

# The Journey

"The Journey" is a road map that is easily read and designed to get you around the detours of life and the bumps in your personal experience and relationships. Beginning the journey requires that you take a serious look at how you arrived at your present position – an examination of your days from conception onward. The understanding of these early connections will be your compass for the rest of your journey as you identify your own personal routes, obstacles, and destination. This journey will lead you down the road to personal understanding, fulfillment and relational success.

There are four segments to "The Journey" small group series consisting of 10 weeks each: Recommended for use with gender specific groups. Click on each picture below for more info or to order.



## The Passenger

Discovering your personal attachment styles and how they developed from your time in your mother's womb and forward. Gain an understanding of how your beginnings impact your life today.



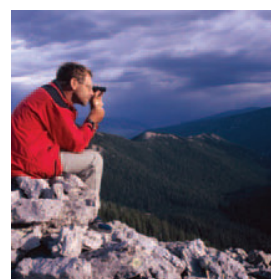
## The Mode

Understanding rejection and being released from its grip. All of us have experienced rejection in many different forms which drives today's behavior.



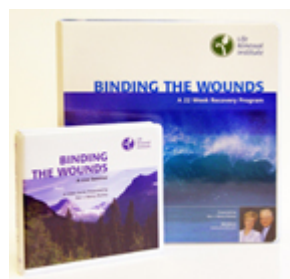
## The Route

Seeking to identify the various forms of abuse and their effect on our lives today. Abuses discussed include verbal, emotional, physical and sexual. Tools will be provided to allow you to recover from the negative emotions connected to the abuse you received.



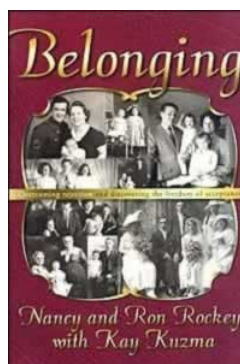
## The Destination

Experiencing complete recovery and the promise for a brighter future. You can know and relate to the power available to you for healing and for developing healthy relationships.



## Binding the Wounds

A 22 week course recommended for use with gender-specific small groups. A process is taught whereby one can recover from the wounds received in childhood which plague our thoughts, feelings and behaviors and sabotage our relationships and success.



## Belonging

In their lifelong search for truth and emotional healing, Drs. Ron and Nancy Rockey confronted their greatest fears from the past and discovered the courage to break free of the chaos and suffering they had endured. In this book, they share their amazingly effective techniques for overcoming abuse and rejection.



# Self-Defeat

# Victory

Denial

Dis-owning

Minimizing

Prices

Techniques

Driven

*Fears*

*Knowledge*

*Conclusion*

Awareness

Owning

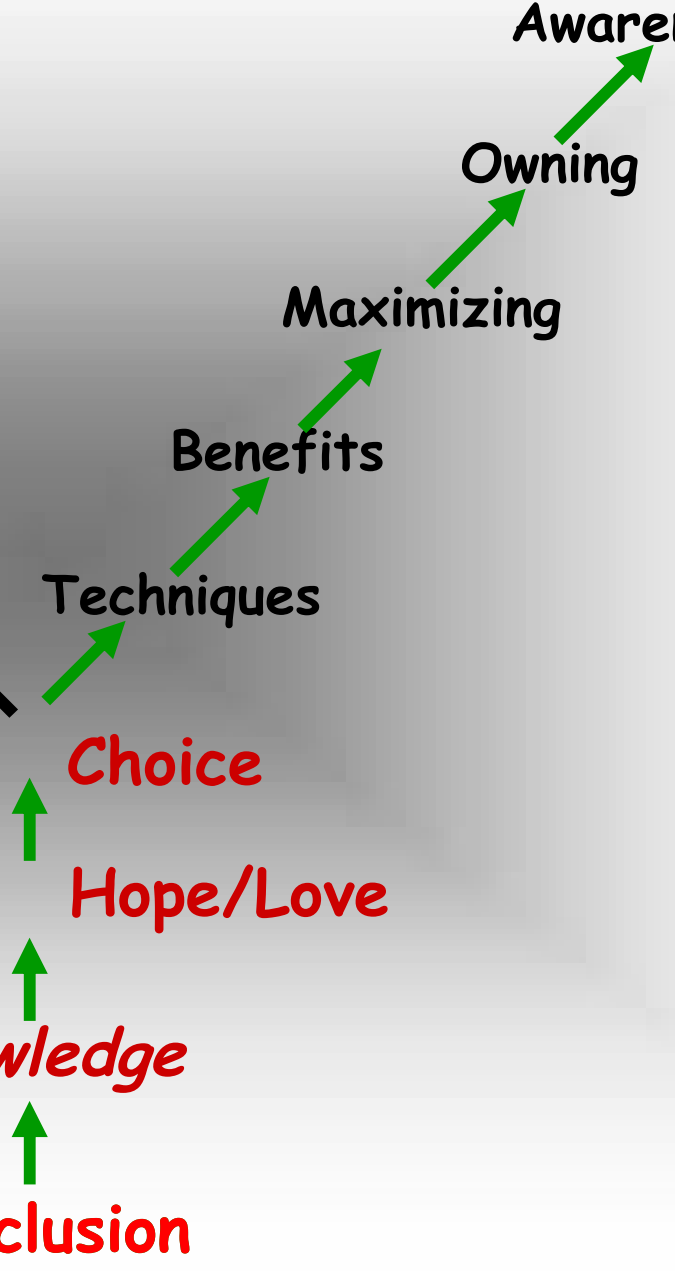
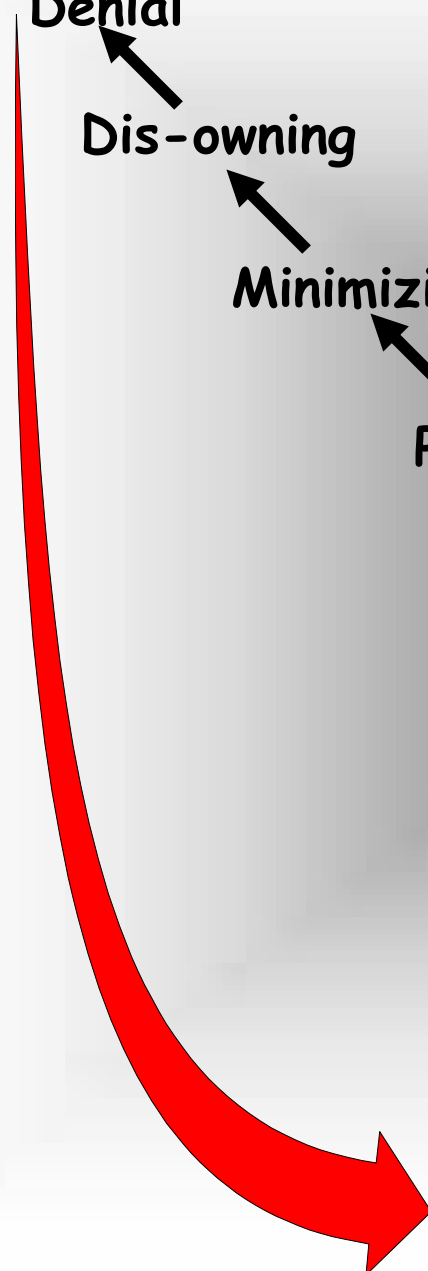
Maximizing

Benefits

Techniques

*Choice*

*Hope/Love*



Let's look at the Y Factor – the two roads that are available for us to take on this journey called life. It's one of those very valuable tools that The Journey offers. As we look at it again, we will ask you to look at it in relationship to how it may have impacted your spiritual nature.

We begin at the base; the bottom of the Y. There, in four boxes are listed the experiences of life that set up the conclusions that can direct us on a destructive course.

- **A difficult or life-threatening birth:** How might that very early experience have impacted your view of God? If there were hours or days of separation from Mother and Father, your tendency is to feel separated from God.
- **Abuses** that you received (rejection, emotional, physical or sexual), may have set you to wondering where God was when you had to tolerate your pain. If the abuses were perpetrated by those who stood in the place of God to you (your parents) before you could comprehend the concept of God then wanting to know God might be seen as repulsive to you.
- **Painful life experiences** such as the loss of a significant care-giver friend, or even a pet can have a negative impact on your concept of God. Many people have a tendency to explain to someone grieving that "God wanted them with Him" or that "God took him or her." That would give a message to a child that God was selfish and you had to pay the price for His selfishness. Other examples of painful life experiences might be a divorce in the family, a disability, a significant upheaval or a seemingly unanswered pray.
- Finally, **not having your needs met** could be a major factor in seeing God as cruel, vindictive, and not meeting your needs just to be mean to you. You would determine that in order to survive, you would have to handle things on your own, because for sure, God isn't going to because He doesn't care about you.

Remember, the most impacting experiences occurred in the character forming years which are from conception to the end of the seventh year of life. These events caused you to draw conclusions about your worth and value, and of course, the conclusion that you drew was not a positive one. You can see how these early negative conclusions about your worth and value would impact your character today as your character is the sum total of your thoughts and feelings.

When an individual feels that he is worth very little, he also assumes that no one will ever value or care for him. This is a frightening assumption! The child begins to fear that he must take charge, must control his environment, his circumstances and the people around him in order to carry on—to survive. He seems to have no choice but to rely on himself and take control. Remember, the brain is designed to see to it that the human survives at all costs! The only available option, as far as the child is concerned, is to begin to develop techniques that will insure that his existence continues. *Unfortunately, his developed techniques are based on improper knowledge and fear. These are the next stations on the Y-Factor (see graphic).*

Perhaps you learned that temper tantrums seemed to get you much desired attention, even if it's negative attention. Later in life, you continue to get what you want by dominating and controlling, by displays of anger or aggression to emphasize that your needs are all important and MUST be met. If that was your technique, chances are that your interactions with God are demands made upon Him, usually only in desperate circumstances.

Perhaps you learned that numbing agents such as drugs and alcohol or the comfort of food would allow you to bypass the pain of feeling worthless and the harbored memories of neglect, rejection, abuse or other painful experiences or losses. Addictions of all sorts are techniques that humans develop to survive and to temporarily alleviate the pain, but these will have negative side effects. So you may have become addicted to religion, to religious forms and repetitive practices which take the place of and act as numbing agents allowing you to bypass the pain from your negative conclusions about your worth, even if only during the time

you practice them. Some of us use music--the louder the music, the stronger the beat, the easier it is to drown out the screaming pain in the brain and heart – for a little while, at least.

It is so important to understand that all of the techniques that we have developed, even if they appear good or generous, are our attempts at getting what we did not have in childhood. If we felt ignored or invisible, we either continue to insure that we stay that way or will do whatever we feel is necessary to receive the attention we crave. We become workaholics, do-gooders, performers for acceptance, working our fingers to the bone, so to speak, to receive accolades, acceptance and attention. We feel that the attention is a requirement for our continued survival. Please be assured however, that most of our techniques are developed without conscious thought.

***Our feelings dictate our beliefs (the way we think), which then dictates our behaviors. Believe it or not, our emotions (feelings) are a stronger driver for our behavior than is our logic!***

Think for a few minutes about a technique that you have developed. Do you work incessantly? Do you avoid sharing your thoughts or feelings even with those closest to you? Do you use medications or other agents to mellow you out or ease the chatter in your mind? Do you bite your nails or perhaps play with your hair? Do you use anger or silence to distance yourself from others? Is your brain on fast-forward, planning and conniving how to get to where you have decided you want to go in order to feel complete? In terms of your spiritual nature, are your techniques designed to avoid or to enhance a spiritual experience?

Perhaps you, like many others, have distanced from anything religious, lumping spirituality with religion, and avoiding them at all costs. If the powerful adults in your life when you were growing up (who stood in the place of a Supreme Being) were anything but positive, loving or accepting, you learned to distrust even a Supreme Being. It's quite easy to transfer feelings about an angry, harsh, rejecting or emotionally absent parent to a God whom you cannot see!

Maybe you've questioned: "Who needs a God? What good does He do when you can't even see or touch Him? And look at all the turmoil and mayhem in the world. Where is God when all of this is happening? Where was He when the planes careened into the World Trade Center or when the flood waters destroyed New Orleans? Where is He when children are starving, raped, brutally treated or murdered?" See if you can identify a mindset you have developed about a Supreme Being and once you've named it endeavor to pinpoint its origin.

Journeying on The Road to Self-defeat, the wounded individual begins to pay the price (see Y-Factor graphic) for the techniques he has established -- the loss of relationships, career or income, sickness, financial difficulties etc. The list goes on and on. Yet the need to survive-- protect, control, avoid or deny, etc., is so strong, that regardless of the high prices we pay and the signposts along the way that should tell us to stop or at least slow down, we steadily increase the pace so that we can get what we assume will make us happy.

If your technique is avoiding spirituality or an addiction to things religious what price are you paying or in other words, what are you giving up to hold on to these techniques?

Because the need to survive is so strong, and the cost for the developed technique is so great you move to the next station on Y-Factor which is to minimize that cost. "It's not so bad that I lost my husband/wife! He/she was no good for me anyway. And the job I lost -- well, I was about to quit anyway, because the boss was a good-for-nothing! And a Supreme Being? It's easier to believe that there is no master plan, that we are all just accidents waiting for life to be over?"

Once you've successfully minimized the price for your technique, disowning your responsibility for personal actions is a natural succession on the Y. Do you blame others for the state of affairs in which you find yourself? "If I hadn't had such terrible parents . . . If I had a better husband/wife . . . then my life would be entirely different than it is now!" Could it be that rather than denying the existence of God, He is identified by you as an exacting and harsh creditor and a cruel, merciless judge or He doesn't care for me or my everyday life. Or maybe

religious fanaticism has become the escape to avoid looking at the pain in your life, expecting a God to wave a “magic wand” at your request to dispel all the troubles in your life and give you everything for which you ask. Is it the boss, the government, the economy or God that takes the blame for your actions?

The next station is where denial takes place. Denial is a state of affairs that, when lived in, causes one’s heart to shrivel--not literally, but denial is devastating to the psyche, body and spirit. Denying that you have an issue or two is a hopeless stance that prevents emotional healing. Denial is an anesthesia we use when the pain of visiting out personal truth is too great to handle. Denial taxes one’s physical health by compromising the immune system among other things. Your spirit is diminished when logic or survival has you deny God’s existence when a part of you still questions if there is a God. Denying what your mind, body and heart know is truth—is living a lie.

In an article entitled *Effects of Stress and Psychological Disorders on the Immune System* by [David B. Beaton](#) of the [Rochester Institute of Technology](#), are found these words:

“Inhibition of emotions could be another stress factor negatively affecting health. Bottling up negative emotions seems to tie up resources of the immune system.”

If you deny your issues, your pain, your addictions or your past, you simply live a lie, and in so doing you are resistant to the help that could transform your difficult existence into a pleasant and successful life. Resisting help due to denying a need for it is living a life of self-defeat. And that life becomes a merry-go-round of potholes, detours and breakdowns, becoming increasingly more frequent and devastating. If you deny the existence of God, you are simultaneously denying yourself the comfort, assurance and assistance that you could have from a Supreme Being. Since God would not force Himself upon you, but simply offer – stand at the door knocking – a closed posture keeps the opportunities for assistance, outside the door of your experience.

## **The Vicious Circle**

These stations on the road to self-defeat are the result of a life based on FEAR. – fear that “if you don’t use these methods you won’t get what you think you need or want. The truth is that staying on this road of self-defeat only keeps you going around and around in circles, because this road is a vicious circle that consumes the life. . More techniques to survive, simply leads you to paying greater prices, minimizing their effect and living in denial, and because of it, you need to find more techniques! This is where the Avoidant, the Ambivalent and the Disorganized in Attachment style live. The need to remain on this merry-go-round is fueled by rejection – the causative factor of so much personal and interpersonal dysfunction. Here you hold onto the abuses received as though they were trophies earned. They become the excuses you give for the destructive behaviors you manifest.

Do you recall that fear predicts its own end and also paralyzes us? We get stuck in our messy circumstances and can’t seem to find a way out of the maze of troubles, issues and destructive relationships.

Here on the road to self-defeat, you live from the head – disconnected from the heart. You are in your left brain – the functional side. There you live in the anxiety of trying, accomplishing and doing – attempting to live above the noise of your pain, or you are totally numbed out on the addictions you’ve established. Even the addictions are your endeavors, your doings – to eliminate the hurt you hold onto.

When you are in this place, the tendency is to become discouraged and that leads you into laziness, procrastination, withdrawal, depression and negative thinking. This is the selfish life, designed to take care of “me.” It is a life of lies, of unbelief in the goodness of anyone or of

a Higher Power. It becomes a progressive and devastating illness and due to a depressed immune system, disease results.

**This is the selfish – the carnal nature, “given to crude bodily pleasures and appetites,” according to Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary. It’s about satisfying whatever feels good to you at any time, regardless of the circumstances or outcome. In its extreme, it is narcissism . . . it is living for the fuel (positive or negative) that you receive from others. It is a constant looking for needs to be fulfilled, and often feeling that nothing is ever satisfying or enough. It is selfishness at its apex.**

### **Break the Cycle**

How can you get off of this defeating cycle of adding new techniques for survival, paying the price for them, minimizing the prices, blaming others, living in denial and disallowing divine assistance? There’s only one way!

1. You must return to the conclusions that you drew. The first is about your worth and value and the other about the existence and the involvement of God in individual lives – principally yours.
2. You must examine the reason(s) you drew those conclusions about yourself and about God.
3. You must allow for the change of the lie at your core (that we are worthless) to the truth of your infinite worth and value. That will impact your spiritual view.
4. You must give back the lie to those who gave it to you, and you do that in the form of letters you write that are not designed for sending, but for emptying your pain. Consider writing a letter to God, especially if you feel that He let you down. I (Nancy) did that and I literally screamed at

Him as well, and it really helped me! It was probably the very first time that I had really spoken my feelings out loud.

5. You must examine how the lie you have believed about your worth and value has negatively impacted your life, including your spiritual nature.

**With this process fear is transformed into Hope and Love. Knowledge (God said in Hosea 4:6 that His people die for lack of knowledge. You might read verses 1-6 and ask yourself what specific knowledge He is speaking about in this passage) becomes the power to choose the right path – The Road to Victory.**

Having done this work, you will develop new techniques--techniques that will have a positive effect upon you. Instead of tools designed for survival, you'll develop skills out of your new base of hope and love – out of service to others and enjoying what you have. Rather than using numbing agents to mask the pain, you will confront the pain, share it with a supportive friend or your recovery group, and use your history to benefit someone else in pain. You will find that there is comfort in knowing that what God promised in His word, the Bible, He will supply:

- Help in times of trouble. Think about it...when you're hurting, don't you often exclaim, "Oh, God"?
- All your *needs* provided.
- Someone to walk with you when times are dark.
- Refuge, comfort and strength.

**The Good in You (that's God Living Within) Can Win.**

Let's take a look at some of the new techniques (new skills, habits and emotional responses) that will replace the old dysfunctional ones.

- The use of anger to distance people from you is replaced by allowing others to gradually get close to you. You're beginning to understand that they are probably hurting in some manner too. Perhaps at first, the safest people are those who you learned to care about in your group traveling through *The Journey*. Call and chat on the phone, get together for lunch or tea.
- Being shy and fearful of others is replaced by taking the risk to speak, to be friendly. Again, choose people whom you know will reciprocate with friendliness and kindness, if it's more than a "Good Morning, how are you?" conversation you want. You take courage to speak to others first. Saying "Good-morning" to people on the street or those who work in your place of employment and eventually you have the courage to invite someone to socialize for a bit longer. You'll look for people with similar interests – perhaps people who are a more outgoing than yourself.
- Alcoholism or the use of alcohol to numb emotional pain is replaced by socializing with friends while drinking a ginger ale (and they might be different people than you socialized with previously)
- Drug addiction is replaced by a brisk walk in the fresh air or reaching out to a friend who came through *The Journey* with you and inviting them to walk with you and then stopping together to chat over a cup of tea or a hot chocolate or a sandwich.
- If you have hidden from your pain in work, you will no longer need to hide, because your pain is released. Remember, work can become a habit and a hiding place as much as alcoholism is. So you might have to begin by actually planning dates and times on your calendar for fun, fellowship and relaxation. You'll be surprised at how pleasant it is to vacation in a beautiful place – a tropical island or a snow-covered mountain. There and then you will take the opportunity to drink in the natural beauty and find rest for your

soul. You will learn to enjoy the moment – every moment! You will stop predicting doom and gloom in the future – it'll be whatever it will be. You'll enjoy the here and now.

- Maybe you have hidden from emotional pain in religion. When avoiding pain, it is easy to go overboard in any endeavor. Becoming fanatic and compulsive about religion does not serve you well. As you have already learned, spirituality is a whole different ball game. In it, you find peace, comfort, love and an abiding Presence that sustains and comforts you, whereas in frantic religious performances, you can easily become stressed. So instead of religious zeal, you'll practice spirituality, which encompasses relationships, sharing, communication with others and with your God, a sense of reassurance, peace, and enjoyment of the here and now. We're not saying that religion in and of itself is bad, but you could almost compare spirituality to a long soak in a lavender fragranced, ample tub with soft and inspiring music playing in the background and religious *performance* to a rushed, cold shower, with the threat of being late for work cranking in your mind, creating anxiety.

Are you getting the picture? Everything we have experienced, remembered cognitively or not, impacts our spiritual nature. There is no way to list all of the negative techniques we could have developed and how they should look when replaced with positive techniques. You are wise enough to look for the positive techniques that will replace the negative ones you've developed. Just remember that when you do anything to excess, no matter how good it may be, that positive behavior may become a negative technique – one that will zap your energy and cause you stress. Doing good twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, gives you no time to reflect, to rest, to recuperate and to enjoy your relationships.

Of course you will reap the benefits of the new techniques you've developed. You will have an expanding circle of friends of like mind who are also on the road to victory. Instead of easing

the pain through chemicals, you ease the pain by confronting it and sharing it with a supportive group and with God. Your financial situation should improve, because you will become more responsible—not needing that buying fix or instant gratification to fill an unfulfilled need. Your positive thinking style, your increased worth and value will facilitate greater physical health, boosting your immune system and your desire to take better care of yourself. Also, more positive techniques will help you succeed monetarily in your career or by making you more eligible for a promotion, open to new opportunities, etc. Instead of anxiously chasing some desired object or goal in order to be happy, you will find happiness along your way in whatever situation you find yourself. Even negative situations are opportunities to re-group asking yourself what positive lesson you can learn from what you're experiencing.

Once you have begun this healing process, and you're well on your way, once you are a few miles down the road to living victoriously, chances are excellent, that you will not turn back. Why would you? Of course, there will be a tug to retrace the old steps, relocate back to the road we have traveled more than this road, but the benefits you are deriving from the new way, usually outweigh the prices you have paid for the old road. Occasionally you will slip back to an old attitude or practice; those old habits die hard because deep pathways may have been created in your brain. But you will quickly make a u-turn back onto the road of victory. You are gaining knowledge, learning and making NEW pathways.

People will begin to notice wonderful changes in you, if they haven't already. They ask, "What have you been doing? You are so different – GOOD different!" Here's where you maximize the benefits of being on the right road! You'll share with others what has happened in your life, what specifically you have been doing to facilitate this change, and how you are learning lessons from each experience whether they are positive or negative. You share that you have gotten in touch with your spiritual nature because you have unloaded the baggage of the past, and are now finding comfort and assurance in your connection with God. You'll invite

others to participate in a group, and share with them what benefits they will derive from the experience. You will get a “charge” every time you are able to share what has happened in your life. You continue to let go of whatever blocks you from receiving joy all of the time, such as: the expectations of others, unprocessed injustices you have received, un-forgiven wounds, and selfish desires to have, to achieve, to acquire. You won’t find rejection around every corner or try to manufacture it.

Another thing that will benefit you is to serve others. One of the ways you can do so is to start facilitating or co-facilitating a recovery group – like *The Journey!* In the process of sharing again your history with members, and reviewing the materials, you have further ‘ah-ha’ experiences and discover deeper things about yourself. You’ll see that service is a big key to personal success! You’ll be proud to own your healing and recovery. You’ll be proud to share your continuous journey with others in the confidence that if they choose the recovery road, they too will benefit.

One fellow, having been through the recovery process, said that for the first time he noticed the fragrance of flowers and the beauty of the trees. He said, “Even food tastes better now!”

You can count on becoming aware of the pain of others around you as well as the beauty of your environment. People take on a new look to you. That teen, decked out in pierced rings and studs, dyed black hair and covered with tattoos looks different too. You’ll listen with expanded hearing to the words unsaid between the lines of anger or sadness. You’ll be discovering that the outward trappings are symptomatic of the pain he or she is carrying. Those whose behaviors have “bugged” you also receive your empathy instead of your condemnation. This awareness inspires you to offer help to others, and in so doing, not only will they benefit, but you will too.

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religious fanaticism has become the escape to avoid looking at the pain in your life, expecting a God to wave a “magic wand” at your request to dispel all the troubles in your life and give you everything for which you ask. Is it the boss, the government, the economy or God that takes the blame for your actions?

The next station is where denial takes place. Denial is a state of affairs that, when lived in, causes one’s heart to shrivel--not literally, but denial is devastating to the psyche, body and spirit. Denying that you have an issue or two is a hopeless stance that prevents emotional healing. Denial is an anesthesia we use when the pain of visiting out personal truth is too great to handle. Denial taxes one’s physical health by compromising the immune system among other things. Your spirit is diminished when logic or survival has you deny God’s existence when a part of you still questions if there is a God. Denying what your mind, body and heart know is truth—is living a lie.

In an article entitled *Effects of Stress and Psychological Disorders on the Immune System* by [David B. Beaton](#) of the [Rochester Institute of Technology](#), are found these words:

“Inhibition of emotions could be another stress factor negatively affecting health. Bottling up negative emotions seems to tie up resources of the immune system.”

If you deny your issues, your pain, your addictions or your past, you simply live a lie, and in so doing you are resistant to the help that could transform your difficult existence into a pleasant and successful life. Resisting help due to denying a need for it is living a life of self-defeat. And that life becomes a merry-go-round of potholes, detours and breakdowns, becoming increasingly more frequent and devastating. If you deny the existence of God, you are simultaneously denying yourself the comfort, assurance and assistance that you could have from a Supreme Being. Since God would not force Himself upon you, but simply offer – stand at the door knocking – a closed posture keeps the opportunities for assistance, outside the door of your experience.

## **The Vicious Circle**

These stations on the road to self-defeat are the result of a life based on FEAR. – fear that “if you don’t use these methods you won’t get what you think you need or want. The truth is that staying on this road of self-defeat only keeps you going around and around in circles, because this road is a vicious circle that consumes the life. . More techniques to survive, simply leads you to paying greater prices, minimizing their effect and living in denial, and because of it, you need to find more techniques! This is where the Avoidant, the Ambivalent and the Disorganized in Attachment style live. The need to remain on this merry-go-round is fueled by rejection – the causative factor of so much personal and interpersonal dysfunction. Here you hold onto the abuses received as though they were trophies earned. They become the excuses you give for the destructive behaviors you manifest.

Do you recall that fear predicts its own end and also paralyzes us? We get stuck in our messy circumstances and can’t seem to find a way out of the maze of troubles, issues and destructive relationships.

Here on the road to self-defeat, you live from the head – disconnected from the heart. You are in your left brain – the functional side. There you live in the anxiety of trying, accomplishing and doing – attempting to live above the noise of your pain, or you are totally numbed out on the addictions you’ve established. Even the addictions are your endeavors, your doings – to eliminate the hurt you hold onto.

When you are in this place, the tendency is to become discouraged and that leads you into laziness, procrastination, withdrawal, depression and negative thinking. This is the selfish life, designed to take care of “me.” It is a life of lies, of unbelief in the goodness of anyone or of

a Higher Power. It becomes a progressive and devastating illness and due to a depressed immune system, disease results.

**This is the selfish – the carnal nature, “given to crude bodily pleasures and appetites,” according to Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary. It’s about satisfying whatever feels good to you at any time, regardless of the circumstances or outcome. In its extreme, it is narcissism . . . it is living for the fuel (positive or negative) that you receive from others. It is a constant looking for needs to be fulfilled, and often feeling that nothing is ever satisfying or enough. It is selfishness at its apex.**

### **Break the Cycle**

How can you get off of this defeating cycle of adding new techniques for survival, paying the price for them, minimizing the prices, blaming others, living in denial and disallowing divine assistance? There’s only one way!

1. You must return to the conclusions that you drew. The first is about your worth and value and the other about the existence and the involvement of God in individual lives – principally yours.
2. You must examine the reason(s) you drew those conclusions about yourself and about God.
3. You must allow for the change of the lie at your core (that we are worthless) to the truth of your infinite worth and value. That will impact your spiritual view.
4. You must give back the lie to those who gave it to you, and you do that in the form of letters you write that are not designed for sending, but for emptying your pain. Consider writing a letter to God, especially if you feel that He let you down. I (Nancy) did that and I literally screamed at

Him as well, and it really helped me! It was probably the very first time that I had really spoken my feelings out loud.

5. You must examine how the lie you have believed about your worth and value has negatively impacted your life, including your spiritual nature.

**With this process fear is transformed into Hope and Love. Knowledge (God said in Hosea 4:6 that His people die for lack of knowledge. You might read verses 1-6 and ask yourself what specific knowledge He is speaking about in this passage) becomes the power to choose the right path – The Road to Victory.**

Having done this work, you will develop new techniques--techniques that will have a positive effect upon you. Instead of tools designed for survival, you'll develop skills out of your new base of hope and love – out of service to others and enjoying what you have. Rather than using numbing agents to mask the pain, you will confront the pain, share it with a supportive friend or your recovery group, and use your history to benefit someone else in pain. You will find that there is comfort in knowing that what God promised in His word, the Bible, He will supply:

- Help in times of trouble. Think about it...when you're hurting, don't you often exclaim, "Oh, God"?
- All your *needs* provided.
- Someone to walk with you when times are dark.
- Refuge, comfort and strength.

**The Good in You (that's God Living Within) Can Win.**

Let's take a look at some of the new techniques (new skills, habits and emotional responses) that will replace the old dysfunctional ones.

- The use of anger to distance people from you is replaced by allowing others to gradually get close to you. You're beginning to understand that they are probably hurting in some manner too. Perhaps at first, the safest people are those who you learned to care about in your group traveling through *The Journey*. Call and chat on the phone, get together for lunch or tea.
- Being shy and fearful of others is replaced by taking the risk to speak, to be friendly. Again, choose people whom you know will reciprocate with friendliness and kindness, if it's more than a "Good Morning, how are you?" conversation you want. You take courage to speak to others first. Saying "Good-morning" to people on the street or those who work in your place of employment and eventually you have the courage to invite someone to socialize for a bit longer. You'll look for people with similar interests – perhaps people who are a more outgoing than yourself.
- Alcoholism or the use of alcohol to numb emotional pain is replaced by socializing with friends while drinking a ginger ale (and they might be different people than you socialized with previously)
- Drug addiction is replaced by a brisk walk in the fresh air or reaching out to a friend who came through *The Journey* with you and inviting them to walk with you and then stopping together to chat over a cup of tea or a hot chocolate or a sandwich.
- If you have hidden from your pain in work, you will no longer need to hide, because your pain is released. Remember, work can become a habit and a hiding place as much as alcoholism is. So you might have to begin by actually planning dates and times on your calendar for fun, fellowship and relaxation. You'll be surprised at how pleasant it is to vacation in a beautiful place – a tropical island or a snow-covered mountain. There and then you will take the opportunity to drink in the natural beauty and find rest for your

soul. You will learn to enjoy the moment – every moment! You will stop predicting doom and gloom in the future – it'll be whatever it will be. You'll enjoy the here and now.

- Maybe you have hidden from emotional pain in religion. When avoiding pain, it is easy to go overboard in any endeavor. Becoming fanatic and compulsive about religion does not serve you well. As you have already learned, spirituality is a whole different ball game. In it, you find peace, comfort, love and an abiding Presence that sustains and comforts you, whereas in frantic religious performances, you can easily become stressed. So instead of religious zeal, you'll practice spirituality, which encompasses relationships, sharing, communication with others and with your God, a sense of reassurance, peace, and enjoyment of the here and now. We're not saying that religion in and of itself is bad, but you could almost compare spirituality to a long soak in a lavender fragranced, ample tub with soft and inspiring music playing in the background and religious *performance* to a rushed, cold shower, with the threat of being late for work cranking in your mind, creating anxiety.

Are you getting the picture? Everything we have experienced, remembered cognitively or not, impacts our spiritual nature. There is no way to list all of the negative techniques we could have developed and how they should look when replaced with positive techniques. You are wise enough to look for the positive techniques that will replace the negative ones you've developed. Just remember that when you do anything to excess, no matter how good it may be, that positive behavior may become a negative technique – one that will zap your energy and cause you stress. Doing good twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, gives you no time to reflect, to rest, to recuperate and to enjoy your relationships.

Of course you will reap the benefits of the new techniques you've developed. You will have an expanding circle of friends of like mind who are also on the road to victory. Instead of easing

the pain through chemicals, you ease the pain by confronting it and sharing it with a supportive group and with God. Your financial situation should improve, because you will become more responsible—not needing that buying fix or instant gratification to fill an unfulfilled need. Your positive thinking style, your increased worth and value will facilitate greater physical health, boosting your immune system and your desire to take better care of yourself. Also, more positive techniques will help you succeed monetarily in your career or by making you more eligible for a promotion, open to new opportunities, etc. Instead of anxiously chasing some desired object or goal in order to be happy, you will find happiness along your way in whatever situation you find yourself. Even negative situations are opportunities to re-group asking yourself what positive lesson you can learn from what you're experiencing.

Once you have begun this healing process, and you're well on your way, once you are a few miles down the road to living victoriously, chances are excellent, that you will not turn back. Why would you? Of course, there will be a tug to retrace the old steps, relocate back to the road we have traveled more than this road, but the benefits you are deriving from the new way, usually outweigh the prices you have paid for the old road. Occasionally you will slip back to an old attitude or practice; those old habits die hard because deep pathways may have been created in your brain. But you will quickly make a u-turn back onto the road of victory. You are gaining knowledge, learning and making NEW pathways.

People will begin to notice wonderful changes in you, if they haven't already. They ask, "What have you been doing? You are so different – GOOD different!" Here's where you maximize the benefits of being on the right road! You'll share with others what has happened in your life, what specifically you have been doing to facilitate this change, and how you are learning lessons from each experience whether they are positive or negative. You share that you have gotten in touch with your spiritual nature because you have unloaded the baggage of the past, and are now finding comfort and assurance in your connection with God. You'll invite

others to participate in a group, and share with them what benefits they will derive from the experience. You will get a “charge” every time you are able to share what has happened in your life. You continue to let go of whatever blocks you from receiving joy all of the time, such as: the expectations of others, unprocessed injustices you have received, un-forgiven wounds, and selfish desires to have, to achieve, to acquire. You won’t find rejection around every corner or try to manufacture it.

Another thing that will benefit you is to serve others. One of the ways you can do so is to start facilitating or co-facilitating a recovery group – like *The Journey!* In the process of sharing again your history with members, and reviewing the materials, you have further ‘ah-ha’ experiences and discover deeper things about yourself. You’ll see that service is a big key to personal success! You’ll be proud to own your healing and recovery. You’ll be proud to share your continuous journey with others in the confidence that if they choose the recovery road, they too will benefit.

One fellow, having been through the recovery process, said that for the first time he noticed the fragrance of flowers and the beauty of the trees. He said, “Even food tastes better now!”

You can count on becoming aware of the pain of others around you as well as the beauty of your environment. People take on a new look to you. That teen, decked out in pierced rings and studs, dyed black hair and covered with tattoos looks different too. You’ll listen with expanded hearing to the words unsaid between the lines of anger or sadness. You’ll be discovering that the outward trappings are symptomatic of the pain he or she is carrying. Those whose behaviors have “bugged” you also receive your empathy instead of your condemnation. This awareness inspires you to offer help to others, and in so doing, not only will they benefit, but you will too.