of language;
Child: Me thirst.
Teen: Me first.

.....
Teenage triplets—
multiple trauma.

Figure 25-5

Teenagers are part of the “me-me” generation. Like in “Give me, I deserve it.” When self-discovery is only about self-satisfaction of pleasure, teenagers may not use rational thinking and may ignore people around them. By helping teenagers find balance, they end up standing on their own two feet.

Taking Wing



Our teenagers are our
parents' revenge.

Teenagers want their own
individual styles, clothes,
and tastes. So how come
they all look the same?

their curiosity. Balance is found, and their identity seeking continues in a positive way.

For adolescents, the dangers of this period concerning the search for identity is that it can lead to excesses, such as the use of illicit drugs, or it can lead to establishment of a negative identity, such as being a member of a gang. The dangers for the parents are that they do not understand what is happening to their teenage children, or they do not even see what is happening. Parents need to offer a supportive atmosphere to teenagers on their rocky road of identity seeking, but parents cannot try to create that identity for their teenagers. **Although others can help, one's personal identity can only be personally constructed.**

Figure 25-6 and Figure 25-7 are written in the language of teenagers in order to better create rapport with them and

Figure 25-6

Teenagers are into rap music. They should use some of the positive lessons of rap when they are in rehabilitation for an injury or when they face any major stress.

Rap Recovery

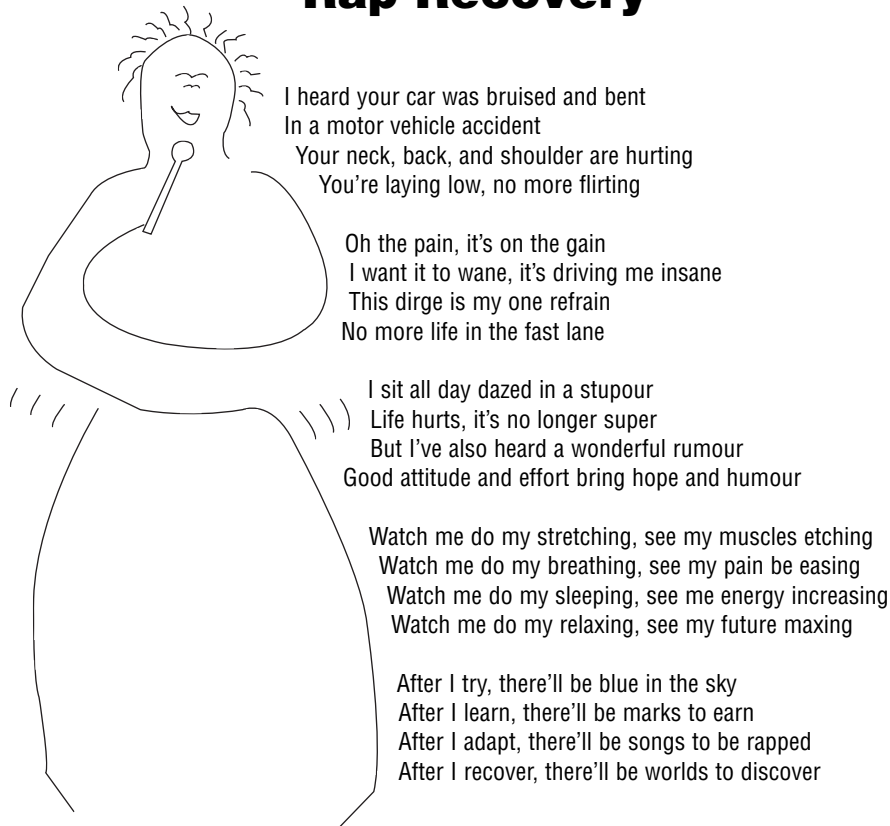
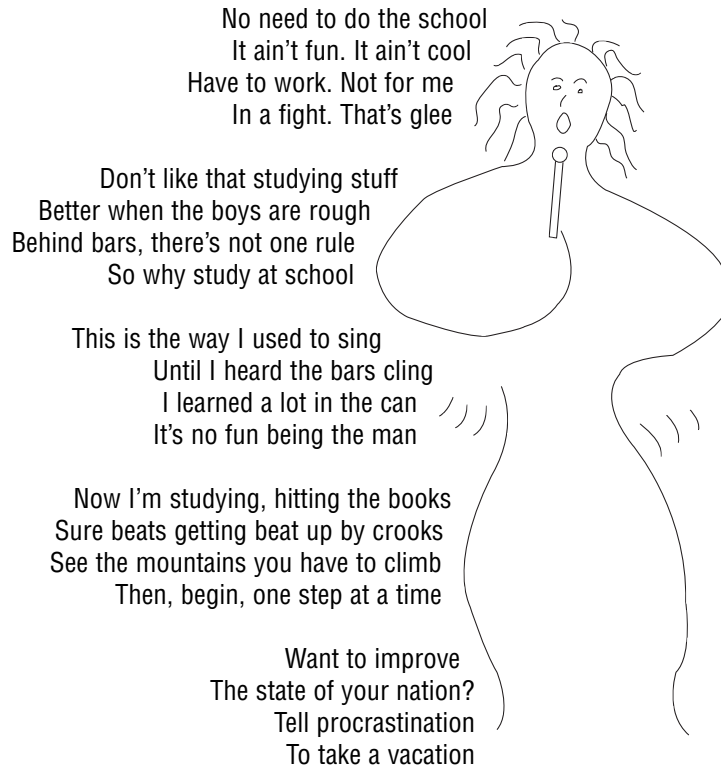


Figure 25-7

Rap music can be used to motivate students to study. It opens their minds to the best and the worst. Studying can help them achieve the best and avoid the worst.

Let's Procrastinate and Meet Our Fate



reach them. The first of the figures is about effort in rehabilitation, and the second is about effort at school. **Teenagers may have their own language, music, and tastes, but also they have their own hopes and values, for example, to improve the world that we are giving them.**

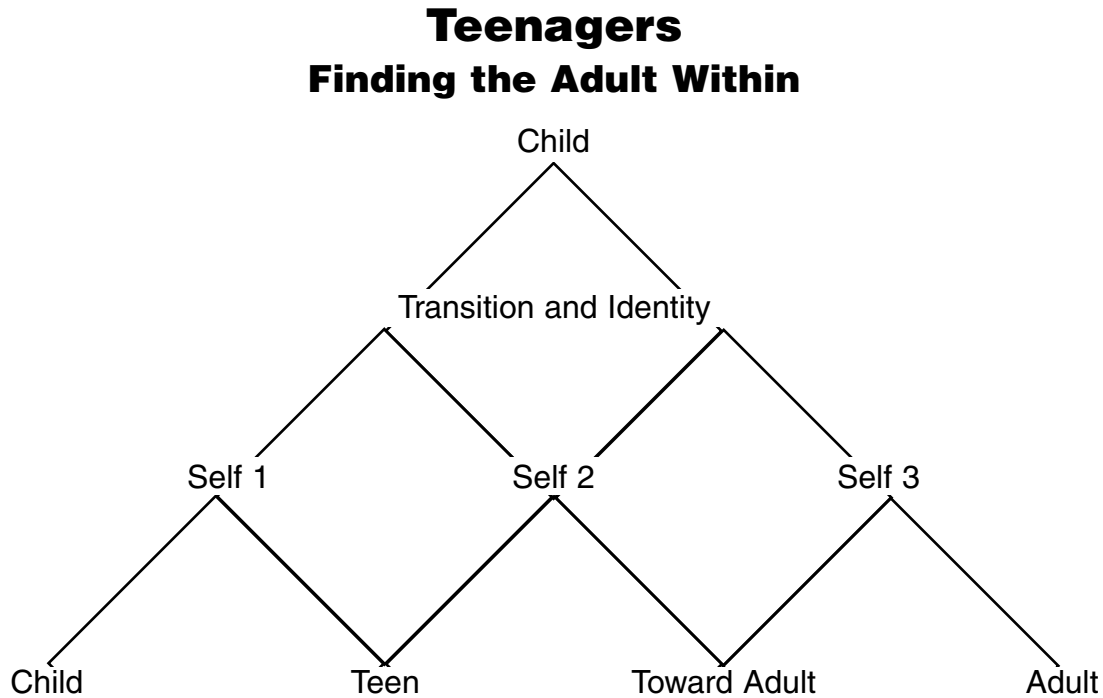
Figure 25.8 indicates that the search for identity is never simple, because we have many identities. Teenagers are branching out in multiple directions in their search, and confusion may develop easily. As adults, we can help teenagers pass through this difficult period by sharing with them details of our own search for identity, and by indicating to them how our search is still continuing. Have your family create a *we-identity*.

.....
Teenager jokes—parental coping mechanisms.
.....

.....
Teenagers have so many identities—no wonder they're all over the place.
.....

Figure 25-8

Teenagers are seeking their identity. But we have many identities. Teenagers need to learn to keep seeking their selves, and to rejoice in their variability and flexibility of self-definition. The selves of adults can keep multiplying, too. The self can be multifaceted, unless we efface it.



.....
*Fill the generation gap—
with your parents.*
.....

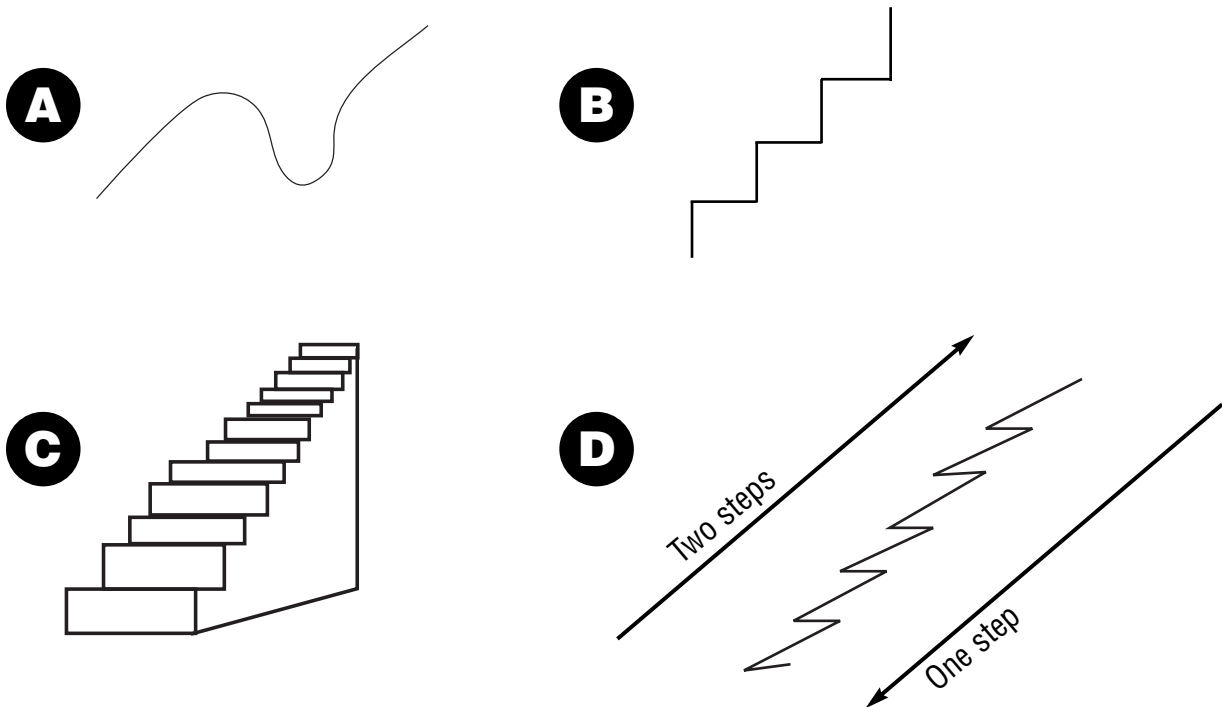
.....
*Childhood is a time of
innocence. Adolescence is a
time of dollars and cents.*
.....

Figure 25-9 analyzes possible developmental pathways through which adolescents pass. The first model indicates that much of development is a slow, gradual, smooth increase in skills, knowledge, and maturity, but also that there are bumps on the road. The second model suggests that development occurs in a few major stages or substages and, with each step, the adolescent suddenly arrives at a new, more advanced way of thinking, acting, or feeling. The third model is a variation on the second, to show that each adolescent reacts differently to a new stage or substage. Perhaps, all adolescents finally do get to each stage or substage (e.g., the search for identity), but each adolescent deals with each one differently. The fourth model indicates that, often, there are crises in the lives of adolescents. They make progress, but have setbacks. Their environment can be difficult and push them back. However, adolescents have extra energy and desire, and can react in motivated ways to their setbacks and non-supportive envi-

Figure 25-9

Model A of development depicts it as a straight pathway, with ups and downs. Model B presents a stage model that would be the same for everybody. Model C presents an irregular staircase, which indicates that there may be the same stages for all, but that each person traverses them differently. Model D suggests that ups and downs are the norm, but that we grow more than we lose with each down; on the average, development is up. Any way you look at it, development should be upward toward the better.

Developmental Pathways



ronments. All these models contribute to helping us understand adolescents. But no one adolescent follows any of the models in a classic way. There are too many individual differences in their personal growth and identity to allow that to happen. All adolescents try to find their unique identity but, keep in mind, that they all wear the same style of jeans and T-shirts, too. **More important, all adolescents carve out a self-image that fits themselves. As adults, we have to respect that they are in transition, they may be overly zealous or rebellious, and so on. We need to keep in mind that, on the average, sooner or later, they will be open to good advice, especially if openly given.**

As far as many parents are concerned, the beauty of adolescence is that it stops. **Figure 25-10** points out that, after adolescence, we grow into a period of young adulthood. **In our adult years, we never stop defining and differenti-**

.....
*A teenager's room is a
treasure hunt.*
.....

.....
*Videogames make
teenagers think faster.
Were it better, too.*
.....

*Adolescents do not
adore less cents.*

*Teenagers will find their
identity when they stop
spelling it "I"dentify.*

ating our identities, because we seek constantly to expand ourselves. Eventually, at some point in young adulthood, we become more stable, build our careers, start families, are clearer in our values, and become more practical and grounded. As each generation ends its transition years, it begins raising the next generation toward their transition. Without adolescence, that never-ending growth of the human species would stop.

Figure 25-10

Teenagers pass their driving tests, so they think they have licence.

Teenagers Graduate

From studying	To working
From youth	To emerging adults
From dreamers	To builders
From seekers	To finders
From frenzy	To family
From passion	To partners
From nightclubs	To night watch
From idealism	To dealing with and doing
From dilemmas	To daily living, rather daily drama
From confusion	To fusion
From laid back	To life

*Adolescents practicing their
math—five, ten, fifteen, twenty;
need to ask dad for money.*

*"Adolescence" sometimes
appears to be a misspelling
of "Ado-less-sense."*

*I told my teen to face the music.
He went to the club
to dance all night.*

Figure 25-11. Teenagers have the attention span that their brains give them and that their distractions allow. So it varies from zero to little to hours on end. They pay attention to many activities, especially games and electronics and, sometimes, serious study. In this book, I have written many sayings. Sayings are perfect for adolescents. They are short, capture attention, and make them think. When you tell your teenagers what you think about them, say it with both the encouragement and appropriate positive limits that they need. Perhaps the sayings in this figure can help improve parent-teen dialogue.

*Adolescents grow out of
"I'm maturity."*

*Teenagers are good kids—
when they do not want
to be adults too fast.*

Figure 25-11

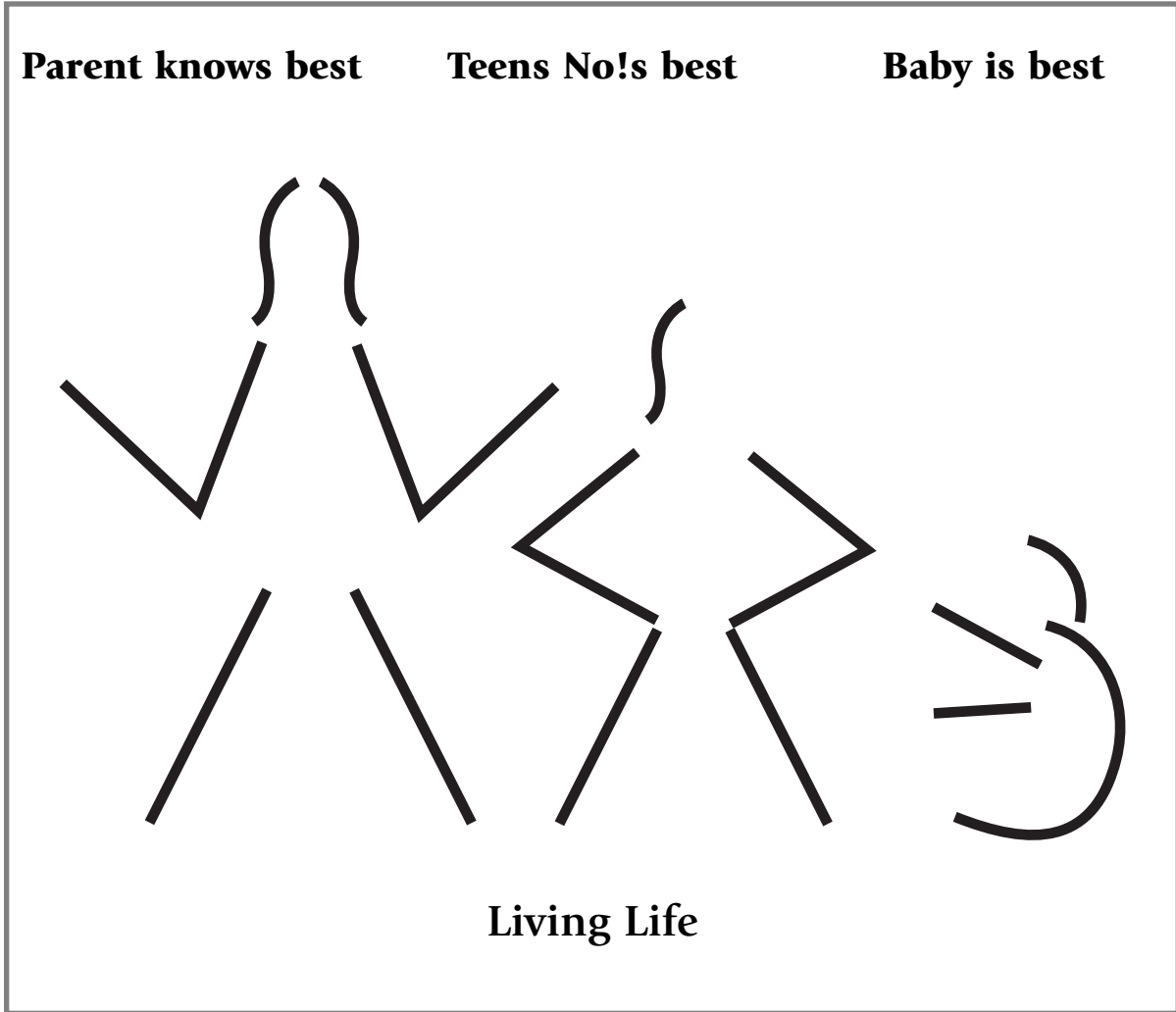
Sayings are sound clips that may help a teenager understand your point of view. Say it like it is.

Tell Your Teen Like It Is.

School		
<i>Take the courses that you need to succeed in life—art, music, social skills, and empathy.</i>	<i>We should learn how to find answers and how to find questions.</i>	<i>Once gained, the desire to discover never leaves.</i>
<i>To stand tall, sit before the books.</i>	<i>If we do not hit the books, life will hit us in the face.</i>	<i>Use the remote control—to turn on the mind.</i>
<i>Learning is half teacher, half you.</i>	<i>Teenagers need to learn to think with their heart and feel with their mind.</i>	<i>Skipping school is like skipping stones—In both, there are bad bounces and sinking.</i>
<i>Schoolbooks provide working knowledge.</i>	<i>Learning prepares living.</i>	
Parents		
<i>Adolescents keep growing—So make it a family experience.</i>	<i>Adolescence is a way station to adulthood—like in, "Help them find their way."</i>	<i>Parents make mistakes, too. But we should avoid the mistake of not talking to our adolescents about them.</i>
<i>By keeping tabs on our teens, they cannot run up the tab.</i>	<i>Peer pressure should be when we help our teens learn to pressure their peers in order to keep their good values.</i>	<i>Teenagers find balance—when we lend them our hand.</i>
<i>Get a good head on your shoulders—hug your parents.</i>	<i>Keep your teens away from the 4 D's—Drugs, Drunk Driving, Delinquency, and the need to say, "Do what I say not what I do."</i>	<i>Learn from experience—trust your parents.</i>
<i>When adolescents have good role models, they influence their future.</i>		<i>For adolescents to look forward to the future, they need our presence.</i>

*Teenagers test our patience
and are trying—instead
of trying on tests and
being patient.*

The teenage years are the years of expansive opening, wild imaginings, and rapid growing. They are years of transition. If we guide our adolescents correctly through their difficult times, we increase the chances that they will guide themselves correctly as they face their challenges in their future.



Yale wanted to explore new horizons, but lacked confidence in his abilities. He wanted to pursue a different path in his life, integrating work and art into a fuller vision of life. But he needed help in getting oriented, especially in helping him find what was holding him back.

He hears of a psychologist who has written a book much like this one, and consults it to help himself.

What's Inside the Teenage Brain? Hopefully, Much of our Sayings.

*Teenagers need sports (on water)
and quarts (of water).*

*Teenagers are curious—they keep
questioning our requests.*

*The more teen clothing startles us,
the more it is mundane to them.*

Teen music may be just static.

*Teenagers are deep—
we can never fathom them.*

*Most teens survive the teen years.
Most parents don't!*

*Teenagers are concerned about
universal mysteries, or so it
seems—everything is WHY?*

*If teenagers wanted to add even
more body piercings and tattoos,
they'd need to use their esophagus.*

Puppy love gets parents growling.



Open talk locks out loneliness.

When You Tell Teenagers the Rules of the House, They Stop Ruling.

*Teenagers think that curfew is for
the few and that sleeping in is in.*

*Teenagers get better over time.
Until they do, parents
better get over the times.*

*I told my teen to reach for the
stars. She chose the constellation
"Madonna Pink Spice Spears".*

*Preteens are learning how to
succeed in the tough world of
teenagers. They are learning
how to ask for expensive gadgets.*

*Teenagers want to rule, but they
don't want to measure up.*

*The teenager rages onto the scene
like a wild pony in a canyon,
running free but needing walls.*

*Empty Nest Syndrome sure beats
The Sandwich Generation.*

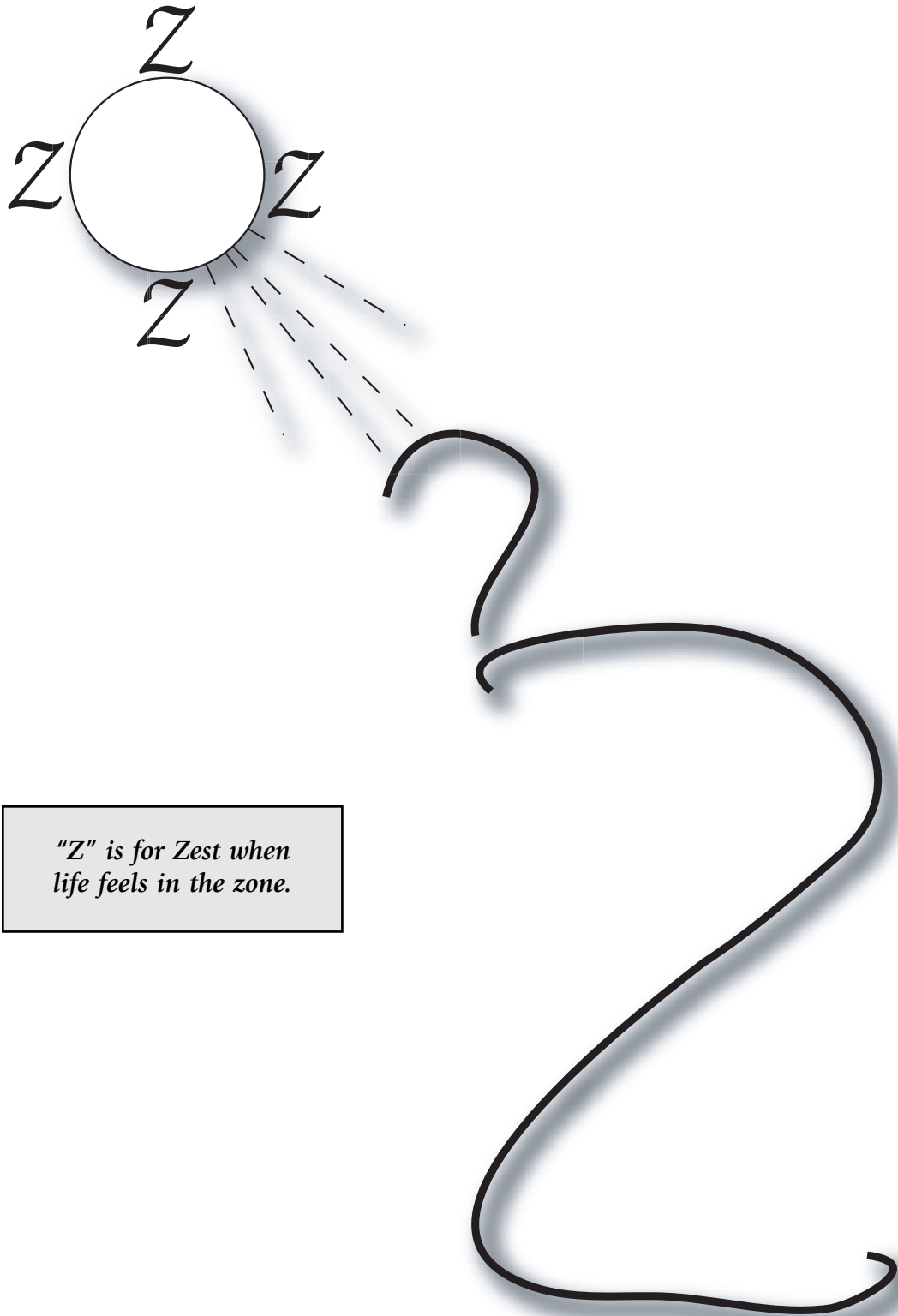
*Some teenagers take the high road
like their fathers—on their
Harley's with a beer.*

*Teenagers are great economists.
They demand. We supply.*



Chapter 26

Children's Fears



*"Z" is for Zest when
life feels in the zone.*



In Chapter 26, I present briefly some figures that can be used with children to help them with their fears. Unfortunately, children are involved in events, such as motor vehicle accidents and, for them, the experience can be even more terrifying than it is for an adult, taxing therapeutic resources. Children may manifest their fears and traumatic reactions in a different manner than adults, for example, in a more agitated and nonspecific fashion, and through violent toy play. Also, the techniques that have been developed for adults may have to be modified for their developmental level. Nevertheless, children can learn the basic techniques, such as breathing exercises, visualizations, using positive thoughts, and systematic desensitization. However, a major technique that I use especially with children involves labeling their fears, such as calling a fear by the name of Mrs. Fear. **This externalization of the problem by giving fear a label allows children to obtain some separation from their fears, and permits the beginning of a therapeutic dialogue where that separation can grow and the children's fears can be replaced by fear control.**

Children who are afraid in vehicles can learn that fear should take a backseat.

Figure 26-1, Figure 26-2, and Figure 26-3 provide examples of how to externalize fear in the child's mind in order to have the child better control it. For example, I may encourage a child to put fear to the rear, as in the first figure. The second figure illustrates the technique of calling fear by the name of "Mrs. Fear." In the next figure, I describe the "Fearies," representing another externalization of the problem. By giving fear a label, the child learns that it is outside of her or his self. The child learns to talk to the label. The child begins to create distance from the fear, relaxing and overcoming its interfer-

Children love fairy tales, not "feary" tales.



Figure 26-1

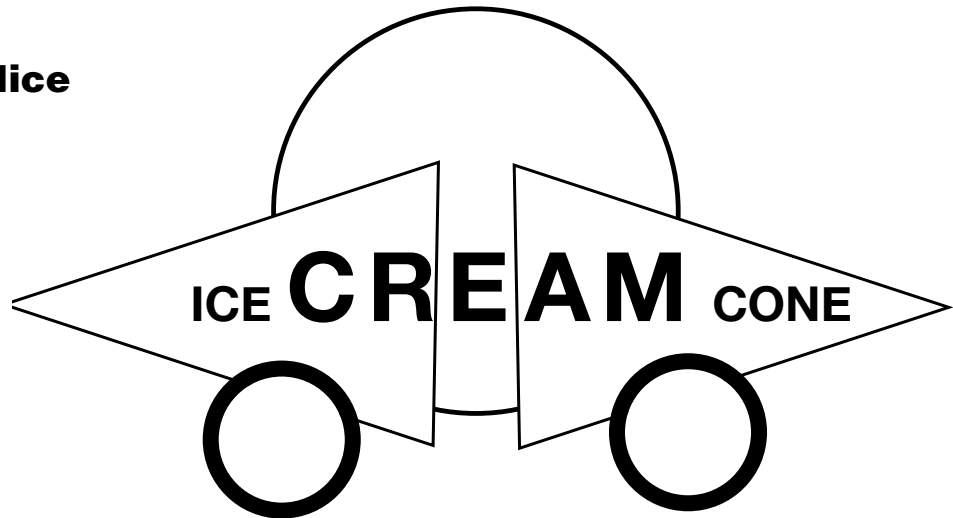
Children can learn to deal with their fears in motor vehicles. Even young ones can learn breathing exercises, distraction techniques, visualization, and positive self-talk. In giving them the tools, children instruct themselves for the better.

Fear to the Rear, Ice it Nice

A Fear to the Rear



B Ice it Nice



By giving fear a label, children can learn that they're able.

When fear tunes in, sing your favourite song.

When fear is strong, it does not have to be for long.

When fear visits, put on your best face—a smile.

When fear acts tough, we can think tough.

Fear is super afraid—when you are super brave.

Figure 26-2

When working with children about any difficulty that they may be experiencing, we can give the difficulty a name, such as “Mrs. Fear.” Then, we can teach the children and parents the language needed to control the difficulty, for example, by having them tell Mrs. Fear that it is time to leave.

Make Fear Child’s Play

OR



“Mrs. Fear” is Here	Miss “Miss Fear”
She want to play her game, But tell her that the rules have changed Tell her that you are deciding where she is riding And it is in the back seat Or even out of the vehicle She can hitch a ride with someone else So thumbs out for her and thumbs up for you	When Miss Fear Wants to make The rules of the game, Tell her “Game over” When she wants to Drive in your car, Tell her that she isn’t Getting far

Figure 26-3

One child called her fears the “Fearies.” Children are responsive to language like this, catch on easy, and use it. It develops a sense that the problem is outside of them and that they can control it.

The Fearies

Question

**Can you tell the Fearies
who’s the Boss?**

Answer

Fearies,
I no longer am afraid.
You can
leave.
Get a
life.
You used to be a
friend.
Now it’s
over.
You’re now in my
control.
I became
courageous.

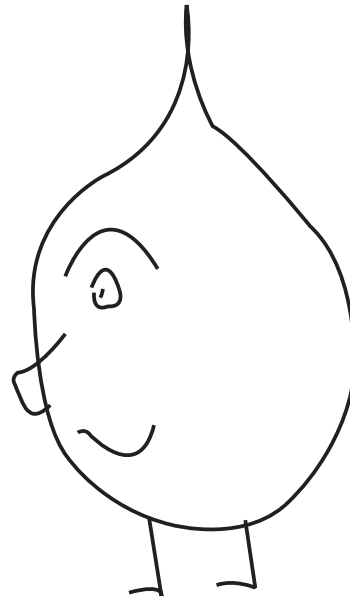
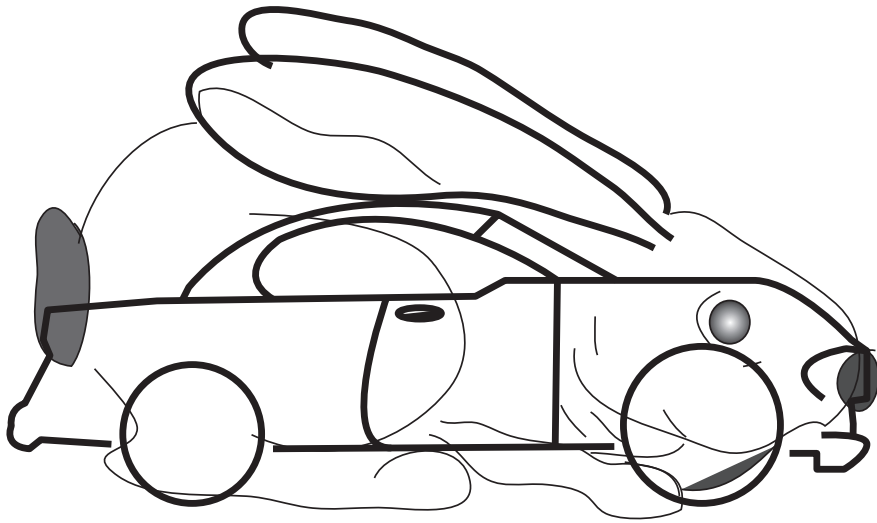


Figure 26-4

We can work with the imagination of children in ways different from adults. The idea of a rabbit car made this child laugh, and produced many positive associations.

The Rabbit Car All Ears, No Fears



ence in normal activities. Parents can use the same language when speaking to a child. I may say to a parent to tell a child that fear had its turn, now it has to learn.

Figure 26-4 and Figure 26-5 present, respectively, a “Rabbit Car” and the smoothing out of a shark into a dolphin. In both cases, artwork is used to represent a solution to a problem. Children have a powerful imagining and artistic skill that we should tap in order to fill them with fun and hope.

Figure 26-6 illustrates the use of stories with children. Stories are natural to them, and the story stems provided in the figure help to direct children to tell positive stories about getting control of fear. We should encourage children to create stories about themselves in order to have them reach positive endings.

Figure 26-7 shows what happens when children conquer their fears. Instead of being frightened rabbits, they can become happy ones. I may tell a child, “When fear frightens you, would you rather be a Scared Hare or a Funny Bunny?” Children respond to techniques that invite them to build options in behavior.

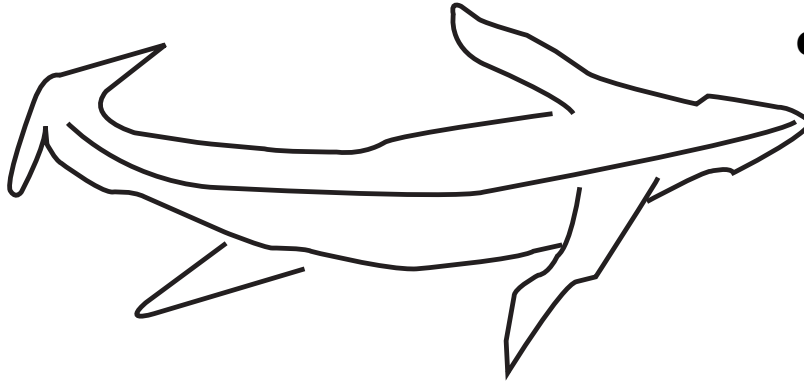
.....
*When a child sees the fun
again, fear hops away.*
.....

.....
*Nothing like a happy ending
in a children’s story.
Help them live one.*
.....

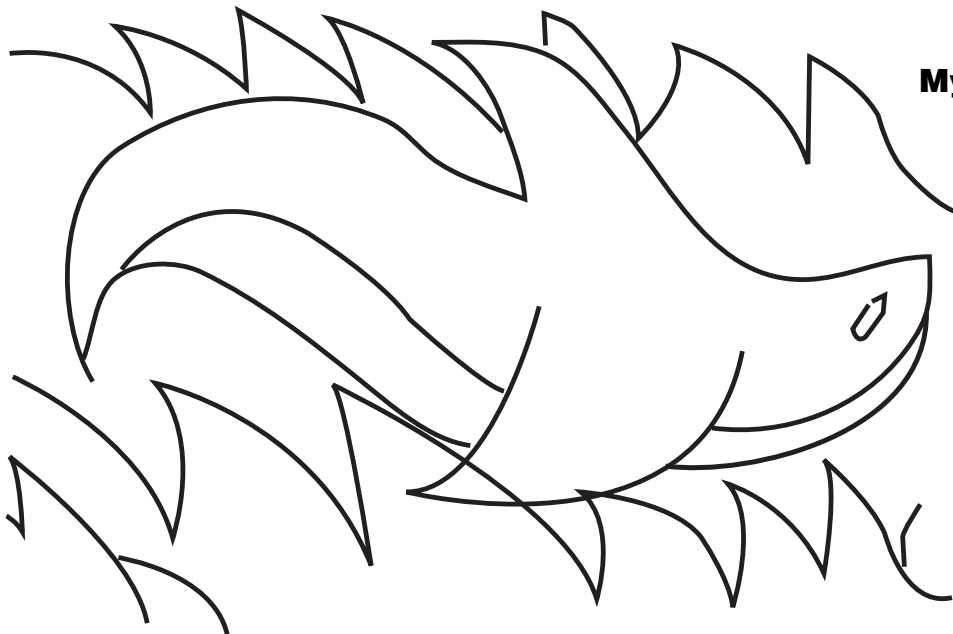
Figure 26-5

Children get vivid nightmares about traumatic events. One way of dealing with nightmares is to attempt to transform them, imagining them as different, so that the next time that they occur, there are different associations.

Revisoning Artwork



Child's Nightmare



My Response

To help children with their fears, have them look you in the face.

Children's heroes may be imaginary, but we can use those heroes to help them really learn.

Figure 26-8 offers another figure showing what happens when children conquer their fears. **Children are not just emotional beings, but also they are intelligent ones who can learn their lessons well.**

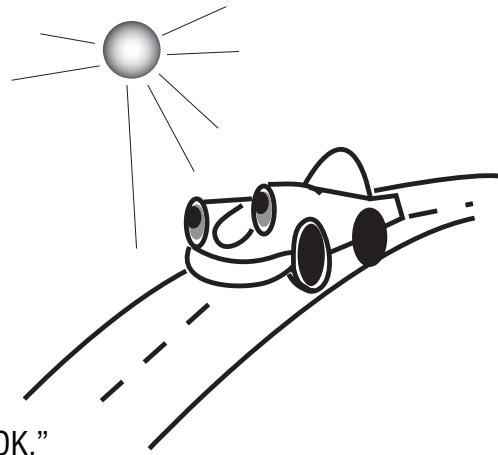
Figure 26-9 should not make you afraid. "Scaredosaurus" used to be afraid because he was in an accident. But he learned what to do and now he is not afraid. When he listens,

Figure 26-6

Children can learn to tell more positive stories about their difficulties, their capacity to cope with them, and themselves. They need caring adults to provide the appropriate audience for this to develop, for example, to encourage their self-expression. A child's "Fearies" can be reframed and reduced.

Standing Away From The Fearies

1. What goes with car ...
What goes with walking ...
 - **Fixate on positive answers, leading to a positive story.**
2. Driving in the car is fun, because ...
3. I used to be afraid of being in the car, but now I am not afraid, because ...
4. I know it's OK to drive to the mall in some snow, because ...
5. If you were nervous about getting into the car, you could say, "It's OK. I'll be OK," or, "I'll hide in the trunk." Which one is better? Why?
6. Story stem: The girl decided to ... When she had done it, she was happy, because ...



Children can learn to tell fear to go play and fly a kite.

Shyness is very intelligent—it lets us wait to see what to do.

Slow to warm up: Sometimes we need time to be just fine.

Fears take a backseat to people who confront it.

Children fear a loss of support far more than a fear itself.

By being a steady presence when our children are afraid, their fear becomes unsteady.

To stop getting distracted by a child's fear, teach the child to distract.

To put fear aside, put yourself front and center.

When we step forth, fear backs down.

Fear does not like to listen—when we talk up our courage.

To talk fear down, talk down to it.

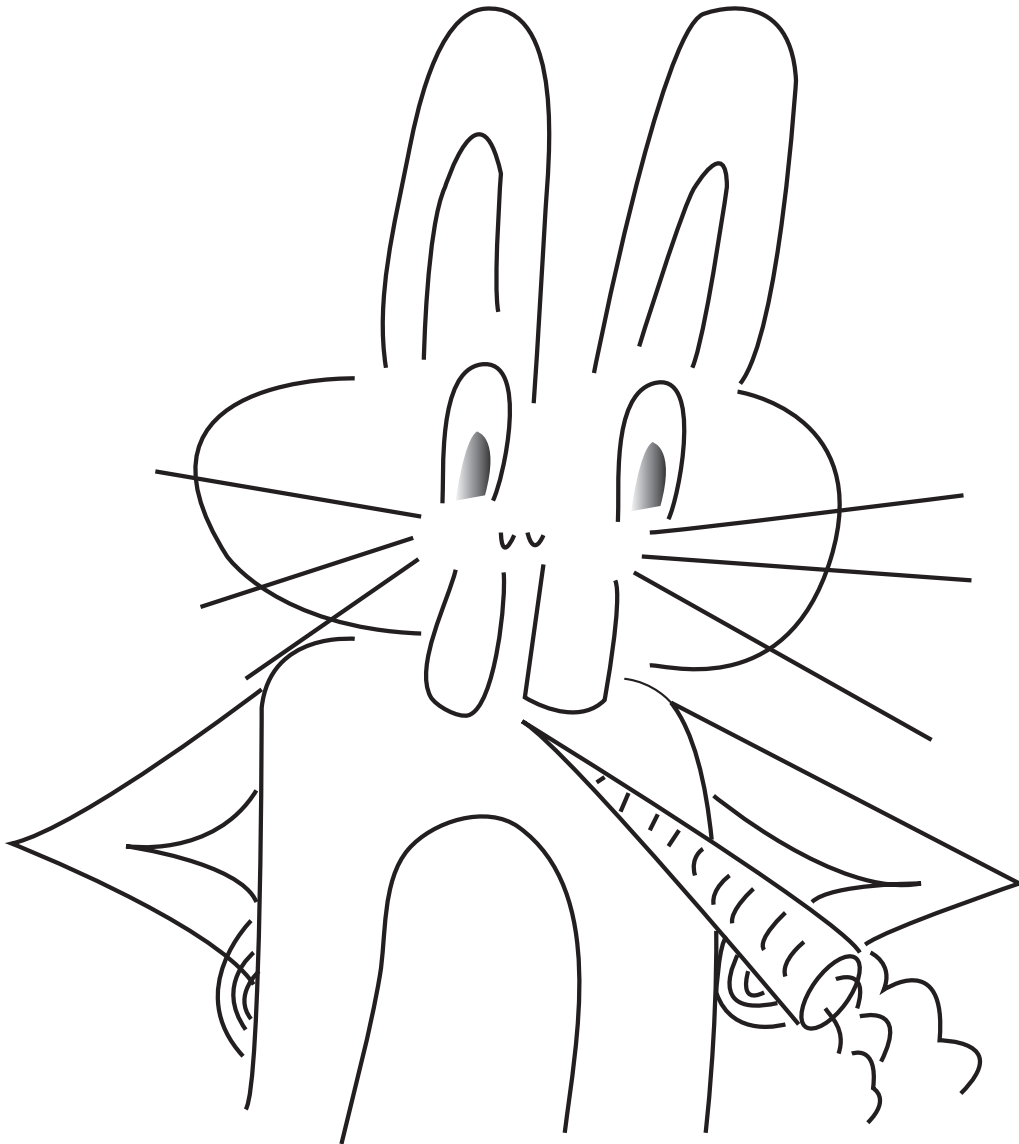
When fear heats up, breathe it down.

Instead of jamming up our minds with fearful traffic jams, we can fill it with fear control techniques.

Figure 26-7

In dealing with their difficulties, children need indirect approaches as well as direct approaches. By engaging their positive side, the terrain is set for having them learn positives.

Funny Bunny



Funny Bunny sees everything as sunny

When you “roar,” fear “meows.”

*Children can learn through words,
through art, through play,
and through and through.*

*There is little room for fear—
when the child’s room is
filled with activities.*

*Get children their fear gear—
“back it up” packs.*

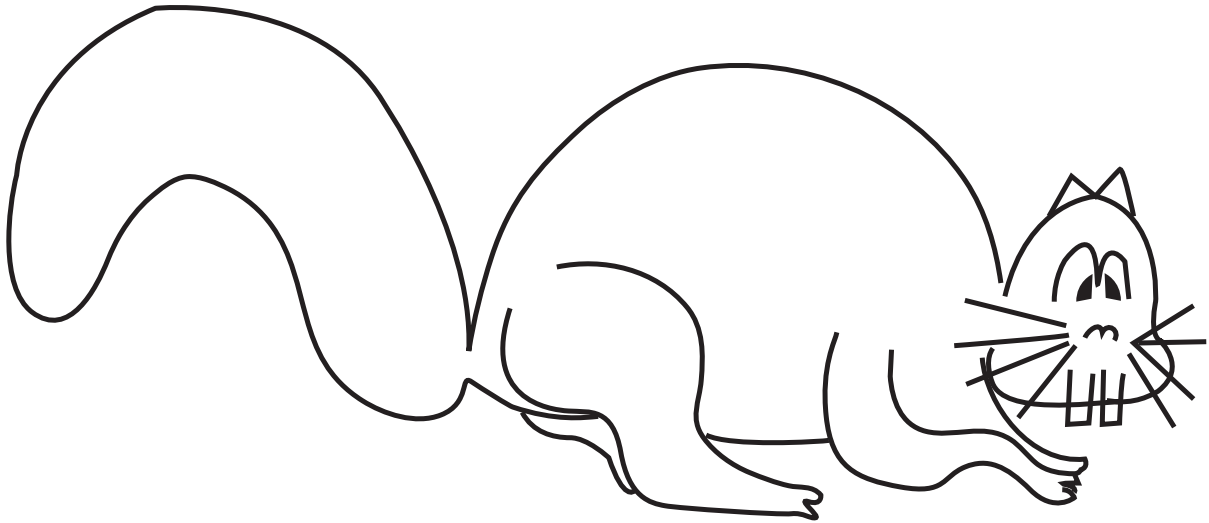
*Cartoons are good ways
of having children tune into
cars again after accidents.*

*Make a child’s fear a
child’s stomping ground.*

Figure 26-8

Children can choose appropriate courses of thinking, feeling, and action. If we give them the right guidance, they can succeed in their positive course.

Squeaky Squirrel



**Who would you rather be?
Squeamish Squirrel afraid of the car, or
Squeaky Squirrel happy driving far?**

Telling Fear to Leave is Child's Play.

*Fear is fraidy cat—when
you stand up like a lion.*

*Which should we choose—
playing games or having
fear play tricks on us?*

*A touch of courage
manhandles fear.*

*Make fear afraid—Learn
how to send it on its way.*

*Breathing slowly in and
out sends fear out.*

*Super Girl is like you—
“Miss Courageous.”*

*Children know that
keeping cool freezes fear.*

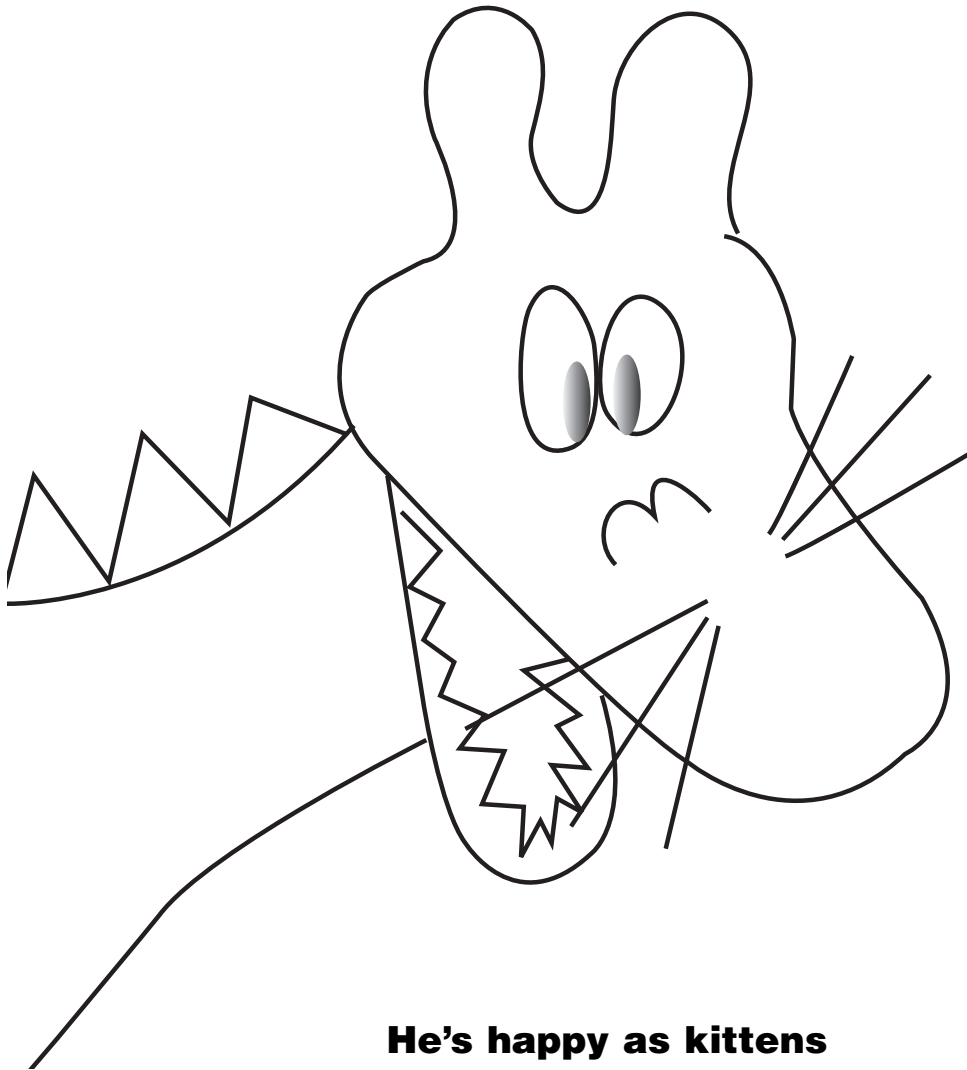
*To have fear no longer there,
tell it—ex marks the spot.*

*Super Boy can learn from a
boy like you—to be Brave.*

Figure 26-9

Being positive about things like children's fears starts with good listening. The information gets better in the dialogue, but also the positive feelings generated in the talker and listener end up becoming the real story.

When Scaredosaurus Listens



He's happy as kittens

What can you tell Fear to help it go away? That you are the Boss.

When you want to play more, tell fear to stop being a troublemaker.

Fear has a hard time breathing when you do your breathing exercises.

Children are BIG when they tell fear to be small.

Fear does not like the beach. So think of the beach if you get afraid.

When you tell Fear to leave, it listens.

he learns, and he decided to listen. His father, “Bravosaurus,” told him to stay calm, to think right, and to imagine that he is brave just like him. Scaredosaurus does that now and he is back to what he used to be. That is, once more, he is Bravosaurus, Jr. So bravo for him. **Children like dinosaur stories, not because dinosaurs are extinct, but because the stories are filled with life.**

Figure 26-10 indicates that nightmares can be controlled. When experienced by a child or an adult, nightmares reflect our worst fears about the stresses in our lives. However, children can learn to control these stresses and their responses to nightmares. Fear is buried deep in our brain, but so are other things, such as our ability to learn techniques that control fear. Before children go to sleep, they can use learned relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing and thinking of the beach. Also, if they wake up from a nightmare, they should do the same. In addition, we may advise them to hug a teddy bear or do anything else to calm down, in order to change the direction of ongoing feeling and thinking. We can encourage children to imagine that they are a Super person battling fears with courage. They have resources in dealing with stress, fears, nightmares, and so on, which we need to promote. **Children become learning machines when we know how to fire their engines. The latter conclusion stands as the conclusion to the chapter as a whole.** Indeed, it can stand as a conclusion to all the chapters that we will ever need to write about children.

.....
We despair when children suffer, and we rejoice when they learn to recover.

Zeke felt zapped by fear. He was 10, but zealously avoided zebras. Chapter 26 helped him change. He no longer felt zonked at zoos. Chapter 26 desensitizes.

Figure 26-10

Whether being expressed in the day or night, children can control their worst fears. Children are marvels of learning when we are marvels of patience.

Nightmares or Teddy Bears

Wake Up Terrified	Wake Up Wise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweating • Breathing fast • Rapid heart beat • Trembling, faint • Can't sleep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, “It’s OK, I know what to do” • Deep breathing • Visualization of natural scene • Muscle relaxation • Rest begins so sleep can come

By being wise, the night owl flies

.....
When Fear roars, li-on it.
.....

.....
*Fear makes us feel the
worst—until we
want to feel the best.*
.....

Figure 26.11. Cool Cat tells Fraidy Feline to get out of the way. He shows he is brave, and stands up for his right to be free of fear, to be courageous, and to be himself. He chose to do the best thing, so that he can get back to doing what he loves best—to play, relax, read, and be good for himself and good to others. So who would you rather be—the Cool Cat or the Fraidy Feline? I know that you can choose the best for yourself, and that you will choose what makes you calm and courageous.

Figure 26-11

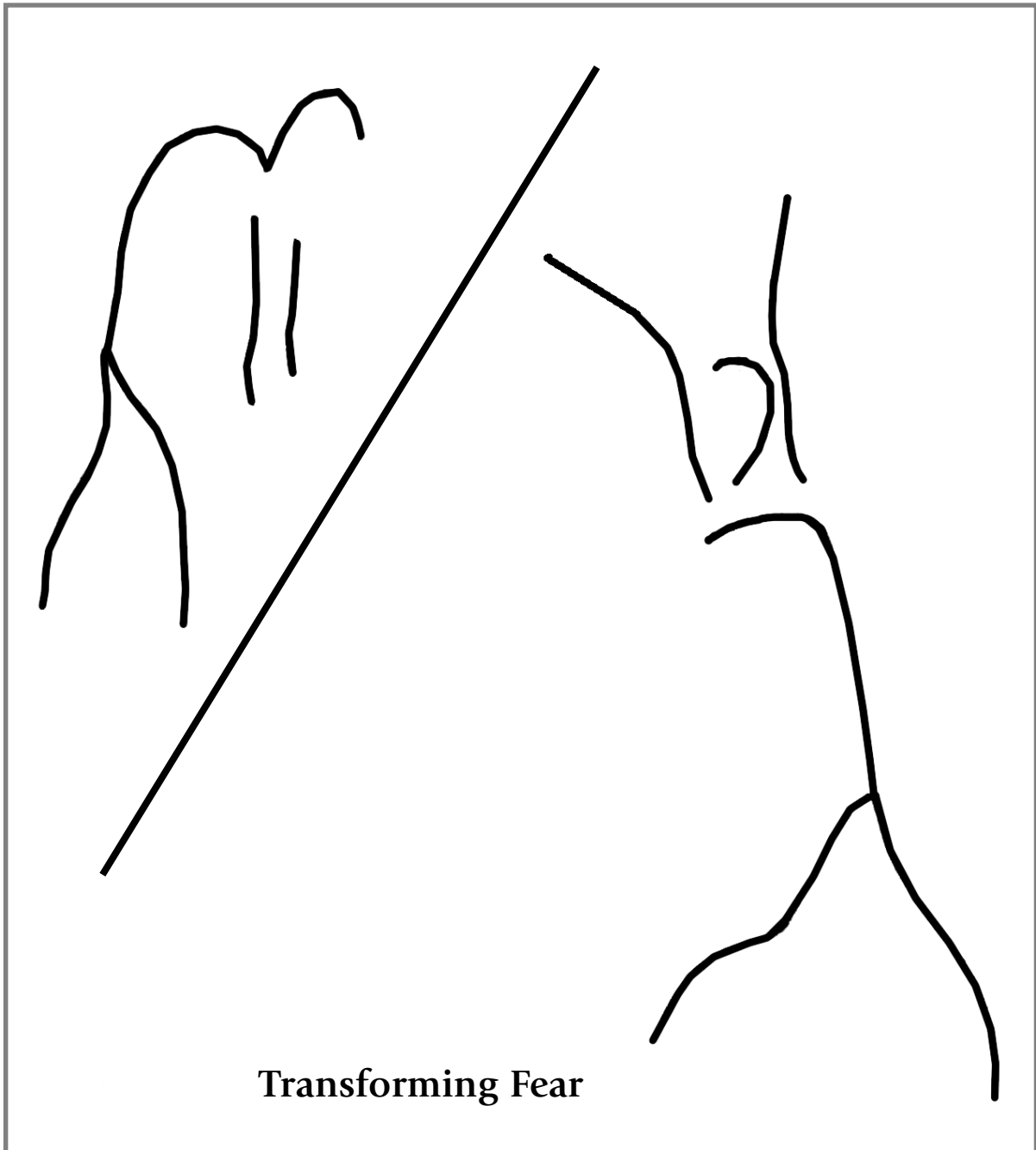
One way of dealing with fear is to keep cool.

Cool Cat



In this chapter, I have provided some ways of dealing with children's fears. We need to keep in mind that children are very responsive to our attitude, and we need to create good rapport with them before we begin more intensive therapy. **Children are responsive in therapy—when we respond to them at their level.**

*Standing up to fear does
not sit well with it.*



Zena understood that growing and learning go together, much as do problem solving and coping with stress. She aspired to become a better person and help others do the same. She had studied psychology at college and was active in learning in her community after work hours. Her partner appreciated her efforts, but thought that something was missing.

Zena decides to read books in self-help, including the present one. She sets up a personal website on how she is evolving and managing the multiple demands of her life, in order to help others do the same.

*When we use what we learned
against fear, it feels old and used.*

A fast heart needs a slow breath.

*Fear is afraid of even the littlest
things that we do to show it
that we are big on ourselves.*

Have fear stand out—over a cliff.

*What happens when we change
the tune that fear sings?
—It loses its stage.*

*When fear is hungry for more,
order “take out.”*



Valentine

Every day is worthy of love's gifts.

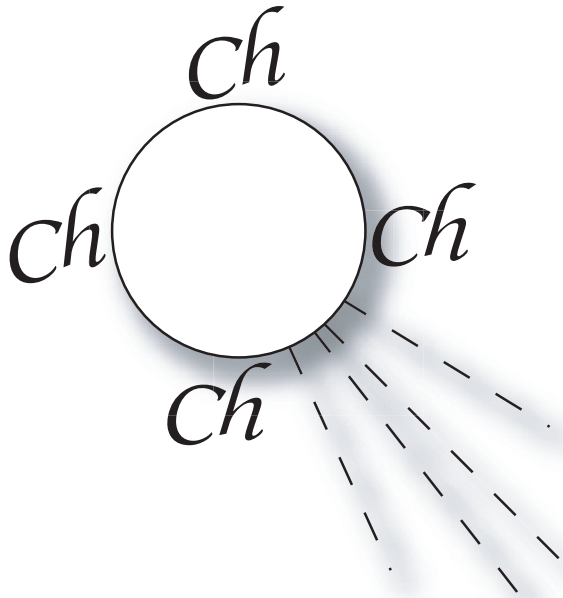
Daily Living

Part 2

In these last four chapters of the book, I consider more advanced topics from work to change in behavior.

Chapter 27

Work and Family



*"CH" is for Children
who we should Cherish.*





.....
When quarterly profits are measured in human capital, all types of profit over the years are assured.
.....

.....
When we place priorities first, we avoid last minute stresses.
.....

This chapter concerns the systems in which we live our daily lives, from the work environment to the family environment. We may think of ourselves as isolated individuals who sometimes need to interact with other people in order to accomplish our personal goals or our mutual goals that we have with others. However, **each of us is interlocked in complex systems with others, such as at work and in the home and, although the effects of living in systems may be unseen, they are powerful.** The first figures in the chapter relate to work systems, in particular, but their messages apply equally to family organization. The last few figures deal more with systems, in general, and with the family system directly.

Figure 27-1 examines how we can go wrong when we do not have an appropriate problem-solving approach. Humans form systems because of their advantages for group and for individual adaptation. Examples of systems include businesses, schools, and families. The most important advantages that system organization offers relate to better problem solving. From understanding that there is a problem, to developing a plan, to working it out step-by-step, problem-solving needs a calm, careful approach, and teamwork helps. As members of a system, in confronting a problem, we need to know when to ask, when to do, and when to let others do. When systems organize teams, even if there is division of labor within a team to accomplish problem solving, more minds are deployed, more knowledge is acquired, and group problem-solving approaches are facilitated. **Two minds are not better than one, unless one mind is formed by the two.**

Figure 27-2 asks us to always apply ourselves with utmost effort to primary tasks and to not let secondary or irrelevant tasks get in the way. At the same time, work needs to be balanced by life outside work. When there is balance in life, it is easier to choose wisely, watch the budget, and balance the books. Problem solving involves getting our priorities straight. At home, this refers to knowing that work is second. At work, this refers to knowing that we are second. **When teams form at work and work together towards formulating plans, they have more of a chance of succeeding. There is less chance of work becoming an unorganized effort by individual workers.** Similarly, in families, group

Figure 27-1

Working effectively requires meeting each new challenge as it arises with an open mind. Sometimes, we do not even realize that there is a problem when one is present. Problem solving involves individual effort and team effort. A company thrives when its employees keep good company.

You Can't Teach an Old Dog New Tricks— Unless He Wants to Learn

New Tricks	Old Tricks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get a feeling that something is wrong• Dig to find the problem• Ask for help in figuring out what's wrong• See the problem • Break down the problem into manageable parts• Formulate a workable plan, asking for help where needed• Apply step by step; communal resolving• Monitor, adjust• Solve	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep burying the bone and forgetting where• Start digging everywhere in the garden• Call in neighborhood pooches to help• Dig deep holes randomly everywhere• Break down from stress and exhaustion• Dig up flowers hoping that no one will notice the holes• Cry step by step; communal howling• Get another bone; start again

effort on tasks brings quicker results, leaving more time for group fun.

Figure 27-3 looks in depth at problem solving. Although we have to be systematic in problem solving, it is not simply a question of applying pre-learned formulas. Each problem is different, requiring continual adaptation. We need to see the context, the question needing to be answered, and any hidden factors. We need to see all the component parts to the question, get all the information needed and, at the same time, not lose sight of the whole. Then, we need to

.....
Problem solving is like cooking—good recipes help.
.....

.....
A turn for the worse is not necessarily the worst turn.
.....

Figure 27-2

Any kind of work requires good effort, application, and stress control. When our priorities are straight, we keep straight on the path.

Work Priorities

Right Priorities	Wrong Priorities
<p>Utter Effort whether in employment in home (chores), in school (homework), in solving a problem, in projects and activities, in taking a responsibility, in giving of time in a relationship</p>	<p>MUtter to self, to other (e-mail, etc.) PUtter around CIUtter (re-arrangement) BUtter (up to co-workers) FIUtter (around desk) GUtter (garbage work) CUtter (as in cut off, interrupt, intrude) StUtter (false starts) SpUtter (hard to start)</p>

To Avoid Secondary Stress, Do Primary Tasks Well

.....
Bring family values to work
—Dedication—Effort—
Responsibility.

.....
In order to succeed, high-
tech people need low-tech
people skills, too.

probe, analyze, see the links, and understand the parts and the patterns. This requires constant investigation and reflection. Once the parts and patterns are well understood, we can develop a plan of action, one that chunks the plan into organized steps and subplans. We should check the plan as it is applied, and alter it, as needed. When creativity is added to the problem solving process, problems become easier to resolve. When we are consistently vigilant to the problem, the plan, and also to ourselves, in the sense of how we handle ourselves, respect other members of the team, and so on, we become problem solvers extraordinaire. Similarly, in families, problem solving together allows each member to contribute from her or his strengths and to be respected for them, while permitting each member to learn how to be better problem solvers, thereby developing their strengths. **When we get used to be good problem solvers by good teamwork and good personal effort, we anticipate with excitement new problems to solve.**

Figure 27-3

Problem solving requires knowledge about how to solve a problem. It involves seeing context, the whole, parts, planning, analyzing, synthesizing, putting into effect the plan, watching it in motion, and putting our self fully into it.

Problem Solving

Place	See context, overall questions, hidden factors
Perceive	See all parts, and the whole, get all information
Probe	Understand, analyze each part, see links
Perspective	Keep in mind overall question and context
Pace	Go slow, stop to think, think to stop
Plan	Formulate a step-by-step problem solving approach
Put to work	Apply the plan
Ponder	Monitor feedback, re-evaluate the plan
Personality	Put self fully into process, be creative

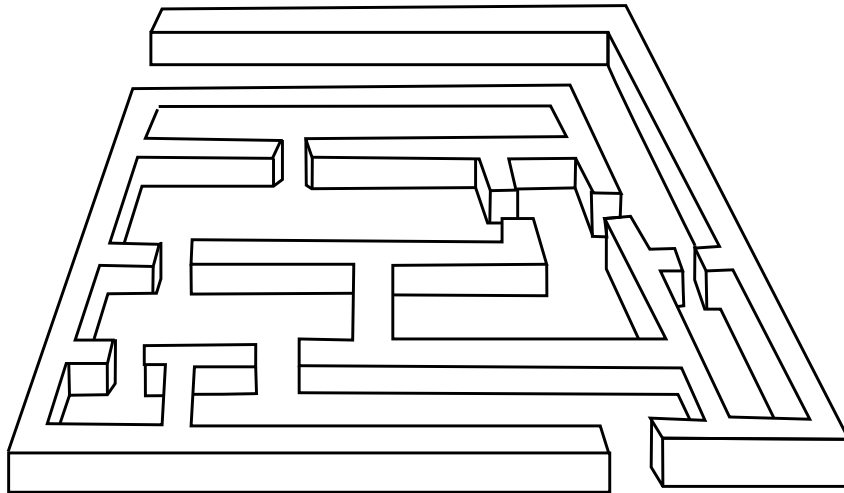


Figure 27-4 examines two opposing approaches to work—one is money-oriented and the other is people-oriented. Ironically, the people-oriented approach may lead to more money being earned for companies than the money-oriented approach. When a traditional profit motive governs the functioning of a company, paradoxically, the ability of the company to make money may be undercut, especially in the long term. When money is the overriding concern of a company, decisions may be made from a short-term perspective, such as in

.....
*When we do not stress the
people that we supervise,
they thank us from
the bottom of their
healthy heart.*
.....

.....
*When critical thinking is in
critical shortage, the stuck
market will not crash.*
.....

Figure 27-4

When people are considered primary in work, more money is earned and the company's stocks rise. When people are devalued at work, the company's net worth devalues. Take stock.

Funny How Work Is Not Stressful

Products Cost Money	People Make Money
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All we have to do is sell • Financial capital • Cutting corners • Bottom line • Downsizing • Sell service • Benefit the company • Get right workers • Management • Vertical organization • Green money investment • People are interchangeable • Bankruptcy for Dummies • Work is not funny 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whatever we do, we do it well • Human capital • Creative turns • Leading edge • Uplifting • Service sells • Personnel benefits • Get workers' rights • Motivation • Vertical growth • Green environment investment • People are changeable • Fortune 500 • Funny how work isn't stressful

when workers are not stressed

.....
TV teaches important lessons about work—As you sit and watch the world go by instead of learning, you do not get paid.

.....
Stand out. Be honest in everything that you do.

cutting corners and downsizing. Workers lose their motivation. Workers feel that they have been sacrificed in favour of financial narrow-mindedness.

An alternate approach would be to realize that people make products rather than money. When a company realizes that its people are its most important resource, its workers have a sense of security, and are more likely to be bold in their creativity, motivated in their work, and enthusiastic about serving clients. They produce a growing company, a concerned company, and a company that is profitable, not only in a monetary sense, but also in a people sense.

Owners and senior managers should take note that a people-first attitude can be the ultimate stress reduction

mechanism for them. When key people at various levels within a company think and behave in this manner, workers become less stressed and more motivated and, in turn, middle managers and supervisors become less stressed and more productive. **The more workers are treated like people, the more workers will work hard at making good products and money for their company.** Similarly, in families, the more each family member is respected, the more each member contributes to family responsibilities in a willing manner.

Figure 27-5 examines the relative advantages of working toward the good of each other and one's company, compared to working only for the good of oneself. When an individual enters a company with a "me first" attitude, inevitably, the company is last in her or his priorities. However, when the culture of the company facilitates teamwork, the company is more likely to be placed first on the list.

Greed is the source of all bankruptcies.

When workers work in teams, teams team with work.

Figure 27-5

When co-workers form effective teams, each individual feels more valued, and individual income rises in value.

Team Works

Individual Goals	Collective Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have to watch out for me • They can't be my friends • No way I'll help him • I'm happy she's stuck • I'll keep my ideas to myself • If I share them, no one will know they're mine • They only want to make money, and not let me make money • Why should I give them extra; I don't get extras • Why should I try; it'll help my supervisor, not me • Who cares what happens; we're just cogs in a machine • Don't they realize that they can make more if we're happy • I'm just biding my time waiting for a better job • They deserve what they get 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual respect • Mutual support • Mutual work • Mutual problem solving • Brain storming • Mutual creativity • Fair salary • Fair benefits • Fair worker response • Productivity • Profit activity • Personal ability • Company stability

.....
*Guys, be the provider of
the family—Provide your
partner with everything
that she needs to work as
well as raise the kids—
such as splitting the
load equally with her.*
.....

In an individual work approach, the person is always on guard, and always watching out for herself or himself. Workers are less likely to cooperate and work together; ideas are not shared; creativity is stifled; the company itself is seen as the enemy. The worker feels like doing the minimum, sensing that she or he is not getting a fair share. When the leaders of the company ask themselves what is wrong with the company, they blame the workers instead of blaming the company as a whole.

In a company that has a team approach, the goals of the company are structured together with the worker. There is more than just financial profit governing the goals of the company. The supervisors and managers of the company seek respect, and workers try to respect each other. Colleagues are seen as equals. This creates a positive attitude that promotes mutual support, working together, solving problems together, inspired creativity, and brainstorming. At the same time, the worker is recompensed fairly in terms of salary and benefits, and responds fairly to this attitude. Productivity increases. The company profit increases. Each person becomes skilled, and the company ends up being more stable, having less turnover. **Money collects in the bank, especially when teamwork collects in the workforce.** Similarly, in families, learning harmonious teamwork fosters valuable psychological growth in each member.

Figure 27-6 looks at “problem storming,” which is a spin-off on the concept of brainstorming. When a company promotes an attitude of working together in solving problems, it ends up with solutions beyond those that any one individual could have proposed. Shared solutions emerge from the group dialogue about any problem, usually ones that could not have been imagined alone at the beginning of the dialogue by any of the individuals involved.

Problem storming begins with good listening. It allows people to link ideas. It allows people to understand and learn. Workers become more active, investigating the problem, developing preliminary ideas, incorporating them, and become invigorated or energized by their role in the problem-solving process. This leads to the group working together in order to come up with suggestions to synthesize and structure solutions to problems. The group works boldly together, organizing its response, trying out its plan, and awaiting feedback. It sees what corrections have to be made. New possibilities

.....
*Finding the problem is
the hardest problem.*
.....

.....
Underlings are not things.
.....

Figure 27-6

By treating each worker as an individual to be respected, worker harmony is created. Managers should give the same treatment to their workers that they expect from their supervisors. Brainstorming at work leads to new solutions beyond any that any one individual could have created. Managers who facilitate better teamwork end up better players.

Problem Storming

Listen, link, learn
Investigate, incorporate
Synthesize, suggest, structure
Try teamwork together
Explore emergent essentials
etwork new novelties

beyond the original plan emerge. Ultimately, novel solutions emerge, solving the problem. **In problem storming, problems usually cannot weather the storm of solutions proposed.**

Similarly, in families, spirals of changes and improvements spill over in unanticipated ways from collective effort to solve problems. For example, children receive praise just for trying, which may have cascading repercussions on their developing self-esteem. Children absorb better the general message of received praise compared to the words used or the reasons why it was given. **For children, praise builds not only character but also future.**

Figure 27-7 indicates that good organization requires work. Disorganization is a natural state of affairs. **Organization is the great equalizer.** It is a state of mind imposed on matter or systems. The need for good organization never stops. However, it has to be applied flexibly, which can be tiring, so that there are dangers.

The first danger in organizations is that they try to keep one way of doing things because it seems to have always

.....
Chaos is never in order.
.....

.....
*All's well that ends not
treating people well.*
.....

.....
*In parenting, control and
warmth come in degrees—
from zero and unjustly
wrong to balanced
and just right.*
.....

.....
*Being open to change
opens being.*
.....

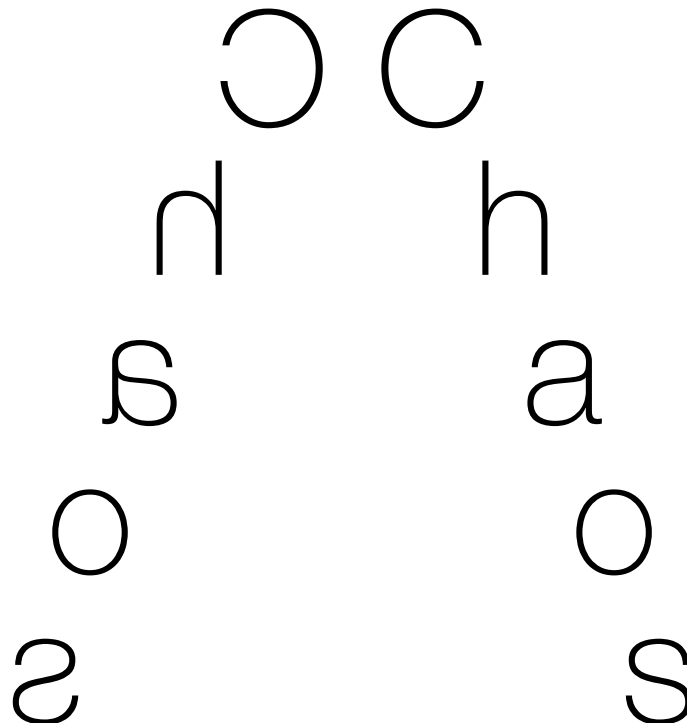
worked effectively. When organizations become too rigid, what obtains may be worse than disorganization. Inflexibility places barriers to adaptation, or to handling new situations. The system can remain in its old mode, separated from a fast-paced changing world and, eventually, become too old. The second possible danger in organizations is that they may not be able to continue to cohere, being unable to give any response that is effective, and they disintegrate into chaos, as disorganization takes over. The system may disintegrate rapidly and, in this sense, anti-organization develops.

However, should organizations descend into chaos, it may end up being beneficial to them. Sometimes, radical change is called for, and the system cannot envisage it until it hits rock bottom. Minor adjustments are not enough. Major change is needed for adaptation to go on in a positive way.

Figure 27-7

Within systems, organization and disorganization live in fine balance, as do chaos and anti-chaos. Their tension allows for the potential growth of systems through phases of transition that may include turmoil.

Chaos—Antichaos



Major overhaul, or re-organization, may constitute the best solution. A system may lurch to a very new organizational structure leaving behind its chaos. It may have to balance delicately while in transition, fearful of toppling. But without an effort to pass through needed transition phases to better organizational structure, organizations may collapse under the weight of their inefficiency and inflexibility.

.....
*Owe a debt to your family,
not your credit card.*
.....

Keep in mind, that when an organization finally changes, it may still have much progress to make. A new organizational structure may be a temporary plateau, or staging ground, for further change.

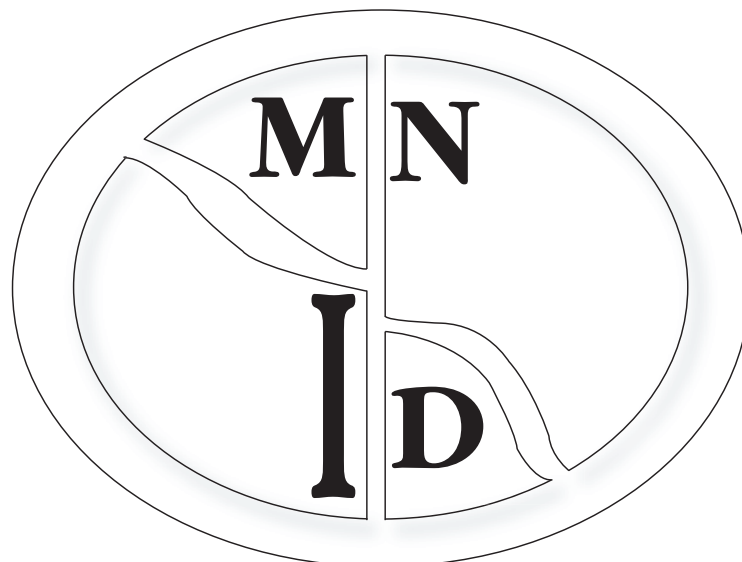
Figure 27-8, entitled "Planet Mind," presents a systems view of the mind. In nature, the most adaptive forms evolve out of the configuration of forces on matter and energy. Therefore, patterns that are similar to each other may emerge in different regions, spaces, habitats, niches, or levels of nature. Commonalities in pattern may reflect optimal solutions to contextual pressures, no matter where they are located. Pattern transcends material.

.....
Minds that collect dust rust.
.....

Figure 27-8

Mind emerges from the workings of the brain or central nervous system. It reflects physiological activity in neuronal networks and pathways, hemispheric cortices and lobes of the brain, and so on. It consists of many parts in relation to one another. Along with the process of the parts shifting in their organization, new thoughts coalesce and form. Concurrently, associated feelings, action tendencies, and so on, coalesce and form.

Planet



.....
*Work is an enriching
experience—when your boss
thinks of more than money.*
.....

.....
*When workers are all in it
together, they do not lose
their jobs together.*
.....

Chip had a chip
on his shoulder.
In fact, he had it
on his elbows and
knees, too. He
chafed at going to
work. Chapter 27
worked him over.
Now he likes his
job. Chapter 27 is
like money in the
bank.

The planet Earth is a product of multiple forces—gravitational, electromagnetic, cosmic, solar, geological, chemical-physical, evolutionary, biological, and so on. For example, geologically, the earth’s circular shape has been moulded out of the dynamical, energetic system hurtling and spinning through the time-space matrix.

The earth is constituted by a series of tectonic plates, or land masses, associated with adjoining ocean floors. The plates are separated at fault lines. Tectonic plates float on oceans of molten matter. When tectonic plates collide, in the upheaval of their encounter, they gradually form mountain ranges. Volcanoes and earthquakes reflect unstable activity in the relationship of one tectonic plate to another.

Life evolved in this crucible, radiating in ocean, on land, and in air. Species have exploded in cyclical proliferations of periods of biological plenty after periods of biological calamity. They evolved, propagated, competed, and cooperated. They populated different environments over different geological epochs. Biological diversity alternated with biological poverty in the great cycle of exponential growth and cataclysmic extinction. In deciphering generalized patterns in this cycle, we find applications far from geography.

The mind can be construed as an optimal dynamical form fashioned out of an interactive system of forces. There are universal pressures that shape its general characteristics, such as intelligence, creativity, and motivation. There are also individual pressures that sculpt the individual differences found in each of us.

The mind possesses the equivalent of tectonic plates. As an analogy, we develop land masses of habitual thinking, feeling, and acting, populated by mostly good habits that serve us well. Psychological tectonic plates float on the outside of our psyche, hiding our inner molten feelings, and surrounding us with the certainty of their visible surface mental landscaping. At the same time, our psychological tectonic plates are bounded by psychological fault lines existing between them, where psychological weaknesses or bad habits can find room to initiate and infiltrate.

Each one of us has a unique psychological map of powerful tectonic plates and psychological fault lines. Our psycho-geological task is to manage well the shifting of our psychological tectonic plates so that they do not collide, or do not reveal and release unstable psychological fault lines. Earthly

bad habits are manageable when we put our Planet's Mind to it.

Similarly, our psycho-evolutionary task is to manage well the psycho-diversity that inhabits the living surface arenas of our psychological tectonic plates. We need to be open to new species of thought, feeling, and action. We need to let the most mature species of thought, feeling, and action survive as they evolve. We can do so by developing as a philosophy of our interior resource management the concept of psychological sustainability and enrichment. In not cultivating a sustainable, enriched, growing psychology, we risk developing a poverty of psychological forms and options, perhaps through critical collapse after unmanaged growth.

The mind is a living system focused in the individual. The planet Earth is a living system that allows its species and individuals to compete, cooperate, and flourish. However, also, it sets up conditions for overuse, ecological depletion, and even planetary destruction. When minds work together systematically, as in teamwork, we can call this the working of a collective mind. When the collective mind is used to

*A good manager sings,
"A bridge over
troubled waters."*

*Good managing is
half listening and
half communicating and
half demonstrating and
half doing and
half delegating and
half leading and
never half-done.*



Good managers move up the ladder very quickly—when they stop for a long time to think about each step.

tackle larger problems that threaten the community and even human survival or that of the planet, we can call the collective mind, Planet Mind. Humans need to use their collective Planet Mind to help themselves and to help the ecology of their relations with others. The better this is accomplished, the better we will work effectively at higher levels toward solving universal problems. In this sense, mind and planet are one.

How can we use these ideas therapeutically? When clients have imbalances in the structure and distribution of their psychological tectonic plates and psychological fault lines, psychologists and other mental health professionals can discern, educate, and facilitate equilibrium and adjustment. Similarly, when psycho-diversity is limited (e.g., too focused on psychological predator-prey relationships), therapists can help clients develop toward more mature forms of being. This could come to include more collective psychological processes.

The earth is constantly shifting and in transition in its forces. Planet Mind is also malleable this way, capable of emerging in newer, more adaptive ensembles. Therapists can encourage this process in individuals' mental structure, in their interactions with others, and in their relations to the wider community. In their work with individuals, therapists might reach out to that part of individuals' mental landscape that is open to collective action and joining Planet Mind. Darwin described the biological process of "natural selection," or adaptation of individual organisms to their niches in order to facilitate survival and reproduction. We need to develop a psychology of "nature selection," or helping nature in its struggle to survive and achieve sustainability.

Figure 27-9 looks at explanations of systems that verge on the simple to those that are quite complex. It asks us to be wary of simple explanations. In this regard, I will first discuss the first five figures contained within the figure, that is, Figure 27-9 a), Figure 27-9 b), Figure 27-9 c), Figure 27-9 d), and Figure 27-9 e).

We have a tendency to see things clear-cut, black and white, all or nothing, or in linear ways (see Figure 27-9a). For example, a child seeks attention at home, and is making trouble at school. It looks like a simple matter — the child is expressing behavioral problems at school because the

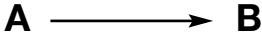

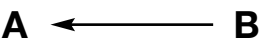

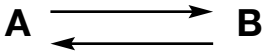
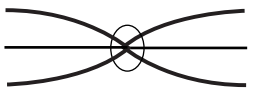
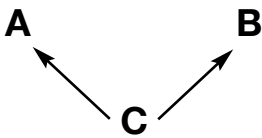
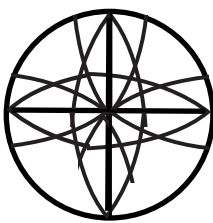
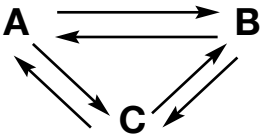
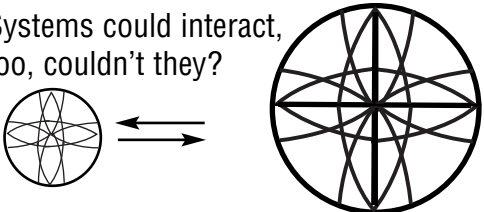
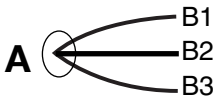
First, let me say that good managers are good people first.

Any complex system works by the simplest rules.

Figure 27-9

Things are never as simple as they seem, for everything is embedded in complex systems. Cause may appear to go from A to B, but, usually, it involves multiple factors and directions.

Simple Answers Hide Complex Issues

<p>a)  Does one thing always lead to another?</p>	<p>g) Maybe many things all lead to the same thing? </p>
<p>b) </p>	<p>h) Could it be that many things interrelate as they lead to other things? </p>
<p>c) Or is it a two-way street? </p>	<p>i) There are many ways that this could happen. </p>
<p>d) Maybe there is no relationship. Perhaps a third thing leads to the other two things? </p>	<p>j) System of many things could be involved. </p>
<p>e) Could it be that the three things mutually influence each other? </p>	<p>k) Systems could interact, too, couldn't they? </p>
<p>f) Maybe one thing leads to many things? </p>	

*Learning is to school
as school is to work.*

*If you let MuchMusic
babysit your children,
as adults, they will
hip hop to welfare.*

*The measure of success lies
in the look of your child.*

parents are neglecting him at home, or the like. The eliciting situation, A, causes the effect, or outcome, B.

A child may express behavioral problems at home and at school because he has had a traumatic brain injury in an accident, and there are no contributing factors either at home or school.

Or, in another example, a child is experiencing a lot of parental conflict at home that discourages and frustrates him, so he acts out at school. However, perhaps explanations that seem so straightforward, going from one factor to another, do not apply, and it is the other way around (see b). It could be that, for some reason that is not clear, a child is expressing behavioral problems at school and, only as an unwanted consequence, he seeks attention at home. For example, he may be experiencing bullying by classmates, causing behavioral disturbances, and only as a secondary effect, does he seek attention at home.

Of course, both explanations could be partly true (see c), with a child having both a home problem and a school problem. The explanation is not linear one way or the other, because, in this explanation, it is true that a child could partly make trouble at school due to home problems, but also it could be true that he could be partly making trouble at home due to school problems.

A fourth possible explanation of why A and B may seem to relate is that there is an underlying third factor explaining the apparent relationship (see d). For example, both home and school problems are related to poverty.

This complex example begins to show the difficulties in thinking linearly for, in such complex cases involving children, usually, there is a circular causality, where all the factors influence each other (see e). The same applies to couples or family disputes. Is it really that one of the adults involved is the source of all the problems, or is it a two-way street or even a busy crossroads? Moreover, are not there always outside issues affecting a conflict, such as family of origin issues or workplace stresses?

The next five figures—Figure 27-9 (f), Figures 27-9 (g), Figure 27-9 (h), Figures 27-9 (i), Figure 27-9 (j), and Figure 27-9 (k)—illustrate further the complexity in understanding systems.

If we look carefully at the simple formula that A causes B, although it may seem to apply in a particular case, we will understand that A never really causes B alone (see 27-9f).

For example, usually, the situation is complex, and cannot be reduced to one factor called "A" and, usually, the outcome is complex and cannot be reduced to one factor called "B." **Both the elicitor A and the outcome B should be considered as multiple, rather than singular.** Many situations may be different but, nevertheless, all may lead to one outcome or, conversely one situation may lead to many outcomes, not just one, as represented in the figure.

For example, one person never really upsets just one family member, because there are secondary effects on everybody. In another example, one individual is not fixed in one developmental path, because she or he can follow several different developmental paths in any one context, depending on relevant factors. Or, two individuals in the same context may not react in the same way or follow the same developmental path, depending on a host of variables and individual differences.

Similarly, there may seem to be one straightforward link between A and B but, often, there are multiple situations, causes, or pathways leading from A to B (see g). For example, the causal situation, A, leading to the effect, B, may be constituted by many factors, so that there are many parts to A. Or, developmentally, several different pathways (to use the current language, several "A"s) may lead to the same outcome, B. Or, one person (A) may appear to be in conflict with another, having a certain effect on her (B) but, usually, there are multiple players (multiple "A"s, as in a family), with one being the focus.

*Home happiness trumps
work stress.*

*Week-ends with family
book-end the week.*

*Work fills the bank account
and family fills the thank
account.*



.....
*Bring your work home.
Show your kids how to work
hard in their projects.*
.....

.....
*To get a good credit
rating, take your children
on an outing.*
.....

.....
*Follow your job—
Go to PTA meetings.*
.....

Figure 27-9 (h) and Figure 27-9 (i) further illustrate how these various connections from A to B can be put together graphically in different ways to underscore the complexities involved. Both the A's and B's are never simple in describing the relationship between them in a causal explanation.

Figure 27-9 (j) asks us to see the whole system. When we think we finally get it, we never do until we see all the factors involved and how they interrelate.

Finally, Figure 27-9 (k) illustrates that even when we think we finally understand the whole system, we need to realize that the system is but one level in a more complex system. There are immediate levels of explanation, but also there are others, with the most abstract or far-reaching being quite removed from the original issue. For example, in trying to understand a family dispute, do we know all of the social contexts, cultural issues, historical patterns, political pressures, medical conditions, psychological vulnerabilities, and so on?

Let's look at an example. We all have tendencies to explain things simply, to see faults in others, to blame others, to ask for simple solutions, to exclude things that do not fit how we understand things, to focus selectively, and to sacrifice other interpretations at the expense of preserving our own even if it means hurting other people. When we do not see the whole, most anything that we try when we are dealing with a problem is bound to fail. The solutions that we propose are bound to miss something important. The parts of the problem that we do not see, or that we exclude from our attempted solutions, inevitably will complicate our efforts. **When we learn better the interrelated connections of a system, it is easier to work with the system and help it transform for the better, whether the system be at work, at home, or in the wider world.**

Figure 27-10 is probably the most complex in the book. It looks at attachment styles, and points out that the secure attachment style is the optimal type to develop within and between people.

Attachment theory was developed by John Bowlby to explain the infant's affectionate relationship to the caregiver. All infants become attached for biological reasons, but the quality of attachment depends on the quality of caregiving received. When caregiving is sensitive, positive mental struc-

tures develop, called internal working models (e.g., “I am loved, the world is a place where I get love”), and the attachment is secure. In this case, at the behavioral level, the infant plays with the caregiver, coming and going in joyous exchanges (e.g., when tested in a play room at 12 months of age, the caregiver functions as a secure base). The infant tolerates brief departures by the caregiver and, most revealing, the infant is joyful when the caregiver returns in reunion situations after these brief separations.

However, infants might not develop secure attachments when conditions are not optimal in caregiving. If the caregiving is not sensitive enough, insecure attachments to the caregiver develop. The infant, on reunion after a brief separation, is either ambivalent or avoidant, reacting with both approach and avoidance or only with avoidance, respectively. Another insecure type is the disorganized-disoriented-dazed style. Often, this type is found in cases of child abuse. These styles have been found to remain quite stable with age, as long as the caregiving environment continues in the same way.

With adolescence, the possibility of changing an insecure attachment type into a more secure type increases, because the teenager is able to think through and come to terms with the past. Thus, when pregnant women are asked to recall their relationships with their parents, they may have a secure recall even if they had not had a secure attachment history and, in such cases, they do not promote an insecure attachment in their children once the children are born.

Attachment theory has been applied to romantic relationships between adults. When both partners are secure in their feelings about their relationship, their relationship functions better and they are happier. However, three types of insecure adult attachment types have been described—the dismissing (avoidant), pre-occupied (ambivalent), and fearful (what I call “frozen” or chaotic) types.

In Figure 27-10, I plot the positions of these secure and insecure attachment types along the dimensions of control and warmth. These seem to be the fundamental dimensions along which relationships vary. How emotionally close is each partner in a couple? How controlling are they? The figure indicates that when there is too much of these aspects in our behavior, problems can develop in relationships. Warmth should be set at a high level, but it should not

Bring your kids to all the best “clubs”—chess club, science club, drama club, basketball club, art club, and so on.

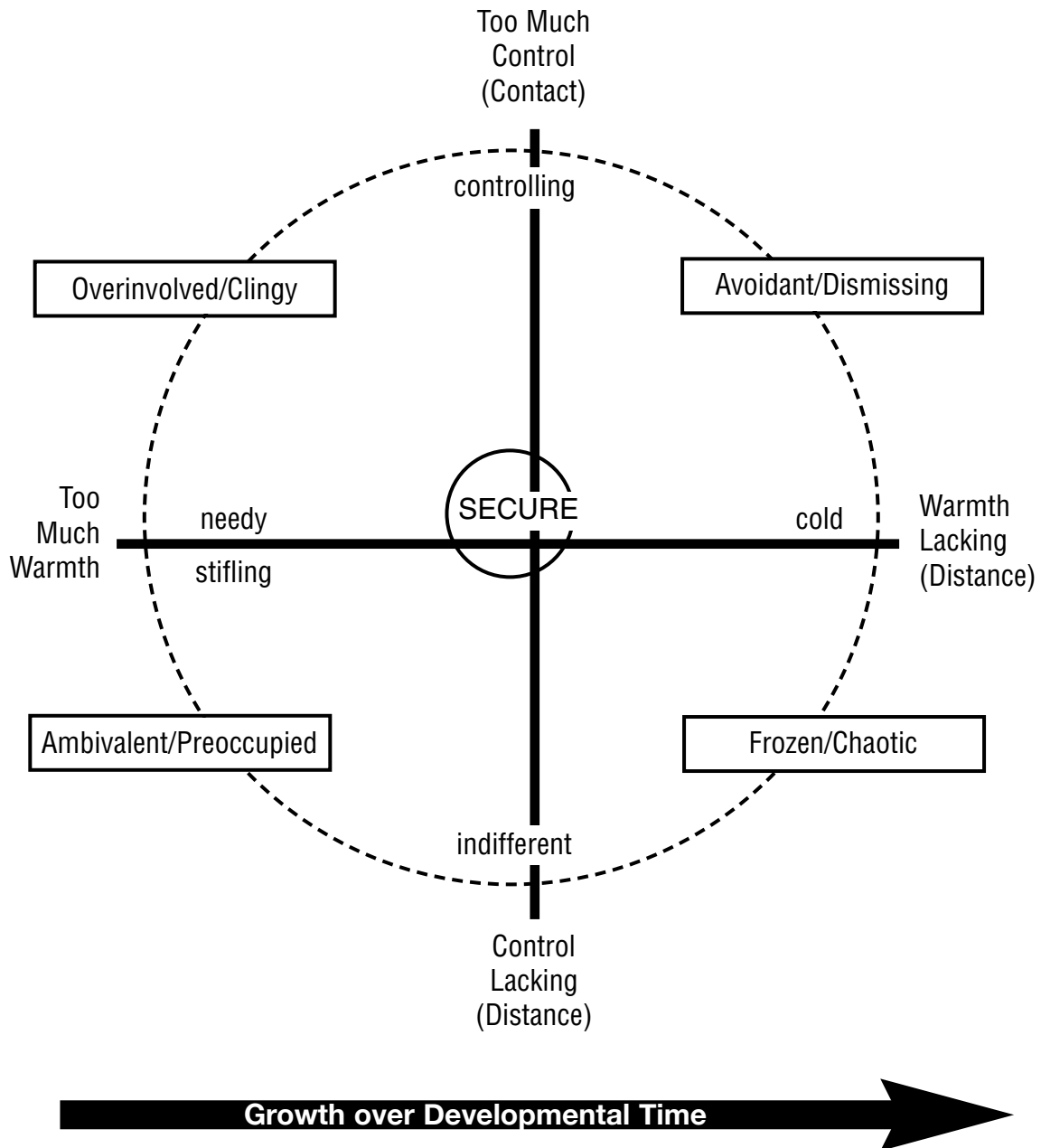
Companies that become green-friendly stay in the black.

By being buffers for children, families protect all children.

Figure 27-10

Relationships involve varying degrees of warmth and control. Good balance in both leads to a secure attachment to our partner. When there is too much warmth, such as in being needy and stifling, the attachment is not secure, but is clingy or preoccupied, depending on whether control is too much or lacking. As for when there is not enough warmth, the attachment style becomes avoidant or chaotic, depending on whether control is too much or lacking.

Romantic Recipes



become stifling or needy and, certainly, it should not be absent. Similarly, control should be balanced, and the partners should be neither too controlling nor too indifferent. For both dimensions, the best balance among the positive and negative possibilities lies more on the positive side.

Thus, I have placed slightly away from the middle of the figure the center of the concentric circles on the figure. They have been displaced toward the warmth side and toward the control side of the figure, in order to indicate that optimal romance involves more positive warmth and more positive control.

In making this figure, my next task was to place the three insecure attachment types. Which ones are colder? Which ones are more controlling? It appears that the avoidant/dismissing type is more controlling and cold, the preoccupied/ambivalent type is more warm and indifferent, and the frozen/chaotic type is more indifferent and cold. After I had performed this analysis, logic dictated that one new insecure attachment type was needed to complete the figure. The figure needed a controlling-needy/stifling type. The label of “over involved-clingy” could be used for this type of insecure attachment.

As you read this, I am sure you are trying to categorize yourself into one of the attachment types. Most of you must be saying to yourself, “Oh no, I hope I’m the secure attachment type. What if I’m this insecure attachment type, or is it that one?” The bad news is that each of us probably express all of the insecure attachment types! The good news is each of us does so probably is only to limited degrees, as the positive, secure type predominates. In my perspective, we are mixtures of different feelings of security and different types of insecurity, and each of us is different this way, but with many of us leaning to the positive, secure kind. We bring these mixtures into our relationships as starting points. But recall that, in the development of attachment, the thinking adolescent becomes capable of reworking the attachment style that had developed with caregivers. Therefore, by the time the person is in a romantic relationship, this thinking and change capacity of pre-existing attachment style should be more evident. **One can always work through insecure attachment styles toward a more positive style.**

*Families should create
more than children.*

Hugs are a family's give.

*A family that laughs
together lives together.*

*A baby asks for nothing
more than everything it
needs.*

*Happy children are made,
not born.*

We hope to avoid being trapped by the insecure attachment types that may characterize us, and to gradually work together with our partners to bring out increasingly the secure type. Love is the best security-promoting device that one can find. One's partner may be the key ingredient in changing the attachment type mix in a relationship. Of course, social support is important, too. Finally, when relationships flounder too much for whatever reason, professional help is worth considering.

Managers should realize that these attachment mixtures affect not only romantic relationships, but also may impact work relationships. Workers may feel very insecure in their work environment, and this may be accentuated if their natural tendency gravitates toward one or more of the insecure attachment styles. **By promoting work security, managers can help establish valuable partnerships with their workers.**

Bedtime stories make daytime glories.

*Children need to be "given a
place," not "know their place."*

*A family is a whole not greater
than the sum of its hearts.*

*Raise your children,
not your voice.*

*Life starts at conception—
of being a good parent.*

*Parents who model
goodness model greatness.*

Use time out, not kick out.

Nurturing needs nurturing.

A child loved is a child launched.

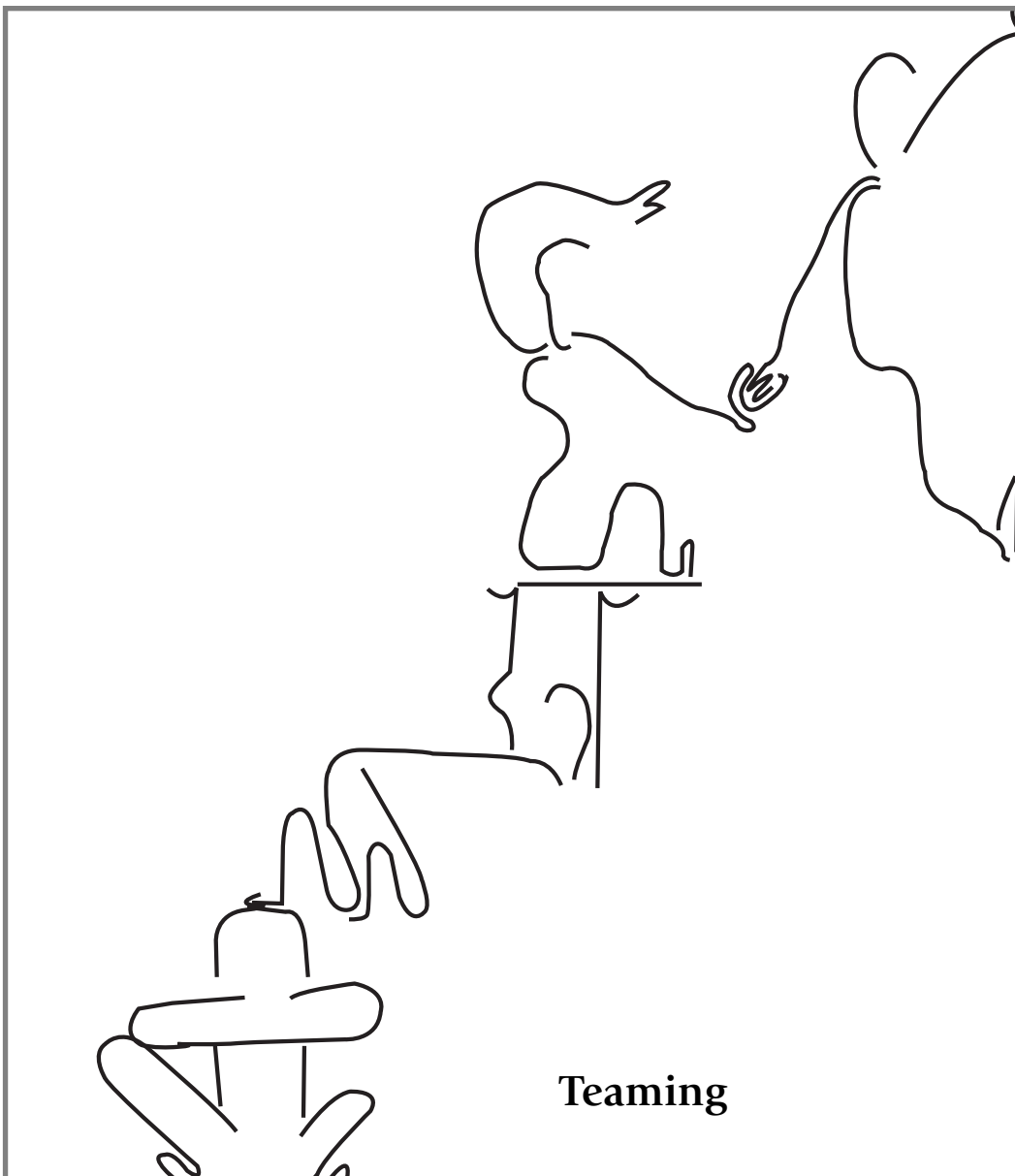
*Exercise your rights—teach
children right from wrong.*



In this chapter, we have learned that **it is important to understand the hidden patterns in a system, even moreso than understanding the particular member elements of the system.** This applies to all systems, whether they are about our minds, our social life, our work life, our life with our romantic partner, or our family life. When we want to change a system, but do not understand the full pattern behind it, and focus our helping efforts only on one part of the system, most likely, our efforts will fail. When we seek understanding of the complexity of a system, to some extent, we simplify the process of finding the best solutions for the difficulties it may be facing.

In order to have few family problems on the mind at work, we need to work hard at our family work.

Family is to work as work is to responsibility.



Chuck wanted to become Charles, to discard his childhood name for one befitting his new-found sense of maturity. He also wanted to change his hairstyle and clothing style to a more trendy look. But he was wavering in his decision, not sure if people that he knew would accept the change, ask too many questions, think that he was trying to change on the inside by changing the outside, and so on.

Chuck knew that he could do it, but needed reassurance. He wanted to change not only his story but also the story that others told about him, to have the stories fit his emerging changes and growth.

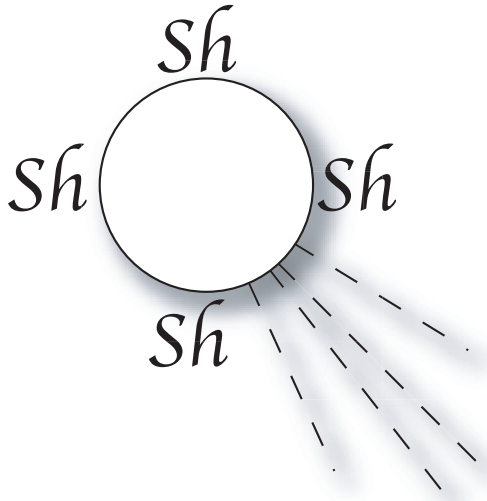
Charles sits down with this book and others like it, and is convinced that he is on the right track.



The strength of the fabric lies in the weave, not in the fiber.

Chapter 28

Change



*"SH" is for Should;
as in, "I should seek
to better myself."*





*Lifelong growing is
evolution's crowning
achievement.*

Chapter 28 deals with change, or psychological growth. In a certain sense, this is the fundamental chapter of the book, for everything about destressing involves change. Our emotions, attitudes, expectations, and actions become open to change when we destress, and, in turn, we can more readily destress when we change our emotions, attitudes, expectations, and actions. **When we catalyze change, change catalyzes us.**

Figure 28-1 asks some difficult questions about change. It lays responsibility for change on the individual or couple desirous of change. It asks that change proceed in small steps toward the establishment of new ways of being. It asks us to be aware of when change takes place and to be aware of what blocks it when it does not. Change should be reciprocal in couples, happening in both for both. When we expect the other to change but deny that we must reciprocate, in effect, we are blaming the other, sabotaging any chance of genuine change. When we block constructive change, we should explore what is blocking progress. **Change is in our hands. It is also in our minds and hearts.**

Figure 28-1

Change in a couple involves change in both partners. Each partner may have a good idea of what the other partner should change in her- or himself, but is each knowledgeable about what the other partner expects of her or him? Couples need to promote two-way, reciprocal exchange as the key change in their evolution.

Do You Have Any Change?

- 1.** If you changed, what would be the first thing that you'd notice?
- 2.** What would be the first small step that you'd have to take to change?
- 3.** That is what you want to change in your partner; what has to be changed in yourself?
- 4.** If you changed, would your partner notice? What does your partner want you to change?
- 5.** How will life be different when you change? Which lifestyle will you prefer, the old one or the new one?

What would you say in a letter to your partner about maintaining the changes that you have made?

Figure 28-2 repeats the theme that we are responsible for our own change. When this attitude develops, we can consider it the new way that we should protect and nurture because of its importance. New ways contrast with already, existing old ways. In the current case, in the old way, when we deny change, we may sabotage it, keeping past bad habits. We blame others who, in turn, expect us to fail. A vicious circle, keeping us from a different future, develops. Change can change all that. **When we step forward toward change, new attitudes, and new and better habits, there is no stepping back.**

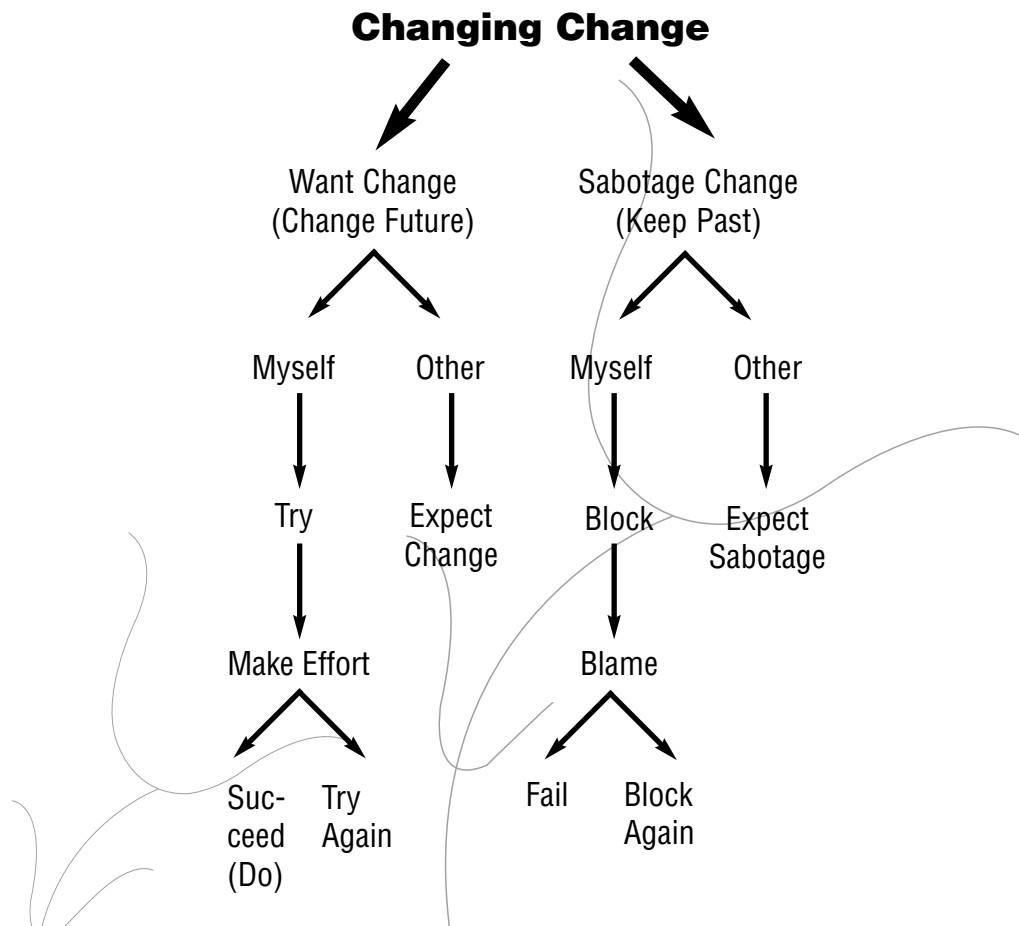
.....
*When we let growth flourish
 in others, it comes back to
 grow us.*

.....
*When we do not want to
 change, life determines
 otherwise.*

Figure 28-2

Everyone thinks that they can change if they had to, but the reality is that there are many people who are not ready for change. They may even sabotage change. We need to watch ourselves as we deal with issues such as these. We need to be sure to promote change rather than to hinder change when we know at our core that change is the best for us.

Promoting Change: Do's and Don'ts



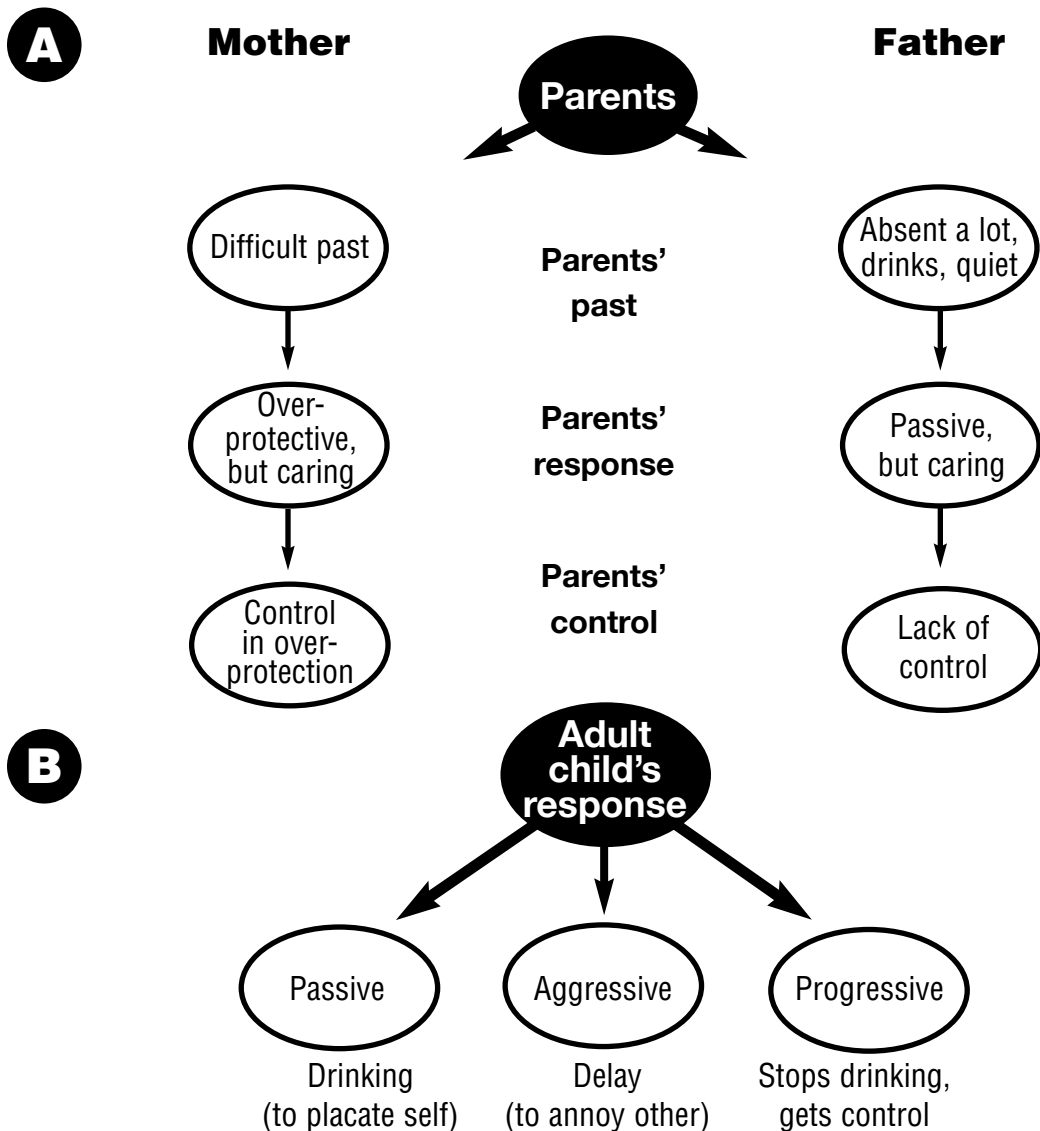
Growth is passed on from one generation to all that follow.

Figure 28-3 illustrates that old ways or bad habits are passed down from one generation to the next, in an intergenerational process, but that the child is not a direct copy of the parent. The particular client for whom I made this figure had felt little control over her life, but she did show a protective impulse. She had been raised by an alcoholic father and

Figure 28-3

Intergenerational transmission refers to how patterns of parenting in one generation lead to effects in succeeding ones. However, parental patterns do not automatically repeat themselves, especially when there is awareness and desire for improvement. Children can demonstrate resilience and difference from the difficulties they encounter in their parents, and end up not reproducing undesired parental patterns when they become adults.

Change Spans Generations



by an over-protective mother. She turned to drinking herself, and became quite passive, to the point of antagonizing her husband by delaying actions. Nevertheless, when she first attended psychotherapy, she informed me that, through her resilience, she was attempting to cut back on her drinking, and she was caring and giving in her own way. Thus, I built up the notion that she was gaining control and becoming her own person. I was facilitating the change journey on which she had already embarked. **People grow toward where they aim.**

Figure 28-4 illustrates two models of psychological growth—one that allows for change and one that does not. A client began doubting that change was possible. She wondered if she was simply always going to be the same. I used the figure

*Blocking change
guarantees change.*

*Stopping to grow is
a temporary glitch
in the program.*

Figure 28-4

Faxes faithfully reproduce the image that is scanned. However, development does not necessarily faithfully reproduce the parental models that are experienced. Life is not necessarily fixed by the past, because the child or teen can become aware of the past and its effects and want better, transforming the future. Growth is constant, and we are constantly in transition.

Models of Growth

Fixed—Faxed	Transformation—Transition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem in past transmitted directly into present and future • Change is an illusion • Little to hope for, we are controlled by destiny; therefore, we risk becoming over- or under-controlled, not happy • We are separate sheets of paper on a fax pile, without control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems in past are challenges to growth in present • Change is constant; deep change can take place (e.g., think of butterflies in metamorphosis) • Everything to hope for. We control our destiny, because destiny lies in our expectations, feelings, and actions. As we learn to respect ourselves and others, direct control becomes much less of an issue • Control and happiness become one, both in each of us and together



*Be a change agent—
Give good care to a child.*

Shelley shunned Shani. Both felt shoddy. Chapter 28 taught them to shape up, share, and shift. They showered this chapter with praise. Chapter 28 changes.

*Superficial change
does not fool growth.*

to contrast the two models of growth, or psychological change, over the lifespan. I called the non-change model the fixed-fax model. I asked her whether she really believe that she could not change, whether she really believed that she was simply a reflection of her past. Further, I asked her whether she believed that when someone appears to have changed in her or his psychological life that it was just an illusion. In this fixed-faxed model, there is no hope for change. It is our destiny not to change. In our thinking, feeling, and actions, we simply reflect what we have experienced. In this sense, I asked the client if she really believed that we are separate sheets of paper on a fax pile, transmitting what has been transmitted to us and, thus, fixed and incapable of change.

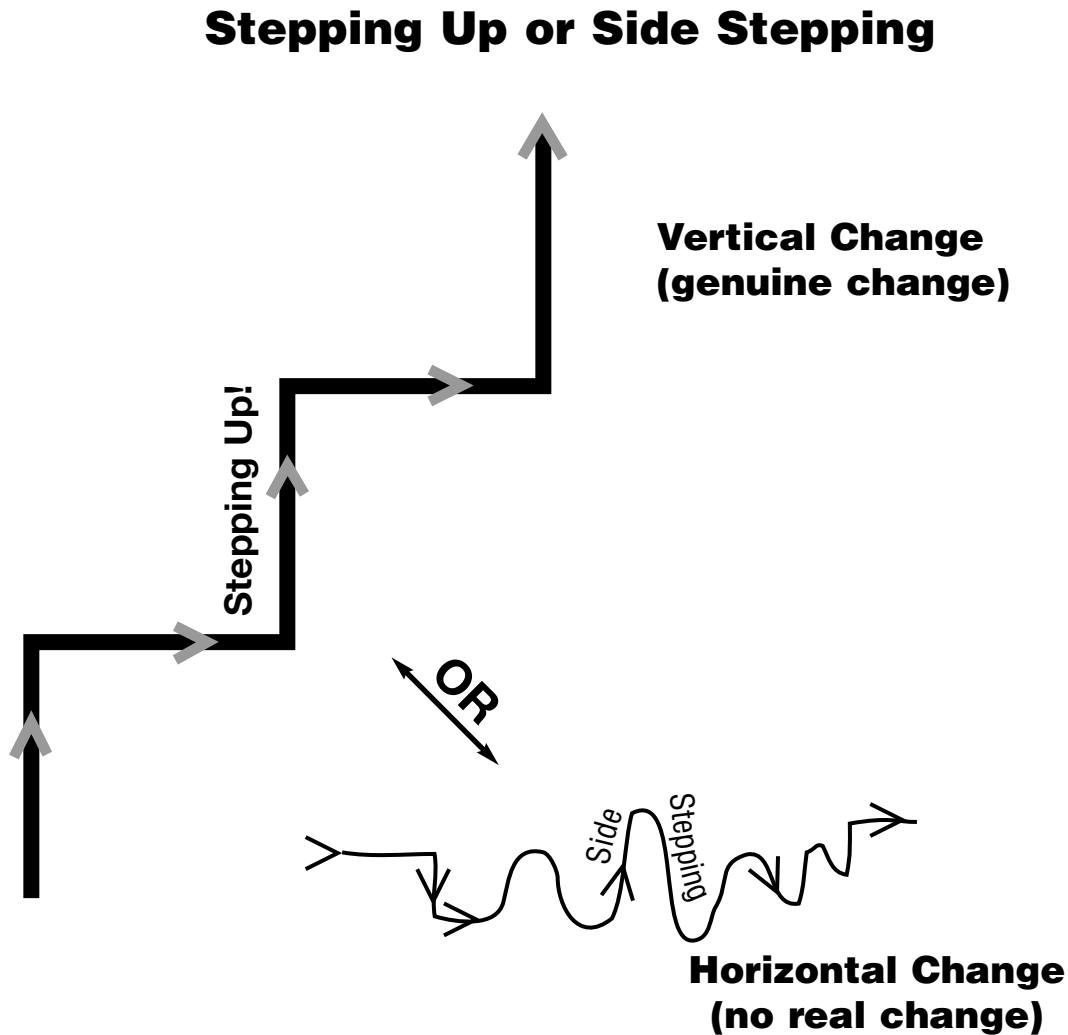
Then, I asked if it was possible that the other model has more validity. That is, according to this model, people are capable of change, life is in constant transition, and problems in the past are not fixed but are challenges to change. Old ways can be transformed into new ways. Change is a constant process, and deep change can take place. I asked her to think of butterflies being transformed from one of their stages to the next. They grow from larva to beautiful creatures of colour, due to the transformative program within themselves. Similarly, the only person who decides our destiny is ourselves, through our expectations and our minds, through our feelings and emotions, and through our actions and behaviors.

The process of change is an uneven process. In a sense, we are composed of many parts, and not all of our parts change simultaneously, while some parts are more difficult to change. The point is that there are always new ways, new languages, and new futures available to us. It is part of our fortune as members of the human species that we can write our destinies and both learn to live with the older ways of our past and create newer ways. Change is a process that continues over the lifespan. In some cases, it may take a full lifetime to realize that parts of us need change. Even then, it is not too late, because **the capacity to undergo psychological change is our birthright and lasts right through our lifespan.** As long as we are moving in that direction, we are being the best that we can hope for.

Figure 28-5 examines vertical change versus horizontal change. By vertical change, I mean change that is progressive, positive, integrative, and improves either our situation

Figure 28-5

Change can seem to be taking place, but it may only concern changes at the same level rather than moving to a new level. Learning how to step sideways does not help climbing stairs.



or ourselves. By horizontal change, I mean change that is in a lateral or sideways direction, at the same level, and change for change's sake. It does not necessarily mean an improvement in our situation or in ourselves. Even though we may be open to vertical change, learning from our past may undermine our vertical development and sabotage our genuine change. We may have learned to adapt the role of being our own change saboteurs and change only horizontally.

*Growth is both letting
change happen and
getting the happenings
that change lets.*

*Get up for change
that brings you up.*

*Organize positive change—
or face negative change.*

*By facing change,
we encourage stability.*

*To make a reservation on
the positive side, use your
psychological reserves.*

At the same time, through psychological growth mechanisms that we all possess, each of us has been launched on a mission. In this mission, our goal is to harmonize, as best we can, our psychological space so that we can be responsible for ourselves and for the others around us. Our choice is either to see everything from our own needs, asking, “What does it mean for me?”, or to take responsibility for ourselves and to decide to see more than our immediate needs. When we decide to go beyond ourselves, the openness created lets in myriad influences on us that facilitate change. We can make the choice to know that the past has had its influence, the future has its pull, and the present has its contexts, but that we can choose to perceive differently. We can see the past as a stepping stone to a deep desire for change in the present toward a future different than our previous understanding of the past had presented. We have to learn to gaze over the horizon. Vertical growth can be dizzying, but it allows us to see around space and time dimensions within which we are locked. In living continual change and growth, we reach the upper end of our human potential.

Change is facilitated by self-exploration, especially of the stresses of the past that have affected our psychological development, the context of the present and our attitude towards it, and the hopes for our future. Instead of hiding problems, or feeling dejected or angry because of them, we should deal with the problems, and feel that, in trying to resolve them, we can equilibrate the troubles of the past, smooth out the problems in the present, and realize a better future. Any difficulty may have quite unpleasant parts, but it unlocks its hold on us when we examine it honestly, work through its effects, and come to terms with it. **Change happens when we work toward it.**

Figure 28-6 illustrates a major theme about rejoining joy, destressing, and developing. The field of psychology typically examines behavior in terms of models that include a stimulus (S), a response (R), and some sort of intermediate stage in between involving the person (P) [or “organism” (O)]. That is, a stimulus, stress, or situation does not have a direct, automatic, reflexive effect on responses or behavior, because the particular characteristics of the individual organism and the species to which it belongs is important to consider.

Humans resemble each other in terms of being part of the same species. However, we are uniquely different from each other, as well.

*True change is always
for the better.*

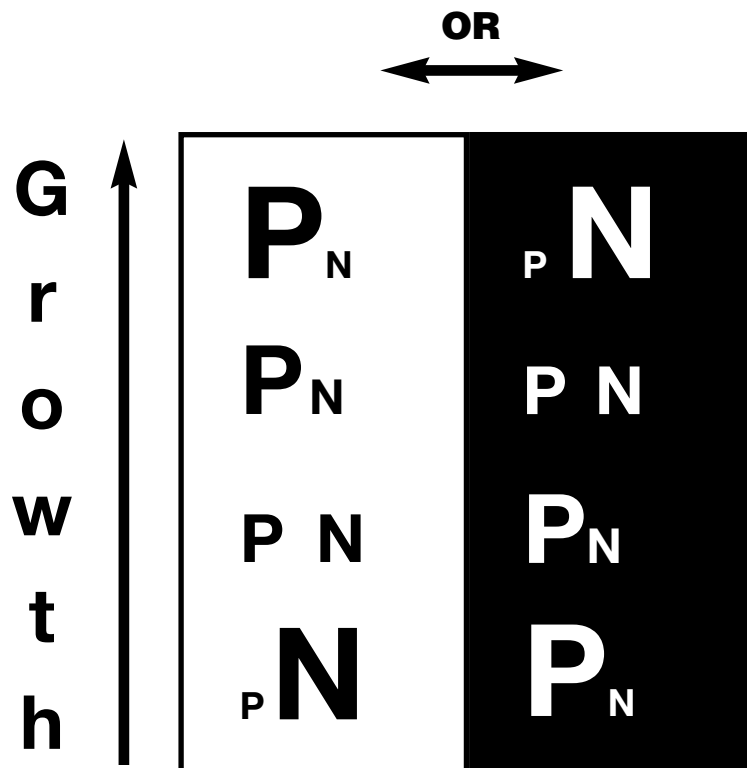
We humans are individual persons as much as we are members of the same species. Each of our particular physical, thinking, emotional, social, and personality characteristics that make us distinct individuals influences how we perceive our environment and its stimuli, develop plans to deal with the stresses and problems that we encounter, and

*Learning prepares change.
Life prepares learning.*

Figure 28-6

We all have positives and negatives, strengths and weaknesses. Positives can grow in us and negatives can lessen in us, both by natural growth and by learning lessons.

Working Through, Coming to Terms, and Growing



P = Positive reservoir N = Negative reservoir

All encounters have potential positives
as well as potential negatives.

.....
*Don't play "hide and seek"
with change—because it
comes "ready or not."*
.....

.....
*Forsake
"Change for change's sake."*
.....

.....
*Letting go bad habits
for good ones
is a habit to keep.*
.....

carry out those plans of action. We differ in many ways. Each of us has special skills, talents, activities, motivations, and dreams that come in unique combinations. Each of us has particular histories, filled with our personal backgrounds, families, and cultures. Each of us has our own packet of coping, resisting, and stress-reduction resources. Each of us can call on varied social supports among friends, family, and the community. Thus, the same stimulus will not lead to the same response in everybody, because our psychology stands between what is out there and how we react to it.

The individuality that characterizes our humanity has important implications for understanding that our environment is also composed of individual components and not only standard ones. For example, every situation, no matter how seemingly negative, may be perceived in a positive way, or as a challenge. Also, every situation, no matter how seemingly positive, has its risks for negatives; for example, a positive situation may be misinterpreted as a negative one because either our past or present circumstance has conditioned us to perceive it inappropriately. Each situation represents an encounter with all possibilities. Each situation is a potential entry point to many paths. Many diverse situations may lead to the same path. Internal as well as external forces push us and are pushed by us.

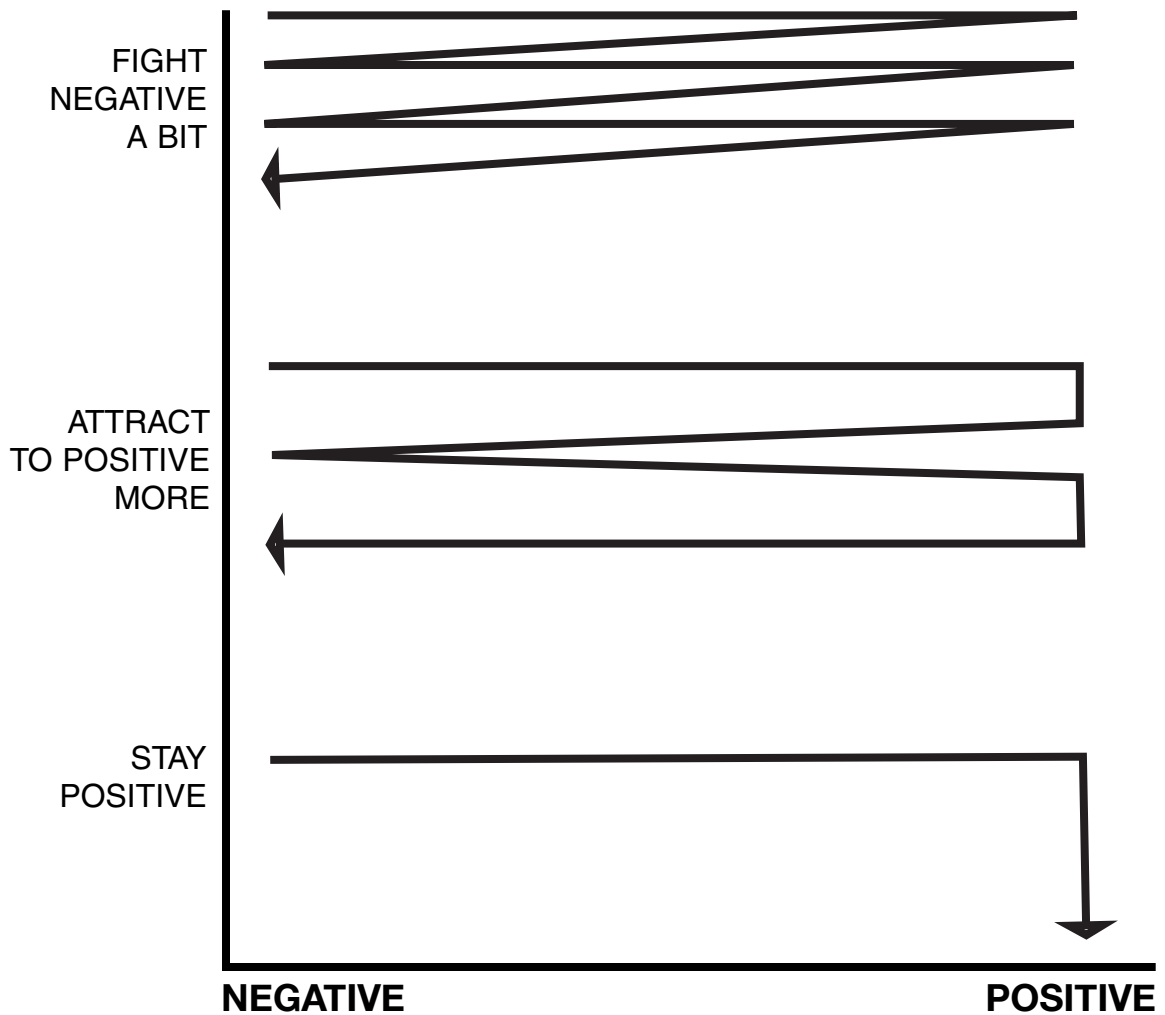
The balance of positive and negative living in each of our encounters can slide toward the negative or positive side, depending on how we deal with it. No matter how seemingly negative may be a particular situation, our individual strengths, support, and circumstance can help us turn things around. We can work through, come to terms, and grow in any circumstance. Psychologically painful experiences can leave negative effects on our mental state, but we can gradually reprocess these experiences, integrating them into our growing mind. All encounters have potential positives for us.

How can we let the positives happen, change, and grow? The choice is ours. Even when the worst happens to us, we can emerge with our human dignity intact and strengthened. For example, in reading the word "evil" backward, one finds the word "live." We all know of extreme courage in face of the worst circumstances. **No matter what the circumstances that we may encounter, in each of us there are programs of growth that give a constant call for their activation.**

Figure 28-7

When we decide to promote positives in ourselves and in others, arguments lessen and good times increase. Give the positives a priority posting.

Advance to Go; Do Not Look Back



Leaving bad habits for positive ones takes some luck, but mostly takes ourselves.

Figure 28-7 illustrates that **staying positive is a skill that is acquired**. When we feel down, have little motivation, or are thinking the worst, we fall into a negative whirlpool that is hard to escape. Our thoughts, emotions, and actions gravitate around the negative. There are other poles of attraction that are positive to which our psychology can be pulled, but

Being ready for change makes getting into it easier.

.....
*Changing is less challenging
than challenging change.*
.....

.....
*Owning the future
is owning growth.*
.....

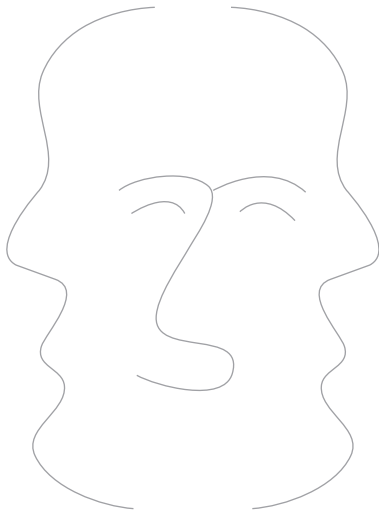
we need to give it a push. We need to fight the negative forces and the bad habits with a will to the positive, a turn to good habits. These good habits on the positive side may not be as well-formed and automatic as the bad ones on the negative side.

When we start to try to use good habits, we can be pulled back to the negative. The negative may have already taken hold of us, and we may be used to it. We need to understand when and why these negative emotions happen and, in contrast, give more power to the positive, in order to resolve the negative or to deal better with it. The more we are attracted to the positive side, the more we stay there, and the harder it is to leave. We need to learn to go there, and once we do, the negative will have less of a pull. We will even come to push it away every time that we can.

Figure 28-8

The future is the mirror image of the past in the sense that when we resolve issues stemming from the past, it becomes easier to be free to resolve issues that will arise in the future. When difficulties from the past are negotiated well, it is more likely that so will those in the present, and it is more likely that so will those in the future. The present becomes a place of transition and change when we look simultaneously backward and forward.

Transitioning



- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Yesterday | Understanding the Past |
| | • Blame others for everything |
| | • No problems; all laid on others |
| | • No self, and others notice |
| | • Disowned self |
| Today | • No room for new problems or responsibility |
| | Changing in the Present |
| | • See the problem for what it is |
| | • Without blaming self or criticizing |
| | • Take responsibility |
| Tomorrow | • Begin to renew self |
| | • Accept the problem |
| | Creating a New Future |
| | • Disown problem, solve it |
| | • Change responsibility |
| | • Find new responsibilities |
| | • Own self |
| | • New problems accepted |

Figure 28-8 tells us that the past has been built, the present is made in an instant, but that the future stretches into possibilities that we can help create. For example, if we realize how we have blamed everything on everybody, we can begin to stop blaming, see clearly, take charge of ourselves, and take charge of life. Freeing the past frees the present and future.

New ways are always calling us; they are always there. The present can be a turning point, a transition to a new future, or it can be a sticking point, a transmission of an old past. We waver on the edge of choice, on the precipice of growth, on the launch pad of change.

By seeking to change, by accepting constant transition, we can never know where we will end up, but we know that it will never end. Life will become created by ourselves and by others living with us, rather than by circumstances, by our past, or by anything else. Change may be postponed, but it can never be permanently suppressed. **Change will happen, especially if we let it happen.**

In Figure 28-9, we see that change does not take place in isolation, but is a product of participating in life. When we are buffered in a manner that the stresses of life about us are controlled, change frees itself. Buffering begins at conception, and should continue powerfully into childhood and beyond, starting with our parents and school.

The interactive process between the individual and the environment begins with the first moments of life after conception. It continues after birth and lasts throughout life. The interaction that takes place in our growth is a triple one. We have our biology that contributes. Also, the environment is important and, although it may be bigger than us, we play an active role in the interaction with it. As with any interaction, our interaction with the environment is always reciprocal. We have energy, motivation, and direction in our behavior. From birth, and well before, we push into the world with the will to touch, to palpate, and to sense and, then, to vibrate from the world's response. When we get an idea, we want to try it out. We are not born passive receptacles of whatever the environment brings, awaiting our fate. On the contrary, we are constantly exploring our environment and influencing it as it influences us.

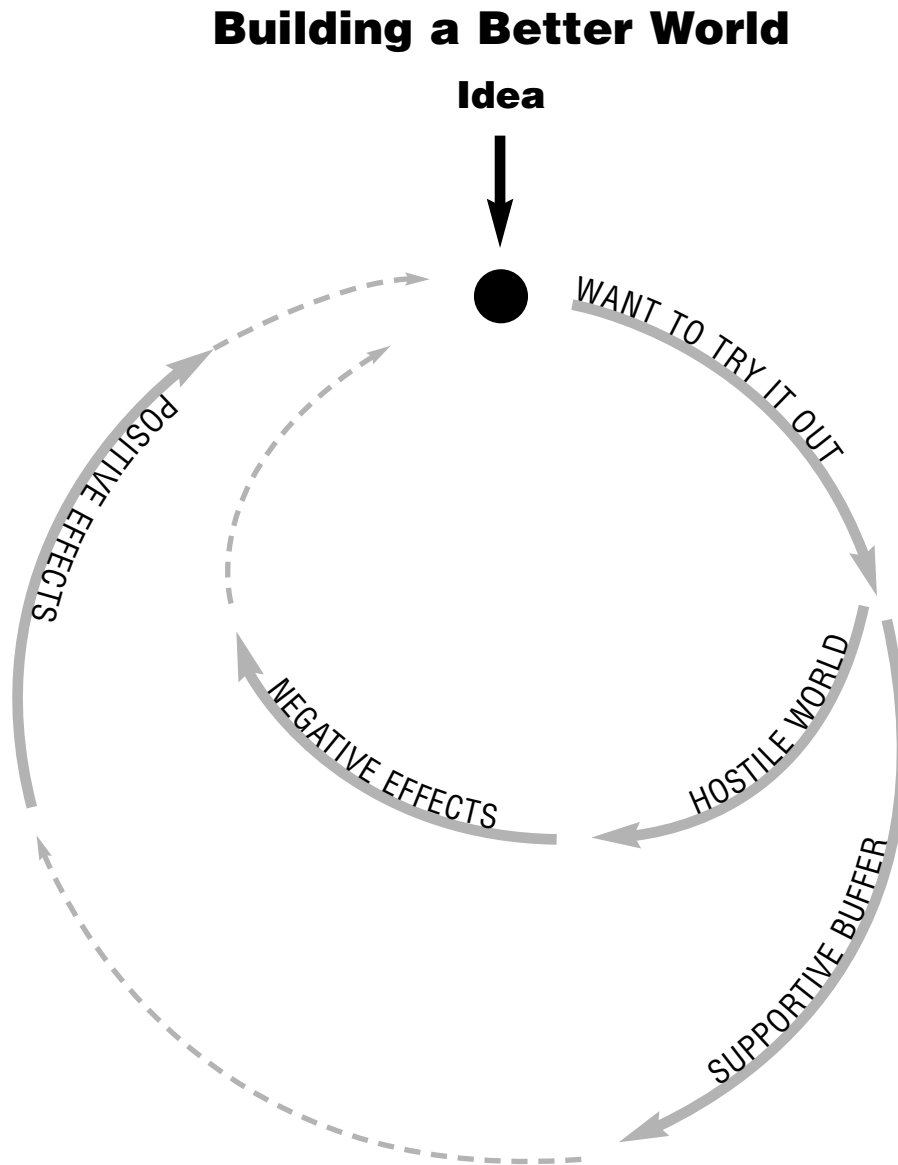
.....
*Change is not a means to
an end but a
means and an end.*
.....

.....
*Support offered
is growth gained.*
.....

.....
*Imagining change is a start
to outcomes that we could
not have imagined.*
.....

Figure 28-9

Change is facilitated by having people function as social supports to whom we can turn when there are problems. People can help buffer us from stress. This social buffering process begins at birth. When those around us have helped us keep open our minds, we become open to new ideas, novel solutions to problems, and so on.



.....
*Don't worry—if you keep
your bad habits, you will
not have to confront success.*
.....

Each time we do something, even if we have done it before, it is a new time. Interaction is always new and it always requires our full presence. Because we are constantly involved in interacting with and even influencing the external environment, change and growth are parts of our internal environments. The impulse to change and grow is born in the individual.

We act on the world with an innate program that incorporates the fruits of our actions and turns it into new learning, ideas, emotions, and behavior.

However, the environment does not always cooperate in providing the optimal conditions for positive psychological growth, such as in cases of infant abuse. Most families avoid such extremes. But we all experience less than perfect environments, some more than others. **When buffers in our environment foster change, we may grow toward constant change.** When buffers that protect us are not adequate, we can learn from our suffering, get help, and still grow.

Figure 28-10. Change for the better does not happen without effort. It is a product of everything about us, from emotions (affect) to thinking (cognition) to action (our

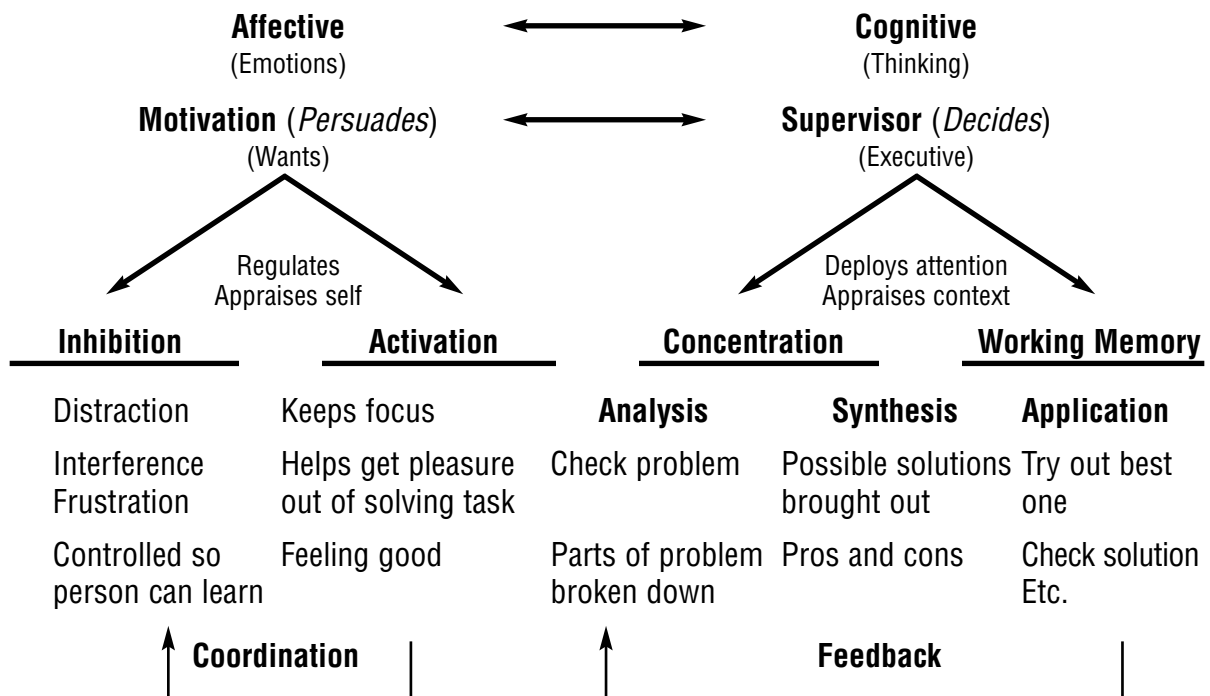
.....
*Be a gold digger—mine
 deep positive change.*

.....
False change shortchanges.

Figure 28-10

Change involves focusing on what we want and executing a plan to get it. Change requires good self-monitoring and motivation and good decisions and problem solving. It is a constant process of inhibiting what gets in the way and activating what works. It needs the will to solve problems and knowing how to solve them.

How We Focus and Change



.....
*To change your mind—
mind your change.*
.....

.....
*To find mental space—go
to the change room.*
.....

.....
*We can choose to dwell on
the past—or we can choose
to dwell in the present.*
.....

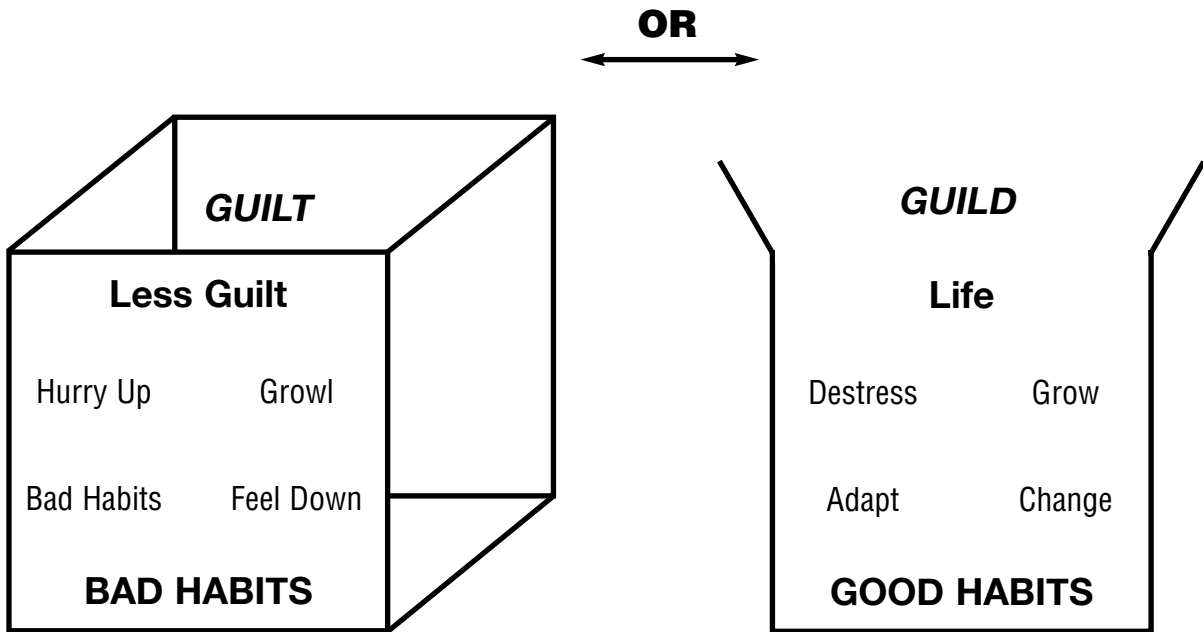
behavior). But it is not enough to say that we can change if we put together well our emotions and thinking. We need to understand the mechanisms and steps behind this goal. The figure shows that our thinking allows good problem solving and our emotions allow good motivation. When we take charge of a problem, such as wanting to change, we enter into an executive role. We decide to supervise where to direct our attention, and to understand or appraise the problem and its context. If the problem happens to be a bad habit that we want to change, we try to understand it in depth. We look at the behavior patterns involved, the situations that bring them out, our thoughts and feelings behind them, and the results that we get when we let bad habits control us. Our executive capacities have us focus on or attend to the problem by way of concentrating on it, holding in memory the important parts that we see in it (in working memory), and holding in memory past solutions that we have tried to help us out. But because we want to change, we do not become stuck on solutions that have not worked in the past. We think of new ways of resolving the problem. We figure out which one may work best, by seeing the advantages and disadvantages of each idea. By having self-control, we wait for the best idea to come out, and once we are sure that it is the way to go, that this is a good habit or will lead to a good habit to replace the bad habit, we try it out. We keep checking, or monitoring, to see if we are changing for the better. With the feedback learned, we adjust our solution as we proceed, to help make sure that it is working.

However, for change to be effective, it needs desire, motivation and persuasion of the self to keep going. We watch, or appraise our selves as we try to change, keeping us focused on always trying our best. We regulate anything that can get in the way and everything that can help us in our efforts. This involves inhibiting, or stopping, any distraction, interference, lack of self-control, frustration, and so on. It also involves helping to find pleasure in the process of change, optimism that it is working, and hope that things will be better because of it. We end up feeling good about ourselves with each problem that we solve, especially when the problem is a bad habit that we would like to control. By controlling the negative in us and coordinating this with improving the positive in us, we can create increasing changes

Figure 28-11

A sense of guilt should be a short term response that brings out a sense of wanting to correct any damages to the self and other that may lay as the source of guilt. To guild the edges of life, guide life to good.

Guilt as a Closed Box, Life as an Open One



A smile is worth a thousand flourishes.

When we are open to change, we change openings.

When change is called for—yell loud.

Turbulence is half way to change.

for the better in our selves and in others. **Changing for the better is always our best choice.**

Figure 28-11. We can get captured by negative thoughts, feelings, and actions, which can dominate our lives. When this happens, we have a choice. We can live the negative or we can withdraw because of the negative. However, bad habits are invitations to change. We can avoid being boxed in and open new possibilities in destressing and adapting and, then, in changing and growing. Part of the solution is to realize that there is a problem. Another part of the solution is to want to change it. A third part is to learn how to change. **Opening to life requires the lifting of barriers.**

To increase your psychological capital, save your change.

By facing change, we mirror stability.

Figure 28-12

In filling in the chart, note relevant situations, what they lead you to think afterwards, and the consequences that you notice or are aware of. But also, note background factors, such as poor sleep, headaches, soreness, stress that is ongoing, fatigue, or emotions. These are in the background and not necessarily in consciousness. They lower our resistance and ability to cope. What seems to be the start of a negative cycle due to a stressful situation may have many unseen causes, as well.

-C -B -A / A B C Chart

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> -C (e.g., Poor sleep) </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> -B (e.g., Stress) </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> -A (e.g., Low resistance) </div> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> A (Antecedent) (situation) </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> B (Belief) (thought) </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> C (Consequence) (reaction) </div> </div>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 	

Stress has many ways of derailing us—and solutions have many tracks.

Chance change to change chance.

Figure 28-12. In the cognitive model in psychology, consequences are viewed as effects of beliefs arising from antecedents, or situations. Therapists ask clients to fill in charts of what they were thinking after an event and how it led to an outcome. However, antecedent situations are, themselves, preceded by background factors in context: in our mood and thinking; in our coping, resistance, and reserves; in our body (poor sleep, pain); in stress levels, and so on. Often, these are out of awareness. We should ask our clients to chart some of these background factors, as well. **Learning and dealing with what is buried behind our mental scenes may help make the view more pleasant.**

Figure 28-13 addresses change in the context of stress and how to cope with it. Stress is both internally and exter-

Figure 28-13

Stress comes from many different sources; from our past, from the stresses of the present, and from our worries for the future. In another way of looking at it, stress comes from the inside (e.g., from our psychological conflicts, our motivation, our difficulty coping) or from the outside (trauma, work, racism, etc.). Our perception of the stress is key. We may realize that it is not as bad as it seems, that we can cope, that we have personal resources and social resources, and so on.

We Can't Avoid Stress: We Can Avoid Making it Worse

Type of Stress	Developmental & Time Line	Perception/Personal Factors
Biological physical	Residual (carry forward)	Poor bodily resources
Familial relational	Regression (go back)	Poor affective resources
Developmental normative	Delay/slow (behind schedule)	Poor coping resources
Contextual (work/ school)	Expectations (feed forward)	Poor cognitive resources
Cultural societal (e.g., intolerance)	Repression (not allowed to develop)	Poor social resources
Major stressor	Motivation problem	Poor rallying resources (of social buffers)
Traumatic catastrophic	Hopefully absent (never exposed)	Absorbed/Overwhelmed

nally generated. It continually enters our lives, not only because it is all around us to varying degrees, but also because it is a normal accompaniment to our inherent internal push to advance in our life. Stress derives from our passage through developmental challenges, crises, and new acquisitions. Each new milestone in development, each new phase or stage entered, provides opportunities for growth, but also dangers through the new issues confronted. For example, the adolescent grows in the search for identity, but may find the quest overwhelming and call off the search, delay it, or retreat.

Stress also derives from biological and physical factors in our health. Our daily life is fraught with stress, whether it is at work or school, or even at home in terms of caring for our

.....
*Changing is half wanting
 and half working.*

.....
*To have a change of mind—
 have a change of heart.*

family, speaking to friends, and so on. In addition, the outer environment (culture, society) is an important source of stress. The environment can bring major unexpected stresses, such as a financial loss, or major expected stresses, such as final exams. Finally, some external events are so stressful they are overwhelming, traumatic, or catastrophic.

Stress comes from the past, present, or future. Normally, it concerns our ongoing present context, but also it may derive from residual problems in the past carried forward, regressions to the past, delayed development, absent opportunities (to which we had never been exposed in the past), or fixations in the past (repression-suppression; development had not been allowed to proceed). Stress also develops from our expectations, plans, and hopes for the future and our efforts to follow through on them. The cumulative stress that we feel can be magnified by how we perceive it and by personal factors that we bring to the task of dealing with it. Perhaps we misperceive the stress, blowing it out of proportion, or seeing stress where there is none. Perhaps we cannot cope with it well, or cannot get people to help us with it, because of poor social skills. Perhaps we want too much or are too curious. Or, perhaps we do not want enough or are too passive or patient. Stress is a normal part of our life that is everywhere. There is no reason for us to make it worse.

We need to learn to tailor our perception, processing, planning, and performance when we are under stress. The more we can limit our stresses, whether through our own

.....
*Feeling guilty should be the
start of feeling change.*
.....

.....
*Psychotherapy has many
faces in how it proceeds
in order to have people be
able to meet many faces.*
.....



Figure 28-14

Cognitive-behavioral therapy is the predominant psychotherapeutic approach of psychologists, unlike the case for psychiatrists, who, as medical doctors, usually prescribe drugs. Aside from behavioral and cognitive ones, psychologists use an array of other techniques. At the same time, they are not technique-focussed, but tailor their approach to each individual; moreover, they are individualized, or eclectic, in this manner. They build rapport, respect the client, and focus generally on their well-being.

Matching Therapy to Need

Need	Therapy
Biological	Drugs
Relearning	Behavioral, Learning
New Thinking	Cognitive
New Ways	Solution-focused, Strategic
Awareness (of past)	Psychodynamic, Attachment
Developmental	Stage, Social Learning
Social	Interpersonal
Family	Systems
Context	Ecological
Finding Meaning	Narrative
Spiritual	Humanistic
Multiple	Integrated
Individual	Eclectic

resources or in conjunction with others, the more we can grow to better deal with stress. **The best destresser lays in change and growth**, and change and growth may be as much social and external as much as it is personal and internal.

Figure 28-14 examines different therapeutic approaches and the needs they are meant to address. Therapy is an externally-driven process that is meant to encourage internally-driven change.

First, when biological factors are the primary reason for psychological symptoms, often psychiatric medications (e.g., anti-depressant, anxiolytic) may help.

.....
*To put on a happy face—
put in a positive change.*
.....

.....
*Put in the good work.
Then, put in the good deed.*
.....

.....
*Feeling positive that
good things will happen
builds positive feelings.*
.....

.....
*Dreaming creates possibility.
Working for it creates reality.*
.....

Next, when clients need to learn new behaviors, thoughts, or ways of living, then behavioral, learning, cognitive, strategic, and solution-focused therapies are appropriate. These therapies deal with problems, stresses, and difficult situations in the present, and suggest alternative means of dealing with them.

Third, when past problems are of concern, more psychodynamic or related approaches are needed. Approaches deriving from attachment theory, which examines inter-generational transmission of psychological characteristics, may also be applied.

Next, the developmental approach may also look at past issues when they are of concern, but also it strives to promote adequate passage through all life stages.

When spiritual-existential issues are of focus, a less directive, humanistic approach is one therapy of choice.

Systems theory helps to address family problems, and examines the larger context of the individual. A similar holistic approach is the narrative or conversational one. It includes helping clients find exceptions to their negative views, actions, feelings, and goals, hidden and waiting to be (re)discovered.

Finally, in an integrated approach, the therapist attempts to treat the multiple issues of clients, borrowing whatever techniques are needed to get them moving forward beyond their past issues, present problems, and pessimism about the future.

To change what you say, change what you think and feel.

.....
*Let positive change walk with us,
jog in front, and never fall behind.*
.....

.....
*When we let positive change
guide us, negative change
loses its influence.*
.....

.....
*The opposite of positive change is
not negative change but suffering.*
.....

.....
*Positive changes keep us from
falling by the “no way” side.*
.....

.....
*To increase your mental
economy—save your change.*
.....

.....
*Change might be messy—
but it tidies up us.*
.....

.....
*It is not what the person has that
makes her, but what the person
makes of what she has.*
.....

.....
Transition is fusion, not fission.
.....

.....
*Helping someone to change
for the better, betters
our capacity for
helpful change.*
.....

.....
*Ending negative change starts
endless change.*
.....

.....
*Light your fire—stop giving
pessimism oxygen.*
.....

Ultimately, a good therapist always adapts to the individual, seeing each person and problem as unique, requiring individually-tailored, eclectic, unique therapeutic treatments. The therapist builds rapport, an important ingredient in any therapy and, independent of any technique or school of thought, **the therapist acts to promote change in clients and empowers clients to do the same for themselves.**

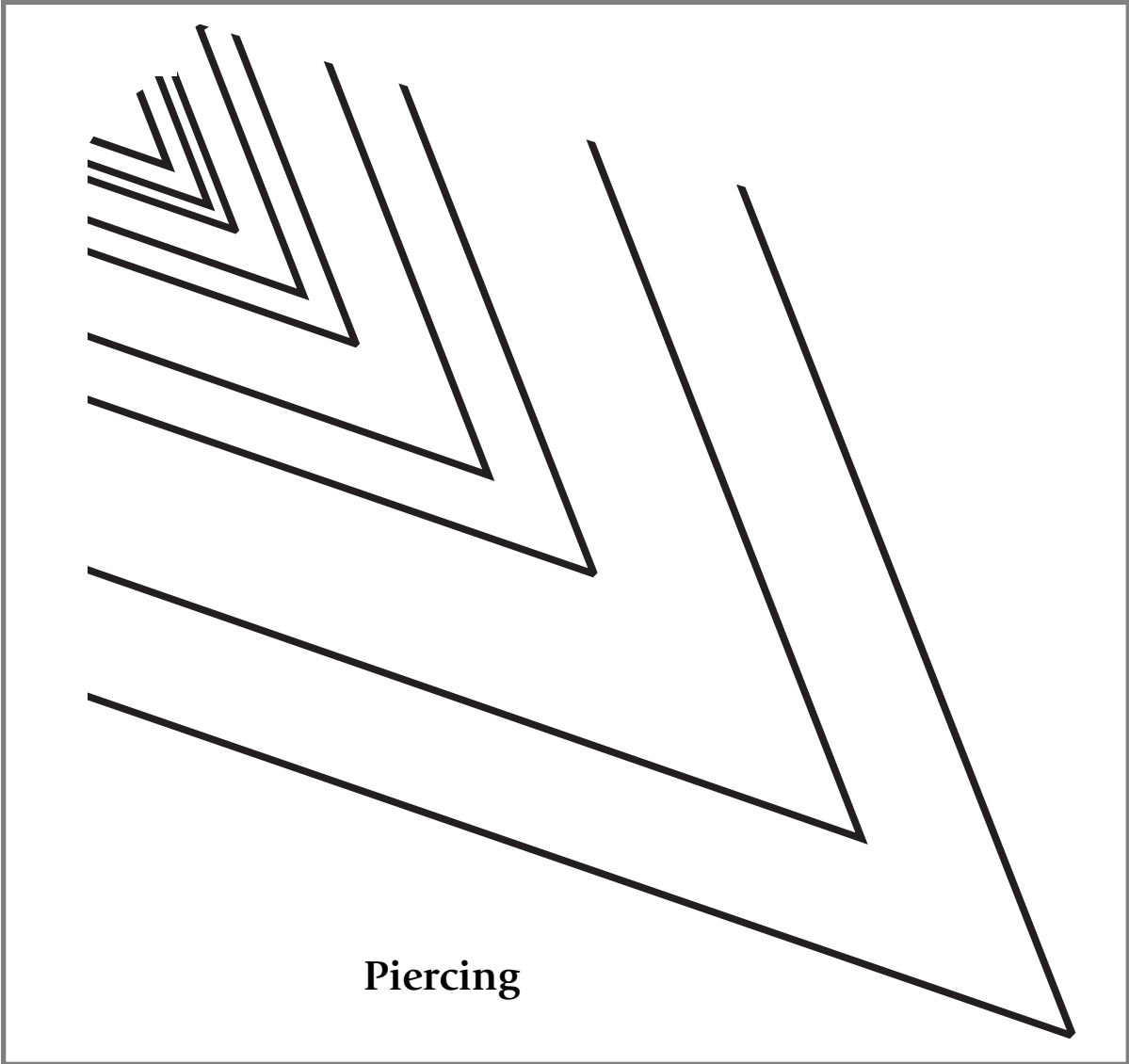
Each client in therapy is unique, and the field of psychology has developed many schools of thought to help treat client issues. Clients have difficulties and need to be treated with respect and as whole people. Psychology has the means to help people deal with the worst stresses and rejoin joy.

*Hopes—the bigger they are,
the harder they stall.*

Optimism is change's fuel.



In this chapter, we learn that nothing has changed. Change is a constant that has been always there in our lives, unless things have interfered with it. And it will always continue to be present. We should always be open to change or, at least, be ready to be open to it when the time is right. When it is not the right time for change, we should bide our time, work on any interfering effects, and work toward eventually unleashing the change. At the same time, we should continue to cultivate and participate fully in our social relationships, from family to friend, and so on. Change may happen on the inside, but it is nurtured by joining the outside. **The potential for change that each of us harbors can be as powerful as any force in nature.**



Sharon was thinking of changing the direction in her life, but was not sure how to do it. She felt stuck at home, did not yet have a partner, and wanted that promotion that she knew she deserved. However, she did not know how to speak to her parents, to her friend whom she really liked, and to her supervisor. She knew that this was the time to change, but felt that she might always be the same.

Her college teacher knew of her predicament, and advises her to explore her options, to try to implement now the changes needed, because it would be easier and she could still try again later should it not work out. She sits down with the present book and ones like it, and realizes that the potential for positive change is in all of us, and cannot be suppressed. She feels positive in her attitude, and vows to start her inward transformation and her attempts to alter her situation.

There are so many ways to change—when change becomes the way.

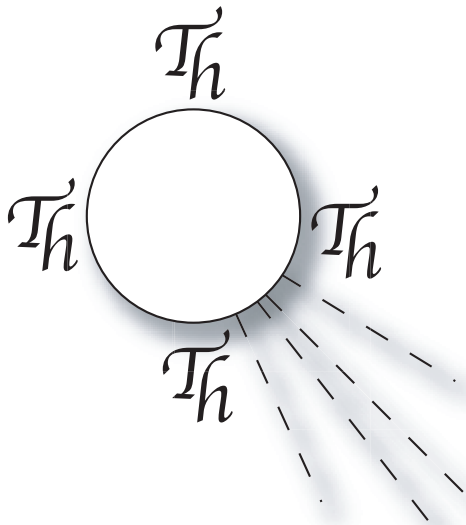
Not changing means not being.

Change happens to grow when we happen to want it.



Chapter 29

Inspiration



*"TH" is for Thinking,
as in
"Thinking of Others."*





.....
*When all faiths accept
all faiths, integrated
faith emerges.*
.....

This chapter deals with various inspirational themes. There is an inner harmony and an outer harmony that we should cultivate. **Life is not simply an outer movement toward the world, but also an inner movement into the self.** Both movements act as a cushion for the stress around us. This kind of philosophy leads to better acceptance, better balance, and a higher vision that stretches into the future, providing spiritual essentials that we need. (Note when I mention spirituality I am not referring to religious practice. Spirituality is a universal human attribute, whereas practicing a religion is an individual human choice.)

Figure 29-1 shows that by developing higher-order values, such as faith, love, and hope, it becomes easier to marshal the courage and energy needed to deal with stress. When our values include spirituality, we gravitate more readily beyond stress.

Sometimes life seems so bewildering. It moves so quickly in all directions without foundation, without hope. It seems

Figure 29-1

Spirituality and children are our most important expressions.

Trilogy



that there is no solution, that there is no help. It seems that there is only chaos and confrontation, confusion and turmoil, and despair and final loss. We grope and search, grasping at every straw that the winds of coincidence blow by us. However, the stresses continue unabated and are overpowering. In the end, we give up, exhausted, and we are spent, lying motionless, tearing, and torn.

*Those who pretend to know
try to influence us under
false pretenses.*

Often, in such moments, we turn to spirituality. We pray and we feel the power of union. Where before we had felt emptiness with no answer, now we find simplicity with a unique answer. We walk through the valleys of all our deaths, both physical and psychological, to find the peaks of all our lives, both for ourselves and for our loved ones. The soul is soothed. The good grows. Connection happens.

It is hard to keep the moment of high spirituality and the inspiration it offers. However, once we have arrived at this level, we can never stop trying to get there again. **Once the heart feels, the eye sees, the mind means, the hand reaches, and the soul settles, we seek this plateau over and over.**

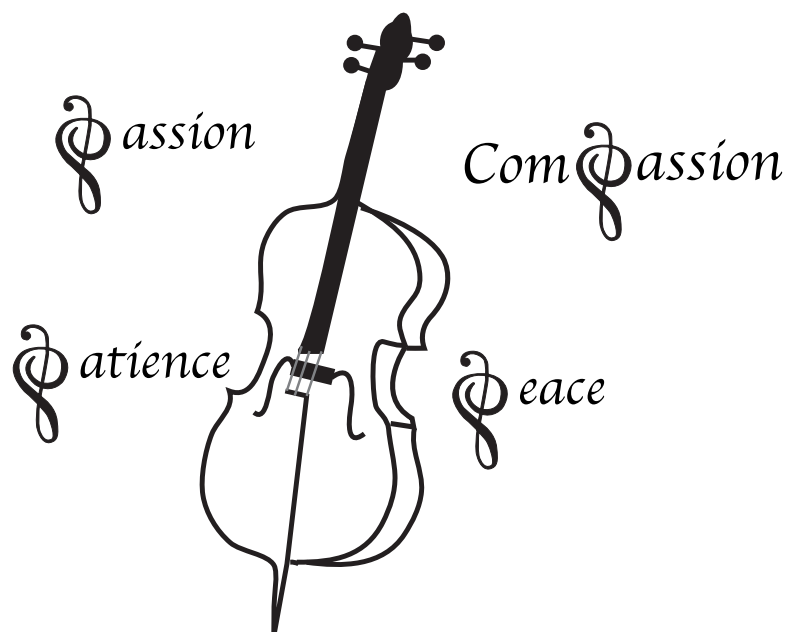
Harmonics is needed in our life, as is seen in **Figure 29-2**. The figure shows that we need not only passion for the things that we love, but also compassion in dealing with

*True teachings aim to
empower, not enslave.*

Figure 29-2

An inner peace is the chorus on which the verses of life play.

Harmonics



*When fanatics come
knocking, beat the drums
to your rhythm.*

Thomas wanted
ethereal thinking.
He thirsted for
inspiration. Chapter 29
led him to theological
themes. He thanked
it. Chapter 29 is
thoroughly therapeutic.

*Great teachers want you to
know more than them.*

other people. In our internal harmonics, we need music in our soul. Internal harmonics allow us to display passion, not only in fiery but also in focussed ways. It allows us to also display compassion, not only in emotional but also in helpful ways.

Each person has secret strengths, unknown gifts, untapped resources, splendid potentials, and precious possibilities.

Often, we place ourselves on scales of comparison, feeling better or worse than others. Often, we judge prematurely, looking upon others with disdain, prejudice, and hate.

However, in the end, we are all equal in the most essential way. We can all stretch out a hand to someone suffering. We can all offer a kind word, a good piece of advice, be there to comfort, offer hope, inspire recovery, and heal deep wounds.

In a cascading chain, the healed whom we have helped eventually become healers. Life is vibration. Goodwill can resonate through the most virulent diseases both of the body and of the mind. Goodwill is built on a lifetime of energetic waves from the spirit of self and others. No one is immune from receiving goodwill when in distress, and each of us can be there to send it when the time is right.

The people whom we may disparage, or look upon with contempt, feel our vibrations, which may inhibit their psychological unfolding. A negative chain reaction of dampened reverberations may set in, slowing their growth and healing potential. Ultimately, through cascades over other people and over time, our own healing or that of our loved ones, are compromised when we engage in such behavior. When we hurt others, inevitably, we hurt ourselves.

However, in contrast, when we see each person as special, we help that person. We become party to their happiness and success. We help unleash a spiral that gyrates through the trials of time. Positive vibrations are catchy. The more the psychological universe spins with their rhythms, the more our own harmony and that of our loved ones are assured. Life becomes less difficult. Utopia is really "Wetopia."

Let the helping begin. And when it begins, when every inclination to fall into old ways is resisted, a graceful, peaceful feeling impregnates our self. In realizing that each person is special, we realize that we are special, too.

When we become the object of others' negative vibrations, disdain, contempt, prejudice, and hate, one peaceful

path that we might follow is to remain comfortable with ourselves, pursue our paths, and give off positive vibrations, without anger or fear. Perhaps by seeing our inner peace, the others will be inspired to reflect and reverse their attitude. Even in extreme cases, by treating each person as special, everyone potentially becomes special.

Figure 29-3 points out that universal values are an appropriate lens to filter the world. **All people have an inherent push for spiritual engrossment.** Spirituality serves as the foundation of our being. Spirituality tells us to increase the circles of our horizons, like the rings growing on trees, so that we can reach higher and farther into moral space.

Spiritual learning needs balance with more academic and practical learning. When both are present, learning is complete.

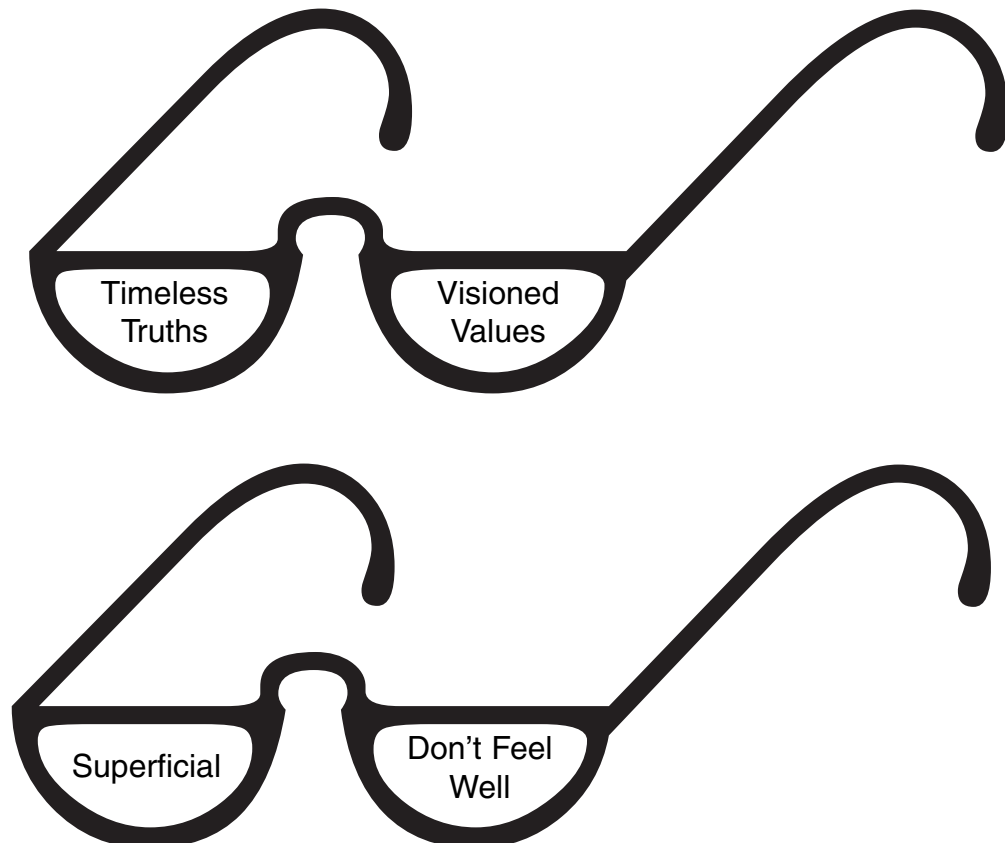
*Teaching that stops
at one book or
tradition stops learning.*

*If we did not have
superior levels, petty ones
would dominate.*

Figure 29-3

Superficial perceptions limit deeper conceptions.

Don't Forget the Second Pair



.....
*It is not so much that we
learn to repeat but that
we learn repeatedly.*
.....

Like trees, we need to be anchored in the soil of the earth in order to grow to the sky. When people study and learn functionally, they complement their spiritual growth. The need for spiritual growth needs to be recognized, cultivated, and activated. At the same time, when spiritual growth is happening, we come to cherish and honour every aspect of our daily lives and constantly seek our improvement. We become students of ourselves, of our interactions with others, and of our life roles.

.....
*Dreams guide reality
guiding dreams.*
.....

In Figure 29-4, we see that dreams can be our guides and can help weave our hopes and wishes into reality. On the one hand, dreams provide love, faith, ideals, values, and prayer and, on the other hand, reality in our efforts to deal with responsibility provides the impetus for hard work, creativity, and, on the other hand, reality in our efforts to deal with responsibility provides the impetus for hard work, creativity,

Figure 29-4

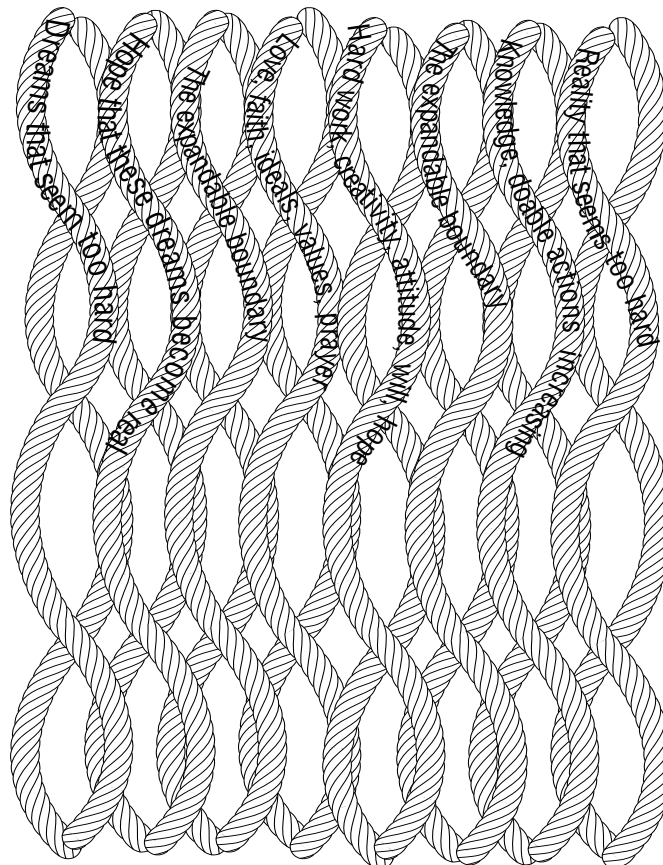
Dreams can meet responsibility when they bind in reality.

Wishes Seem so Different From Reality

Dreams

Binding Zone

Responsibility



the right attitude, will, and hope. When these boundaries meet in the binding zone, **when we work to create an integrated fabric within ourselves, the tissue woven is one of strength and possibility.**

In the emotional equation of life, there are fine balancing acts that we need to perform. We have a positive core, a valued interior set of motivations, relaxing strategies, good habits, social connections, and work or school skills that we want to use and have grow. The best way to beat off stress, to brighten the blues, and to deal with problems, is to bring the best of ourselves to our life tasks. Simply put, the more our life space is taken by positive, life-enhancing activity, the more our lives feel enhanced and full, and the less there is room for external or internally-generated stress.

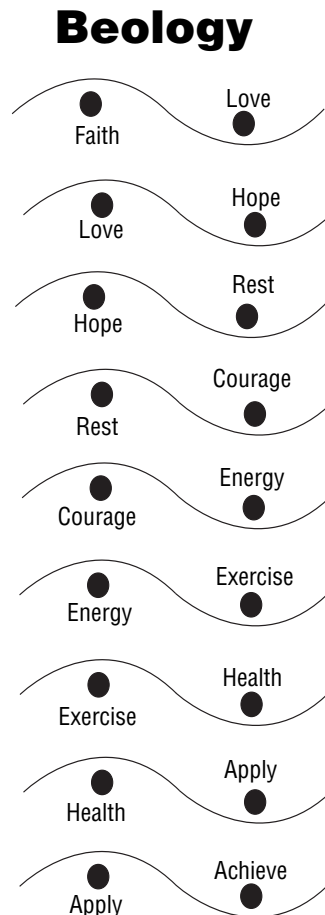
Figure 29-5. We are all “Beologists.” There are many areas of study. Psychology is the study of behavior. Sociology is

*Spiritual people
do not pollute.*

*Flowers bloom
only to rebloom.*

Figure 29-5

Faith and love lead to application and achievement.



.....
*Saying yes to mystery is
saying no to falsity.*
.....

the study of groups. Biology is the study of living species. However, we want to study much more than this in our everyday life. In Beology, we especially want to know how to be, for example, how to be ourselves, how to behave socially, how to feel good inside, how to think clearly, and how to do the right thing. Institutional school teaches us only the material of courses, only skills. Institutional religion tries to teach us how to be, but cannot make us be.

The best way to learn to be is not to feel that we already are. We need to take what life offers, be open to experience, and let it teach us. Being open to experience does not happen just because we want it to happen. Understanding this is a good start. Knowing the inside facilitates learning the outside. When both are finely tuned, in balance, and working right, life is experienced naturally.

Beology is the only course that we take where the text is written as we proceed. The most important human quests, from love to work, are based on a chain of the simplest, but noblest, human endeavours and attributes. Knowing oneself and being open to change keeps us in constant being.

Figure 29-6 speaks to the human quest for spiritual solace, communion with a god-like experience, and dialogue with eternal mystery. We believe what tradition has taught us, but also come to believe what our inquisitive and caring minds teach us. Monotheistic religions describe an omnipresent single god, while polytheistic religions describe a pluralism of gods, ones that are present everywhere in nature. Despite the very different spiritual beliefs and practices of these religious points of view, there is not much difference in the experience of god for their followers. Private prayer and the public act of attending services use rituals to facilitate spirituality, but rituals cannot create it. **Spirituality lies within each of us so that we may rise to its level.**

Spirituality stems from inside depths casting outward. Our spiritual path and growth are intimately personal matters. Thus, even without any religious training or knowledge of any religious tradition, we can all engage in spiritual prayer, receiving its inspirational motivation and serene soothing.

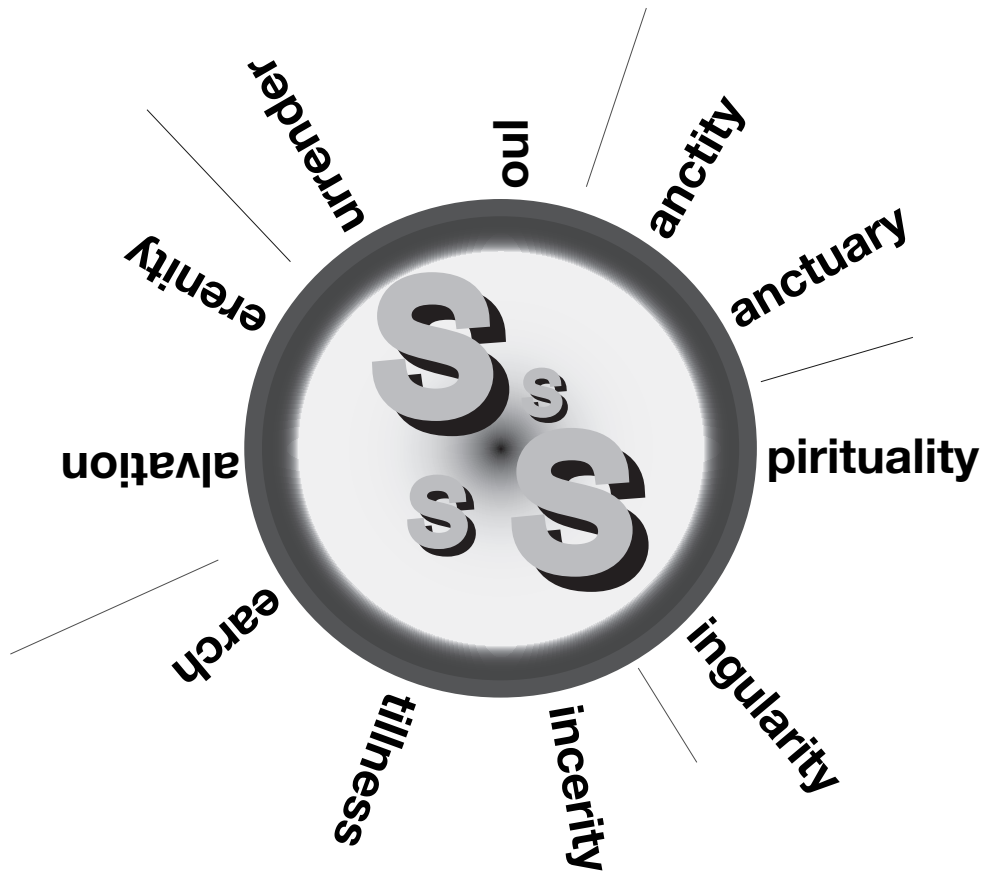
.....
*Religion builds on
spirituality—spirituality
can build without religion.*
.....

.....
Worship—not warship.
.....

Figure 29-6

Faith gives inner peace even when there is outer war.

Believing is Seeing



Spirituality lives good sayings.

*The highest heights
build from the lowest lows.*

*We create all things good and
some that are beautiful.*

*Holy books that tell us
to hurt are wholly wrong.*

*Humans live in a
universe that vibrates
with their energies.*

*It is good that we were created in
the universe and that we can help
create good in the universe.*

*Getting over it means
getting into it.*

*Translate everything that you do
into the language of morality.*

*Practicing what we have
learned to help ourselves
is the best practice.*

*Being cannot be turned on just like
that—or turned off once it starts.*

.....
Wisdom is to widen.
.....

Figure 29-7. In the following figure, I offer ten positive ways of leading enriched lives, using a play on words based on the Ten Commandments. Hopefully, we lead our lives from perspectives such as these.

Figure 29-7

The Ten Commandments tell us mostly what not to do. These ten commandments tell us mostly what to be.

The Ten Commandments

1. We shall be sensitive, empathic, communicative, and supportive. We shall feel, sing, celebrate, pray, mourn, and share. We shall love. We shall change and grow.
2. We shall nourish and nurture, cushion and cradle, buttress and buffer, and strengthen and steel.
3. We shall help, give, and sacrifice. We shall accept the same in order to receive the same. We shall find inner peace in making peace.
4. We shall collect heart and mind together, foster caring, cultivate wisdom, sow enthusiasm, generate creativity, cherish simplicity, engender emergence, and facilitate growth in others.
5. We shall see over horizons, reach around barriers, hope beyond the future, and surpass the constraints of time, place, and person. We shall bring optimism and effort into everything that we do.
6. We shall accept the past as a lesson learned, live the present as moral learning, and move into the future in spiritual learning.
7. We shall be honest, fashion liberty, promote dignity, act equally, practice fairness, show respect, engage in fraternity, defend morality, protect security, bring vigil to and educate against hate, pursue justice, and live harmony. We shall tolerate multiplicity in peoples and in truths.
8. We shall be kind to ourselves and others, forgive ourselves and others, and trust ourselves and others.
9. We shall be responsible for all who need responsibility, for all who depend, for all without well being, for all who suffer, for all who are in pain, for all who have no anchor, for all who want hope, for all who feel hopeless, and for all things animate and inanimate. We shall do this over and over, again and again, resting to regain strength in order to restart, in repeated acts of responsibility. This is our re-responsibility to ourselves, to others, to community, and to the planet.
10. We shall commend others who live this lifestyle, and help others to live it. We shall be the best that we can be, help others be the same, and participate fully in life, for reasons beyond our immediate needs, and for reasons that stretch into the universe.

Figure 29-8. examines the whole, the wider field. Shape and song spring organically from the cohering of disparate rhythms and forms. Perhaps they join in one supreme whole form from which all others spring, from which all art and music cascade, from which all rhythms and forms emanate, from which all individuals and universes emerge. We are made of many parts, of many tunes and, if we analyze each one too critically, we forget the fine music that the notes

.....
*Parts that misfit might
make wholes that fit.*
.....

.....
*Fanatical thought deserves
fanatical criticism.*
.....

Figure 29-8

Look carefully at each of the component shapes by themselves. Now look at the organic whole that they form.

Formings



play together. When we cultivate wholeness, we harvest rhythms.

But rhythms fall into disharmonious modes as we lead our lives on a day-to-day basis. We struggle to cultivate inner harmony and outer harmony. We struggle to cultivate them so that we can connect.

Giving is the axis of connection of inner harmony and outer harmony. We can never know whether they remain 100% connected, but we can always know whether we are giving. By cultivating harmonies, we reduce dissonance. By facilitating giving, we discourage disharmony. Moreover, **giving has its own rewards, and entrains in us the best of our rhythms, for it helps us attune to life.**

Figure 29-9 expresses basic ideas about children, parenting, and the cycles of life. The ultimate spirituality lies in mutuality. Children are resilient when they are surrounded with support. They grow strong and sensitive, and giving and generative. Conversely, children are vulnerable without support. Children are born into our responsibility. The future has lent us its children to nurture. Children will always appreciate when given their future. The future will always appreciate when given back its children well-nurtured.

We need to be good observers of life, to see deeper essences. Systems have patterns across their parts that may be hard to discern. We need to look beyond the surface to hidden messages. For every truth, there is an opening to a wider truth. In this regard, in one way or another, every act is not only for us, but also for the future generation.

.....
*Openly guide for
the perplexed.*
.....

.....
*Growth transmitted is
self transformed.*
.....

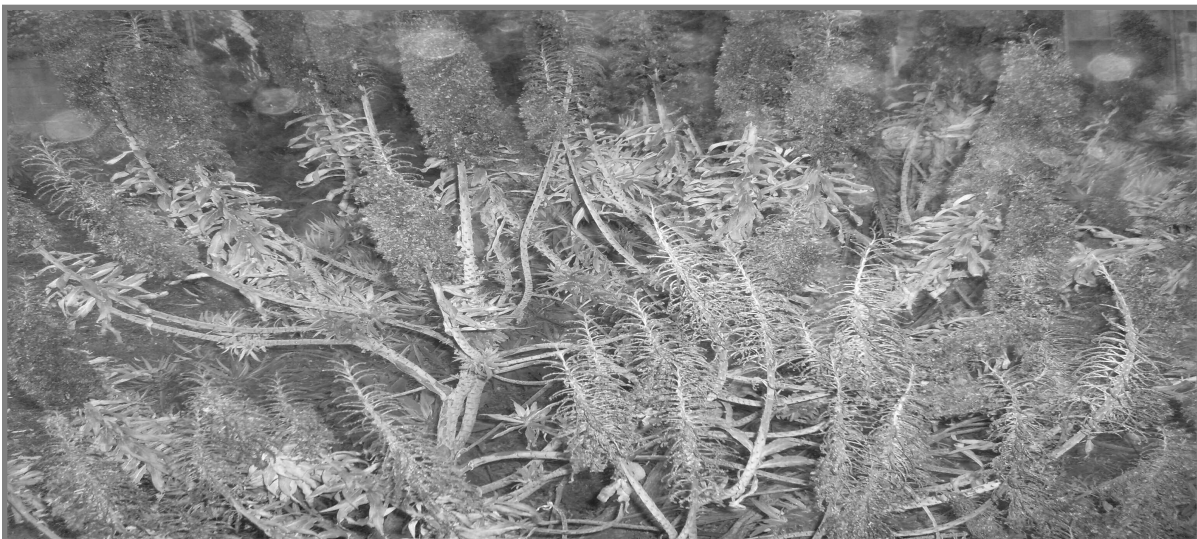


Figure 29-9

We are conceived through parental love acts and keep growing through acts of parental love.

Mutuality

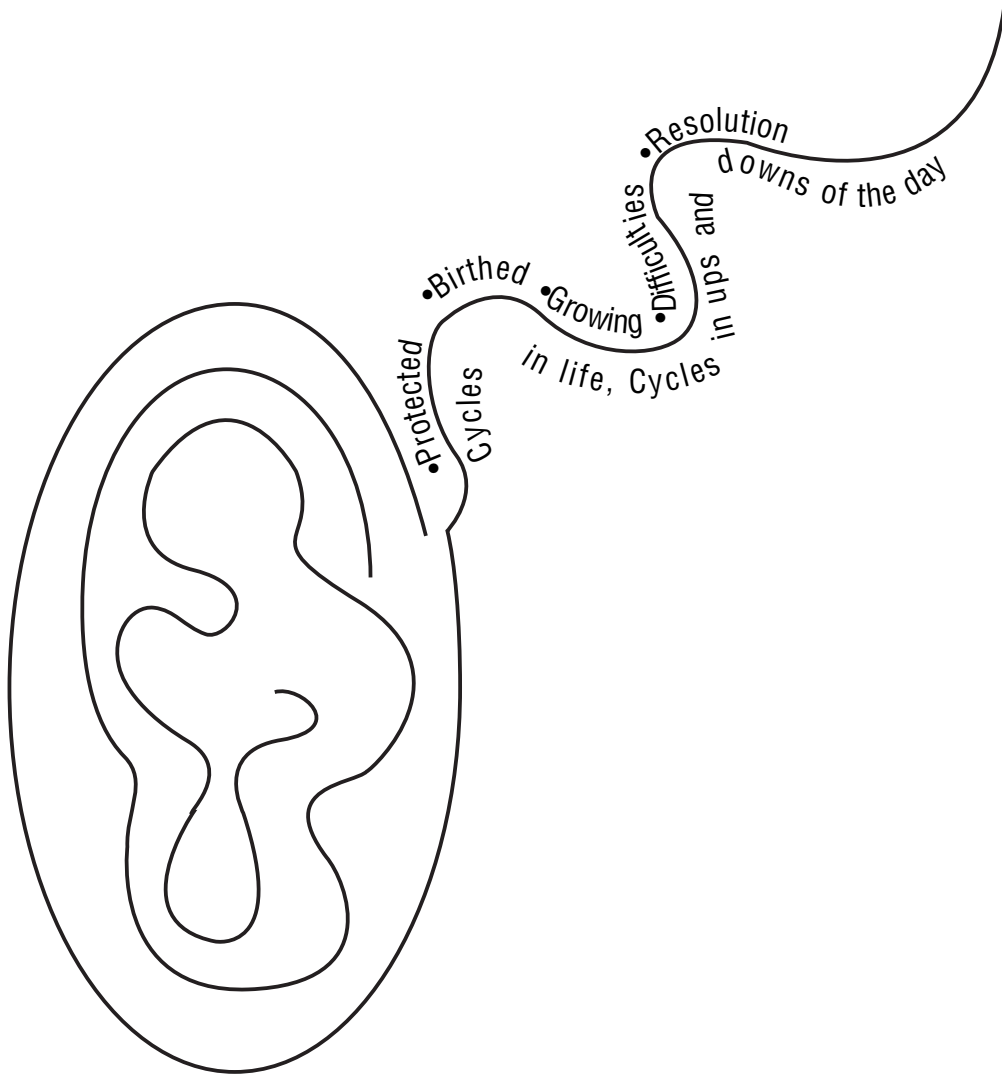


Figure 29-10 captures fundamental human values that seem to impregnate part of many basic philosophies, religions, and moral codes. It is based on Heidegger's concept of "Dasein," and indicates that the components of higher human conduct include *a)* being, or absolute presence, *b)* becoming, or continual growth, and *c)* world, or universal concern and giving.

.....
*One is the biggest number
in the universe.*
.....

.....
*If we take everything that
we have learned to feel, we
will start a feeling to learn.*
.....

*Each holy book is
an invitation to
write a better one.*

As infants, we start off needy, incapable of giving, except indirectly through the joy that our smiles and play bring to others. We develop as preschoolers to be able to understand the emotions of others and begin to act to help them. As school-age children, we become better at taking the perspective of another and engaging in altruistic acts, helping even if we have to give up something. As teenagers, we become conscious of the extent of individual suffering and the plight of whole peoples and even the planet. Perhaps we act in idealistic ways to help out or to protest. As adults, we take our family under our wings and, when we can, we also give time to the community.

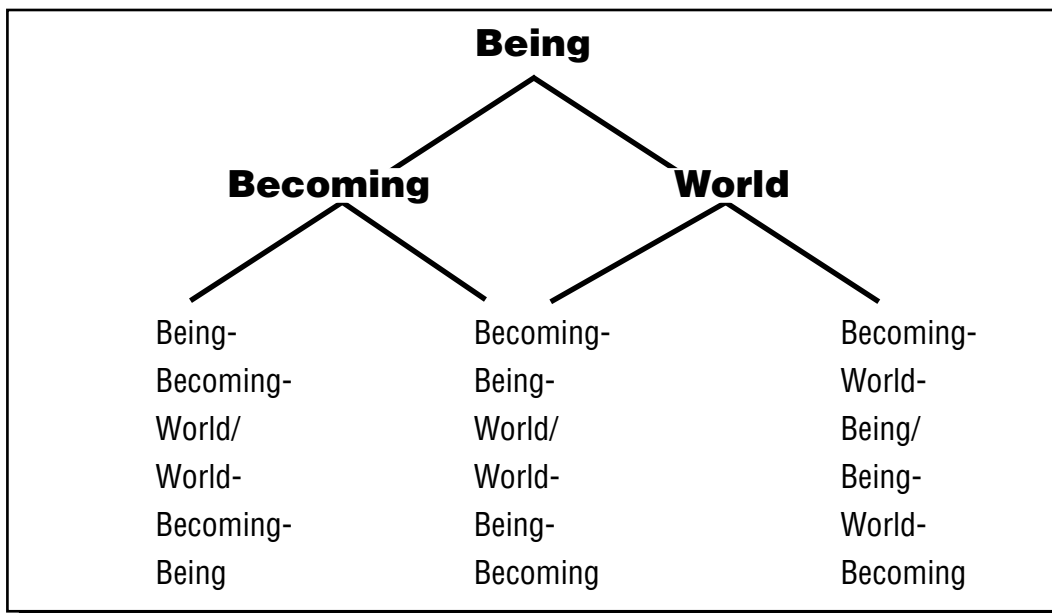
*Having faith in fate
means actively helping
oneself and others.*

Erik Erikson referred to this giving tendency of adults as “generativity.” As we mature, the scope of our helping behavior deepens if we have the psychological space and time. Our sense of spirituality and our concern for universal values take on a more profound, more personal dimension. Throughout the life course, our sense of responsibility and helping expands. **As we grow, we become more “being,” more “becoming,” and more “world.”** If we have less time

Figure 29-10

Philosophers query the meaning of life. They try to capture it in profound concepts and elegant sentences. We query the meaning of life, as well. The words that come to mind for me are “being,” “becoming,” and “world.” By being present in all aspects of the world, we constantly grow and become better, both for ourselves and for the world.

Being Becoming World



for giving because of our responsibilities to work or other obligations, as long as we are on the appropriate developmental path, we are never any less being, any less becoming, or any less world. Values, morality, spirituality, responsibility, altruism, and helping know no time frame. They are the noblest of human behaviors and, when their time is right, they will blossom in us like the flowers of spring, lively and beautifully, bursting with passion.

.....
*When all seems confused,
spirituality should be
connected.*
.....

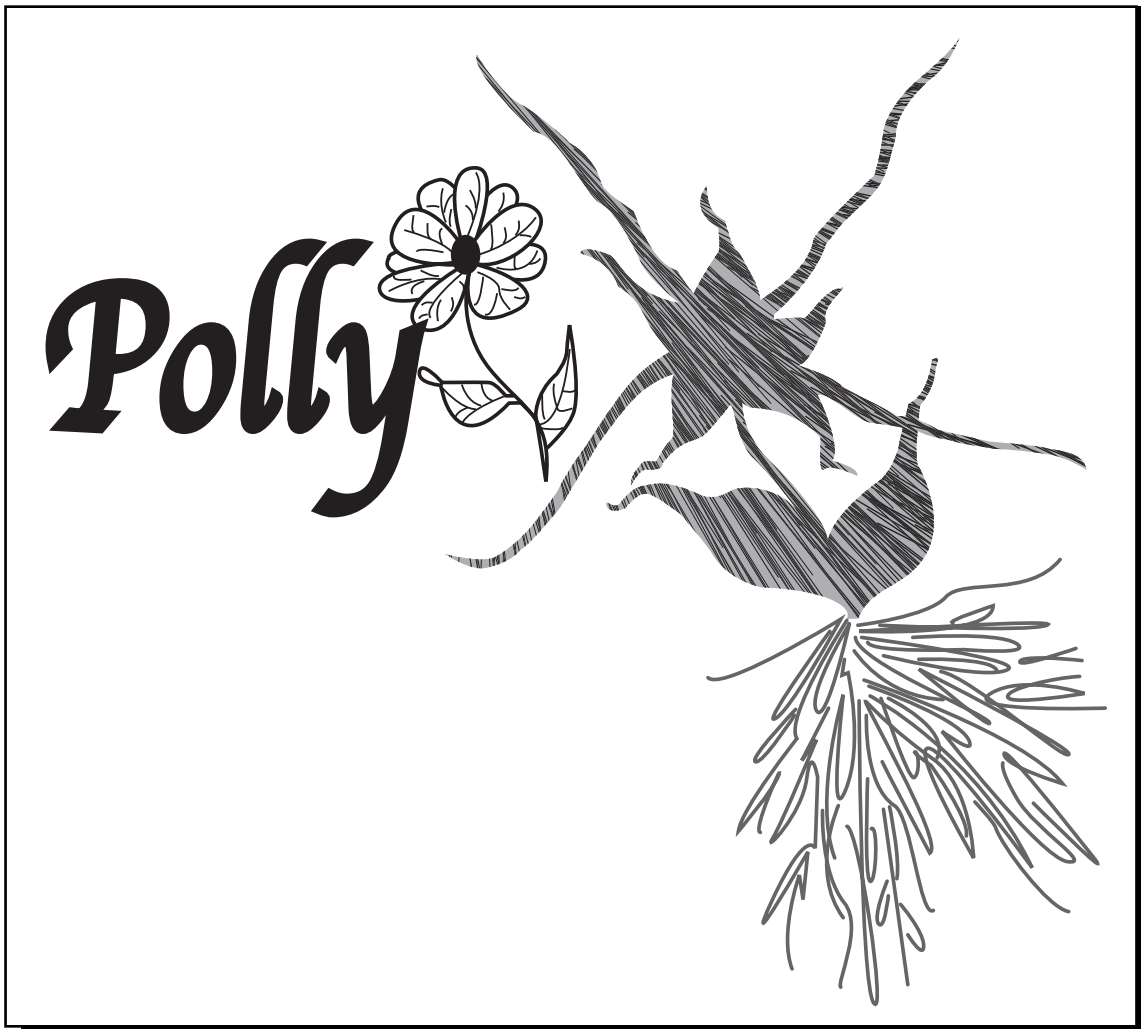
.....
*Giving to life endlessly
gives endless life.*
.....

Figure 29-11 was drawn by a family member after the unexpected death of his best friend. It was drawn absent-

Figure 29-11

We loved Polly K. Inspiration has us look beyond things to the meaning in things.

Re-Essence



.....
Dogmatism is Cataclysm.
.....

mindedly as a doodle as he spoke about his friend to another friend. It captures the basic elements of his ongoing emotional reaction to his friend's fate. The cross through the flower on the top right indicates his emotional rupture at the death and the chaotic lines in the bottom flower represent his turmoil as the months progressed. But the image that stands out for me is how he represented his friend as a tender flower, in full bloom, facing the sun.

Children and adolescents are the future. When they are deprived of life, the future suffers. We need to help children survive into their future but, more importantly, we need to kindle a sense of future in children. **The future will stop sending us children when we relinquish our responsibility to them**, not giving enough warmth and affection, buffering and moulding, guidance and scaffolding, and sustaining and supporting.

.....
*Wellness is next to
Goodliness.*
.....

Polly, an adolescent, understood this, and wrote the following, which is inscribed on her tombstone and which my teenage family member read at the unveiling:

"Please take care of all those who are good. All the lovers and children. The friends and our families. The poor and the rich. The happy and the sad. Take care of all but those who bring pain and sorrow into the lives of all those who are good. Love the good unconditionally, and that is how you will be loved. Bring joy into the lives of those who lack it. Bring wisdom to those whose eyes need to be opened. Bring love to those who need to be loved: All. For your imperfections are forgiven and all that we have is thanks to you. Protect and love everyone regardless of religion. There is only one true supreme being for us all. For we are all brothers and sisters. End hate, end bad, end wars, end conflicts; while we try to end all things that are bad we forget to enjoy all things that are good. Help us to enjoy life. That is all one needs to be happy:"

.....
*The brain gives us sight.
It also gives us vision.*
.....

I love, I hope, I pray
Polly K.
August 1998

In **Figure 29-12**, I explore the power that feelings of rejection have when they hold sway over us, and ways that we can subjugate and transform the feelings from ones of dispute to ones of shared communication and problem solving. When we too actively believe that we have all the answers, we are prone to feel upset when others disagree with us, or when we come across evidence that goes against our beliefs. We get angry and put our backs up against the wall but, in the end, all that this gives us is a good backache.

When we believe only in our way, soon, we find out that our belief is untenable and that others will hold different opinions, either ignoring us or getting angry in their turn. If

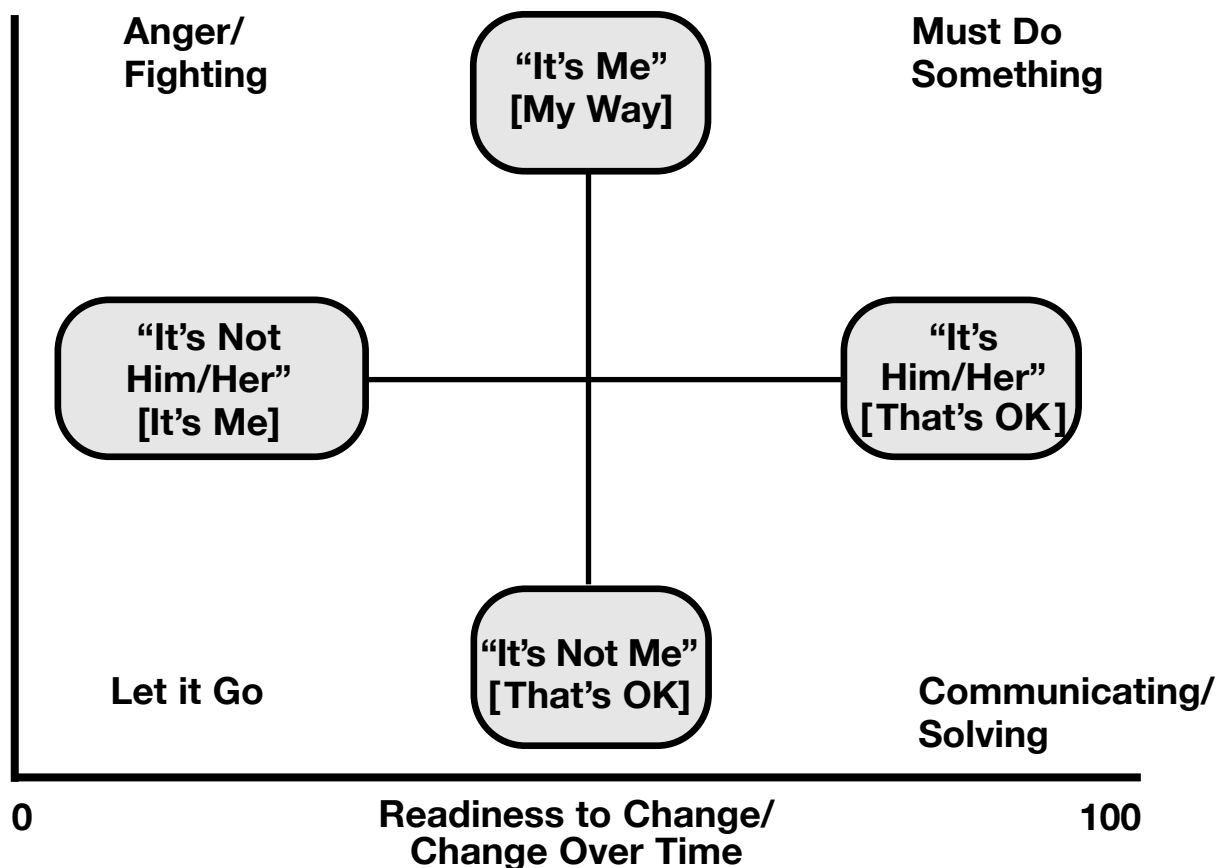
Rejecting others' ways eventually leads to either rejecting the self or to rejection by others.

Innate in us is knowing that there is more than us.

Figure 29-12

The figure is built on two major dimensions that are related to the feeling that it is “my way” or “it is me.” The dimension gives four combinations—it is me or not, it is the other or not. The figure also shows what happened at the intersection of the dimensions in communication, *a*) from feeling rejection (anger/ fighting) to communicating well and solving the problem, and *b*) from feeling that something must be done to letting it go. These types of communication deriving from the dimensions change with time, but they tend to associate in attitudes of either confrontation or genuine communication.

Ejecting Rejection



When we reflect on all things big and small, the reflection is never small.

Peace and love are the greatest ideals, and we are the greatest guides toward them.

He who brooks no criticism should stay alone.

they are fearful of us, they may agree with us without believing what they say, creating the seeds for future turmoil. In contrast, if we adopt a more constructive attitude, we become more accepting of other ideas, we communicate better, and this increases the chances that the problem will be solved. **Good communication may not always produce good solutions to problems, but bad communication will always produce bad solutions, if any.** The good news is that we can improve our approach with time, effort, and help from others, such as our partners in communication. By rejecting rejection from our potential behavioral response to others, we are more likely to get continued behavioral response from them.

Figure 29-13 shows that the greatest challenges that we face, of living in peace rather than war and in love rather than hate, are constant struggles with which we have to deal. They dominate the rest of our concerns, like immense clouds and storms on the horizon to which we do not pay attention as we scurry around in our daily lives.

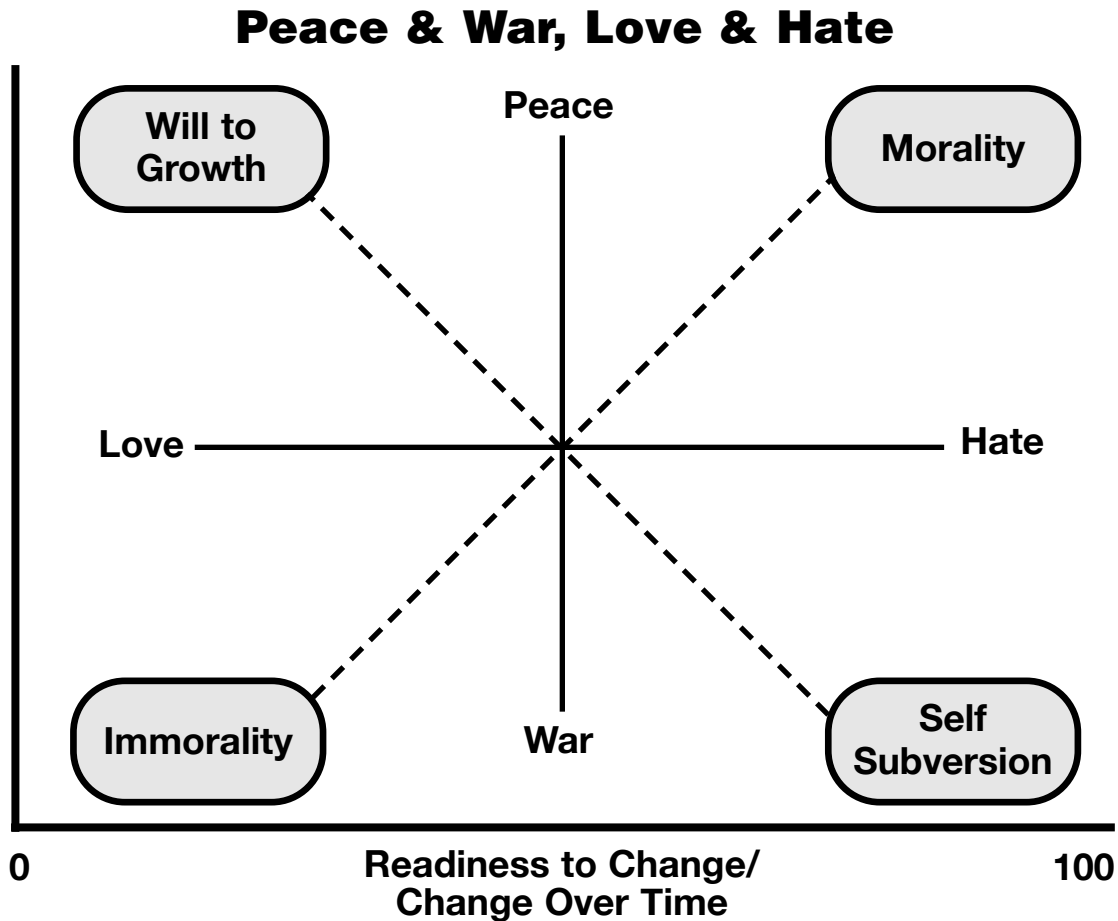
Often, we live our routines at home, at work, and in the wider community, without seeing the larger picture, both in terms of the endless suffering in which many people live outside of our immediate lives and the ups and downs in our relationships in our immediate lives. Part of the problem is that we do not have the personal resources to cope with these issues when they go awry. When we hear of war, it is in distant lands, or when our relationships go sour, especially at home, we are overwhelmed. However, another reason that we cannot react appropriately to major issues either in the world around us or in our personal lives is that we may be still at a point in our own growth that is not free of our stresses or issues from the past. Perhaps we cannot free ourselves from self-limiting tendencies in our psychological growth.

Perhaps the comfort level with our daily lives is too entrenched and we become too self-focussed or, perhaps, we have suffered too much ourselves, and we exclude in our mental world the suffering of others, lack sufficient empathy, and so on. We may be either too stuck in ongoing ways or too insensitive to perceive the problems of others because of our past stresses.

The issues of peace and war, and love and hate, are intimately connected. We all have a duty to ourselves and to

Figure 29-13

In this figure, the action tendencies of peace and war are juxtaposed to the feelings of love and hate. In addition, the figure includes the dimensions of morality/immorality and will to grow vs. self-subversion of growth. On the positive side, the dimensions cluster into an ideal of living peace and love, but on the negative side the cluster concerns the darkness of war, hate, immorality, and self-subversion. The great human struggles that we live oscillate between the two clusters, and can move increasingly toward the positive side, both within any one individual and within any one culture or country.



others to keep these issues constantly central in our lives or, at least to keep growing toward including them in our lives by working on what prevents us from keeping them in focus, within the limits of our daily obligations. **By becoming individuals who genuinely distress in order to rejoin joy, we move toward integrating the issues of peace and war, and that of love and hate, into our daily lives. Also, by reaching into ourselves in order to find and respect these issues as important ones, we make it that much easier to**

.....
*We are created in the image
that we create for ourselves.*
.....

.....
*Responsibilities are
nativities.*
.....

.....
*When we freely give,
we greatly get.*
.....

.....
*Freedom comes from
choosing to help others while
having an inner peace.*
.....

destress and rejoin joy. In moving in the right direction at these most important levels, of keeping war and peace and love end hate in mind, all parts of us grow. This may lead us to help find solutions on these crucial issues, both in terms of our understanding and in our actions.

Figure 29-14. This is a poem about the responsibility that we have to ourselves, the other, and the world. It is framed in terms of spirituality and God, but the message

Figure 29-14

Poems are pathways to new ways. This one is about our spirituality and our capacity of being great and good. Life offers choices at each moment. Each moment offers the choice of living life in a way that is great and good. Choosing wisely keeps us being great and good.

Spirituality is in Each of Us

God is at our mercy
He cannot intervene in our affairs
He suffers when we hurt others
His suffering is endless
His hope is high
We are God's saviours
We can mortally hurt God
 or we can give him mercy
 by being great and good

Each of us should answer the call
Each of us will have a time for Him
Each second beckons
But we do not respond often or at all
The goodness that we have
 gets buried by timelines and needs
But all of us could be there
Others are the way
We need to find the way

Your peace is my peace
Our peace is his peace
We are his peace
We are his suffering
We can choose together
 to uplift our spirit
 to uplift each other
 to uplift Him/Her

applies to what we need to experience in order to feel inner peace, destressing, and rejoining joy. By dint of our free will, we all can be great and good, decent and fair, empathic and helpful, kind and respectful, honest and moral, and free of the worst injustices, in our behavior, thought, and feeling. They will always be there, bad habits and human frailties, but we can always control them, understand them, and reduce them. They are our messages to ourselves that we have to be constantly vigilant to our bad sides and constantly act to build our good sides. It is easy to give in to the bad sides but, in doing so, we give up our humanity. Each time that we do, part of the very best in our human potential is lost. Each time that we do not, part of the worst in our human potential is put aside and our best sides are built, both to serve us and others. In any spiritual account of the meaning of life, some type of message such as this one is given. Unfortunately, in some personal or group accounts, we do not find this pure message, or some proponents do not promote it or they even act against it.

Each of us has to make sure that our spirituality serves the good sides. We also have to make sure that anything that serves the bad sides is resisted and that the other is educated about their deficiencies and even their dangers. This message may be difficult for some of us to grasp. It places great responsibility on each of us to choose wisely in the chaos of life when it is just a struggle to get through each day. However, for each of us, the moment will come where we can choose wisely and choose to free ourselves equally for ourselves and for others. **When life demands more of us, we should demand more of ourselves—reducing the suffering of others reduces our own suffering.**

.....
*When our horizon
 meets the heavens,
 the universes rejoice.*

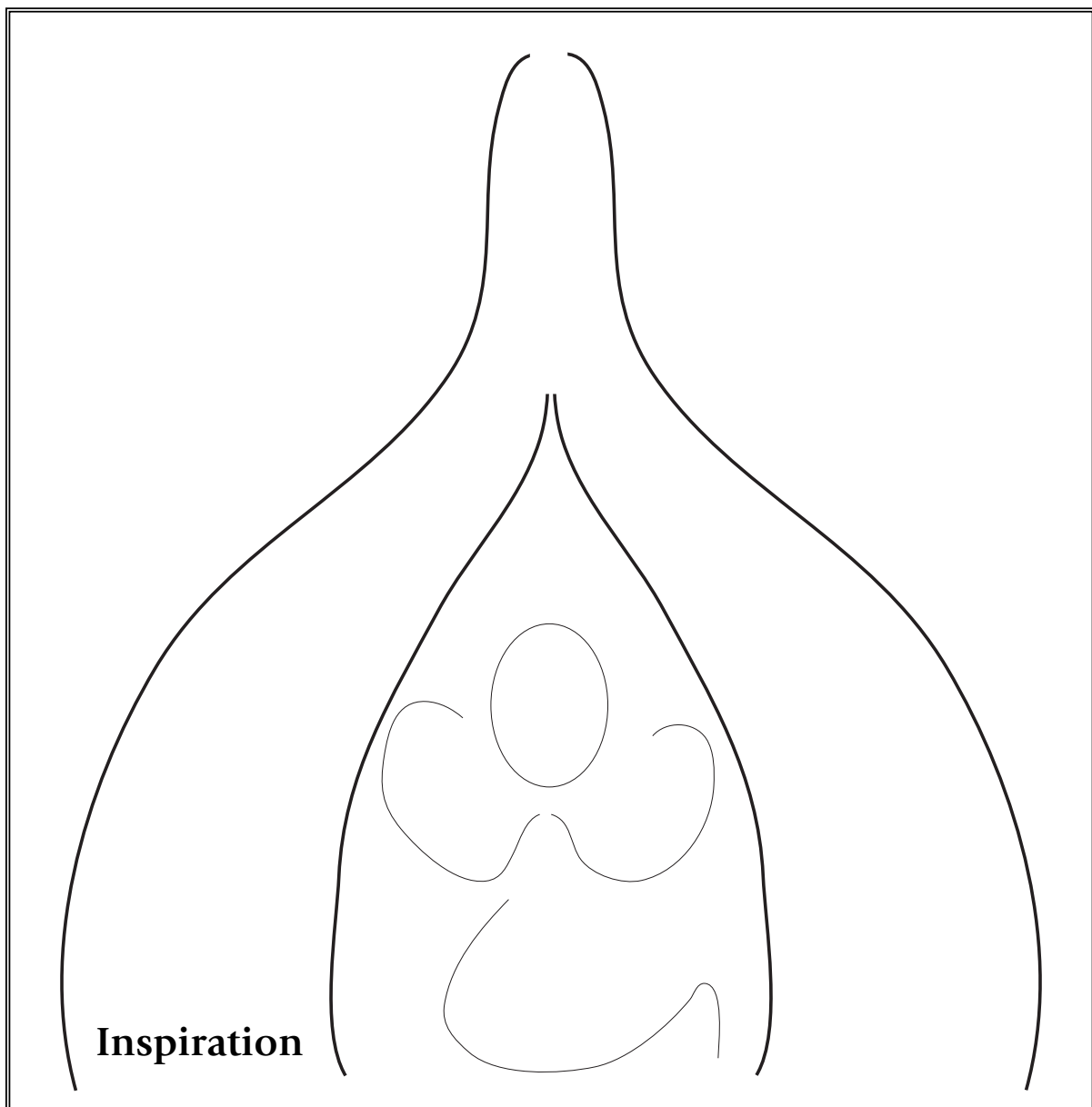
.....
*Meaning is not in the
 thought but in the being.*

..... <i>Seeing the truth means acting on it. Acting on the truth means seeing.</i> <i>Power comes from persuasion and leaves in force.</i> <i>Standing up for one's rights is enabling. Standing up for someone else's is ennobling.</i>
..... <i>When we feel lost in the world, we need to practice our teachings—what we learned to help ourselves grow.</i> <i>When one's purpose is more than one, one's potential is infinite.</i> <i>Essence is endless sense.</i>

.....
*Be uncommonly good—pray
for the common good.*
.....

.....
*Cause a chain reaction—
tighten a bond.*
.....

Chapter 29 deals with the grander themes of life. Without the grander themes of life, life becomes mechanical. With them, life becomes meaningful. The chapter deals with the deepest inspirations and the most tragic losses. Both can take away our capacity to speak. We need to live the messages of our inspirations in order to be able to live through our losses. By offering comfort to others in their deepest moments of need, we emerge stronger within ourselves and they emerge stronger in themselves and later can be stronger for others in need. **Acts of kindness eventually inspire kind acts.** Polly knew that.



Thura was changing rapidly, but not all for the better. She had been a wild child, always trying new things, but now she became more inward to the point of losing her motivation. She had wanted to study more, but could not bring herself to lift a book. She was resisting phoning her old set of friends, but had not taken the steps to meet new ones.

Her parents were not happy with her depression, but began worrying once she did not register for courses, like she had promised. They were concerned about her increasing isolation. Thura was touched by their support, and remembered all the good advice that they had given her, and that they had stood by her throughout all her difficult years.

Slowly, she begins to come out of her stupour, and begins to read books like the present one. She registers for a college course, and applies for a day job that would give her free time to study.

Spirituality is quiet fire.

*Spirituality is a tree living
in our roots.*

*Stress gets jealous when
we get zealous.*

*When the body is caught
between a rock and hard place,
the mind is not.*

*Put on a show for stress—
have it watch your fortitude.*

*Handling stress is like
grasping reality.*



**Wandering without
Wondering is Withering.**

Each life can become an epic journey.

Spirituality is solid sky to walk on.

*To clear the mind,
turn on the heart.*

Earth—we are all on it together.

*A high-minded spirit starts
with a high spiritual mind.*

*You can fool some of the people
some of the time, but you can
never fool yourself anytime.*

*Because you have looked out for
me, I will see you through.*

*Get a special take on things—
give from the heart.*

*Goodness comes from being
well bred—not from being
part of a breed.*

*To help someone in distress—
be great on their nerves.*

*Stars are smiles at your
possibilities.*

*The psalms are the great healers
They give solace and hope,
peace and rest*

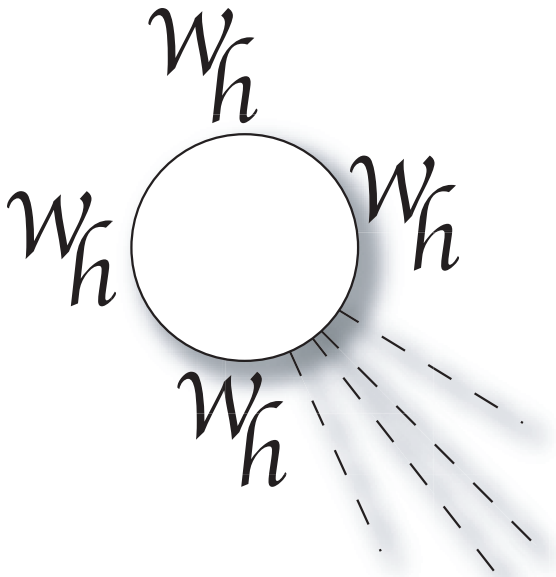
*Each of us can read them
Each of us can learn
Each of us can write new
psalms in our own way*

*Peace is our potential
Its lack our burden
Its search our way*



Chapter 30

Working Your Behavior



*'WH' is for
"Why, What, When, Which,
Who, and 'How' did the
'How' get in there."*





In this chapter, I provide exercises for the reader to use in order to help practice the basics in stress management and recovery. The book series on rejoining joy, includes a whole workbook of exercises to use for the three critical practice books in the book series (Volumes II to IV, or 30 chapters). For this chapter, I excerpted 11 exercises to help you get on your way.

Resilience to Stress and Recovery from stress takes work to do well and this chapter has provided exercises to help you on your way. It caps a long journey through 30 chapters over books II to IV in the present book series on rejoining joy. Stress and trauma are part of what happens to each of us in life, but so can be resilience and recovery. We can even grow from stress and trauma. This book series is dedicated to helping you be resilient to stress and trauma, recover from them, and even grow after them.

*Breathers Win: B breathe R relax
E energize A attend T think H
hear the other E evaluate R
respond S sensitively W wisely
I inspirationally and N nicely.*

*Give your negative thoughts a
charge. Tell them you are in charge.*

*Being reactive is radioactive.
Being yourself and actively
thinking about what is best
keeps the reactive inactive.*

*Before blurting out anything,
Say: That is to note; let me think
about it. It could be that ...
Maybe, but did you think of
this ... I hear you; but here is
something to consider. True, but
perhaps you forgot that ... We are
disagreeing but that does not mean
I'm not listening. Let's take a
break and return to that later.
It is best that we see what each of
us is saying and find a better way.*

Wise means asking Why's.

*I'd rather live in the certainties of
my quest to reduce my ignorance
than living a futile quest to
establish certainties.*

Your Good Habits

Part of the way that we improve ourselves is by developing new and better habits or good habits. For example, we may start exercising physically, reading more, or eating healthier foods. Or, we may vow to speak more calmly to our families, our friends, or our co-workers.

In this exercise, you will outline the best of your good habits and indicate how you can make them move integrated in your inner positive psychological core.

List up to five major good habits that you have expressed even if just a bit and only for a while.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

List up to five good habits that you would like to develop, moving them into your inner positive psychological core.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Know Destressing

All of us have various coping skills and destressing techniques. Some of us are better at using coping skills and destressing techniques, and some of the coping mechanisms and destressing techniques that we use are better than others. We try to implement good solutions for our stresses, difficulties, and problems, but others are less successful.

In this exercise, you will evaluate what coping skills and destressing techniques work well for you and which others need improvement.

List up to five major ways that you have tried to deal with your stresses, difficulties, and problems that have worked best for you to some extent.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

List up to five major ways that you have tried to deal with your stresses, difficulties, and problems that have not worked as well as you had wanted.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Controlling Ongoing Stress

Stress can be controlled. We may not be able to eliminate the stressor, but either we can try to manage the stressful situation, and even remove it, or we can try to control our negative reactions to it.

In this exercise, you will describe how you should deal with an ongoing stressful situation that cannot be entirely managed or removed.

List up to five major ways that you can learn to live with an ongoing stressor.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

List up to five ways that you can reduce the negative effects that an ongoing stressor has on you.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Breathing in Destressing

Breathing in a relaxed way helps reduce stress reactions. The first thing that I teach to my clients is the value of breathing exercises. They are simple, but effective techniques in dealing with stress. For example, one might try concentrating on breathing in regularly and breathing out regularly, and adopting a smooth transition from breathing in to breathing out.

In this exercise, you will consider ways that breathing correctly can help deal with stress.

List up to five ways that you could use to create a relaxed breathing rhythm when you are placed under stress. Remember, there is no one correct way to do breathing exercises.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

List up to five ways that breathing exercises can help you in dealing with your stresses.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Coping with Stress is Individual

Each person has her or his unique ways of dealing with or coping with stress. What works for one person might not work for the next in trying to deal with or cope with stress. There are hundreds of things that we can do to try to handle stress, but keeping positive in attitude, planning solutions, and proceeding to problem solving are very helpful. However, there are also things such as distraction that we can use when the stress cannot be stopped.

In this exercise, you will indicate the individual ways that you try to deal with or cope with a stress.

List up to five major ways that that you can use to stop stress by effective problem solving.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

List up to five major ways that you use to cope with stress that is ongoing and cannot stop.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Old vs. New Ways

When we create new flexible ways that are better for us in behaving, dealing with stress, and being with people, we gain advantages compared to what old inflexible ways had offered.

In this exercise, you will understand that by aiming to continually adapt and adjust, we become more capable in dealing with stress.

List up to five new ways that you have developed to handle stress better.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

List up to five old ways that you use less often or no longer use, thereby helping to handle stress better.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Thinking Through Stress

Stress is an invitation to use our brain to beat the strain. Often, stress elicits reflexive, ineffective actions instead of reflective thoughts that prepare effective, planned actions.

In this exercise, you will learn that by thinking through stress, it will be easier to be through with stress. Stress does not think, so we have to think for it.

List up to five disadvantages in not thinking before we act in dealing with stress.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

List up to five ways that you can think through stress.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Building Destressing

We cannot block stress in one fell swoop. Most of the time, we need to use a combination of approaches, techniques, and much effort. By taking one step at a time in a controlled manner, we can limit stress and its negative effects. In building our capacity to handle stress, we need to take a two-track approach. We need to learn what helps us resolve the stress, such as having good effort, and we need to learn how to handle the effects of the stress on us, through the use of good destressing techniques.

In this exercise, you will learn how to increase your destressing skills and effort in dealing with stress.

List up to five ways that you use to build up your destressing skills and increase you capacity to handle stress.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

List up to five ways that you can increase your effort in your attempts to deal with stress.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Self-Talk and Stress

Thinking positively does not mean being positive about everything, and overlooking negatives. Rather, it means that one has a good attitude how things will work out, no matter how stressful or negative is the situation, stress, difficulty, or problem. Whatever the circumstance, we can give ourselves constructive advice and instructions on how to proceed in solving any problems that are involved.

Also, thinking positively means talking positively about the self and others. We talk to ourselves all the time, but we can learn to do it positively and constructively, for example, by giving ourselves positive messages about the major characteristics of ourselves and about others.

In this exercise, you will learn that self-talk is not simply empty words.

List up to five statements that you can say to yourself to help you stay positive as you prepare to deal with stress.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

List up to five positive statements about your core psychological characteristics that you can tell about yourself in order that you stay positive.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Positive Actions in Stress

Planning to deal with stress requires inclusion of positive actions. Often, when we are under stress, we react quickly, but the actions are not positive. Rather, we panic or overreact in a negative way. Sometimes, the best thing that we can do when a stress arrives is to do nothing, at first, except for planning positive actions. This will make possible good application of the positive actions, which will help in dealing with the stress.

In this exercise, you will learn some techniques that can help you delay negative reactions to stress, giving you time to develop positive actions.

List up to five ways that you can control negative reactions once stress begins.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

List up to five positive actions that you can apply once stress begins.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Recovering in Stress

This workbook is about rejoining joy and destressing, which means that recovering is an important part of what it emphasizes. There are so many stresses that we experience in our lives and we have to learn how to recover from their negative effects. Moreover, many of us experience injury or illness that can be accompanied by tissue damage and pain. The recovery process is especially important in such cases. The capacity to recover well from pain, stress, negative emotions, or other negative psychological factors is critical in rejoining joy. The use of good destressing techniques is critical in assuring good recovery, whether from stress or from the pain of injury and illness [because pain induces stress]. However, rejoining joy, destressing, and recovering rarely go smoothly, as there are many ups and downs. We make some progress in our recovery, stop at a plateau for a while or even regress, then make more progress for a while, before the down starts again.

In this exercise, you will learn what you can do to keep the downs in recovery under at least some control and, then, have the ups in recovery proceed in a positive direction.

List up to five ways that you can use to handle the downs in recovering from stress, pain, or other negatives.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

List up to five ways that you can use to maintain the ups in recovering from stress, pain, or other negatives.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

This book covers many topics of daily life, such as communication and raising children. As you complete the reading of the book, you can begin to take notes of how it can help in your daily living.

NOTES
