

A Component of NAADAC's Life-Long Learning Series

Romancing the Brain 2017 KSAODS

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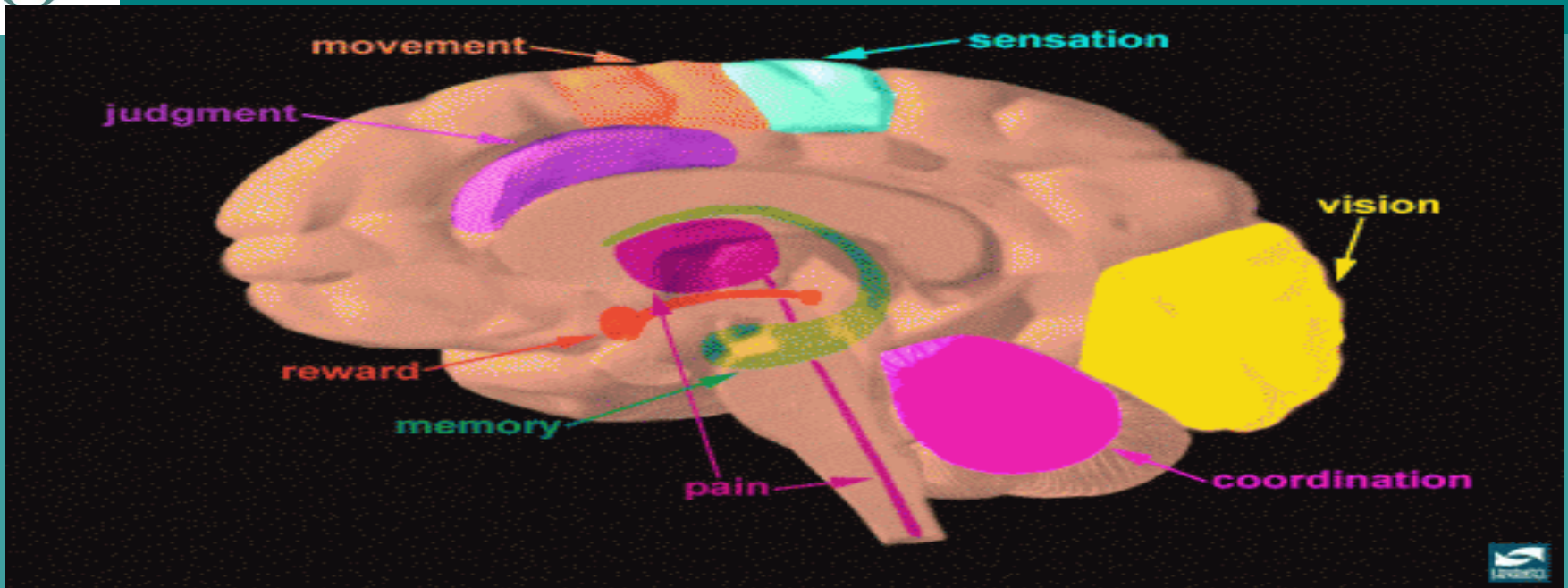
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Your Brain



Your brain governs specific functions. * sensory (blue) * visual (yellow) * reward pathway (orange), * cerebellum (hot pink) for coordination and the hippocampus (green) for memory, thalamus (magenta) which receives information about pain coming from the body (magenta line within the spinal cord), and passes the information up to the cortex. Nerve cells or neurons connect one area to another via pathways to send and integrate information. The distances that neurons extend can be short or long. This pathway is activated when a person receives positive reinforcement for certain behaviors ("reward"). + NIDA 2016



Your Brain Loves....

- Your own Natural and Organic Rewards:
- Food
- Water
- Sex
- Nurturing



Preventing Relapse

- Science tells us that stress is the biggest trigger for relapse.
- Relationships – personal, professional, in community, are the largest groups that stress us out on a day-to-day basis.
- What would happen if we learned to “romance” those around us and ourselves?
- What would happen if we worked through the trauma of our lives?
- What would happen if we learned to live happy and healthy?



Helping Your Clients/Patients to Keep the Brain Simple

- Your Limbic system is located approximately in the center of your brain
- It is the oldest system of your brain – the mammalian brain
- It pre-historic time, it was the largest mass area of your brain
- It is the part of the brain that most people use most often in conflict and trauma

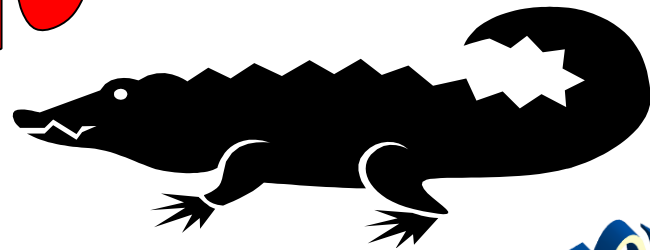


Conflict Resolution in Recovery

BUT!!

LIMBIC

DON'T YOU EVER!



YOU

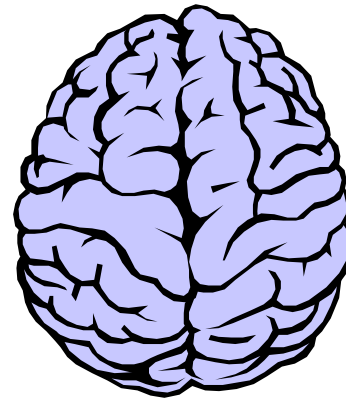
Absolutes

Should

WONT

NO

you better!



How???

!

Always

**EVER
EVER**

If you ever...

Never

**Fight
Flight**

Could



Location of the Cortex in the Brain

The **cortex** located in the front part of the brain.

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





Conflict Resolution in Recovery

Cortex

Will you

I believe...

Lets Discover

I wonder

Please



Let Us Find Another...

YES!

Often

Consider

Stand Still

Is it possible

Thank you

I would like

Back-up the Train



Is What I am Going to Say...

- One helpful skill to learn is the ability to **stand still in the moment**.
- In standing still in the moment, you learn to stop or slow down your thoughts and conflict process by asking yourself 3 questions:
 - Is what I am going to say (words and phrases) and the way I am going to say it (tone, inflection and gestures) going to build the relationship up?
 - Is it going to keep the relationship level?
 - Is it going to tear the relationship down?



Going Limbic on Someone

Expressing anger in an unhealthy manner causes the person doing it:

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

Example... "going limbic"

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



Being Deliberate

- Phrases like “*Thank you,*” “*Please,*” “*I am sorry*” and “*I did not intend to ...*” give people more power in their lives or diminishes their power?
- Words or phrases like the following add what to a conversation?
 - I believe...
 - I wonder...
 - Let’s discover...
 - I would like...
 - Consider...
 - Often...
- Consider how this change could effect what you would expect to see in other people (for example; work colleagues, family and friends).



Phrases that “Romance” the Brain

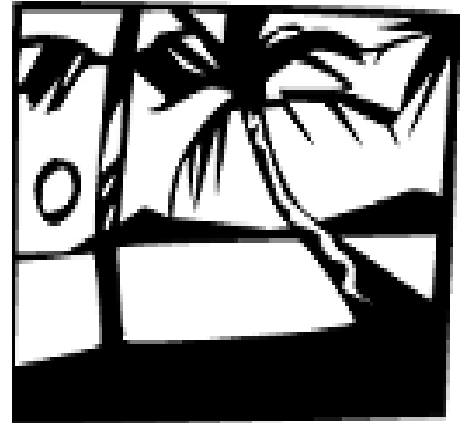


- *Is it possible...?*
- *Have you had an opportunity to...?*
- *I wonder what would happen if...?*
- *Help me understand...*
- *I'm confused, I thought...*
- *Is this ok with you...?*
- *I'm curious about...*
- *Please explain to me...*



Phrases that “Romance” the Brain (cont)

- *My pleasure to...*
- *Please...*
- *Thank you...*
- *May I have permission...?*
- *Please tell me what you mean by this.*
- *When you have a minute, would you please...?*





Phrases that “Romance” the Brain (cont)



- *I am sorry.*
- *Is there another way I could (say/do/explain this)?*
- *Let us discover/consider/ believe...*
- *Often, this is a misunderstood (action/behavior/word)...*



More “Romancing” the Brain

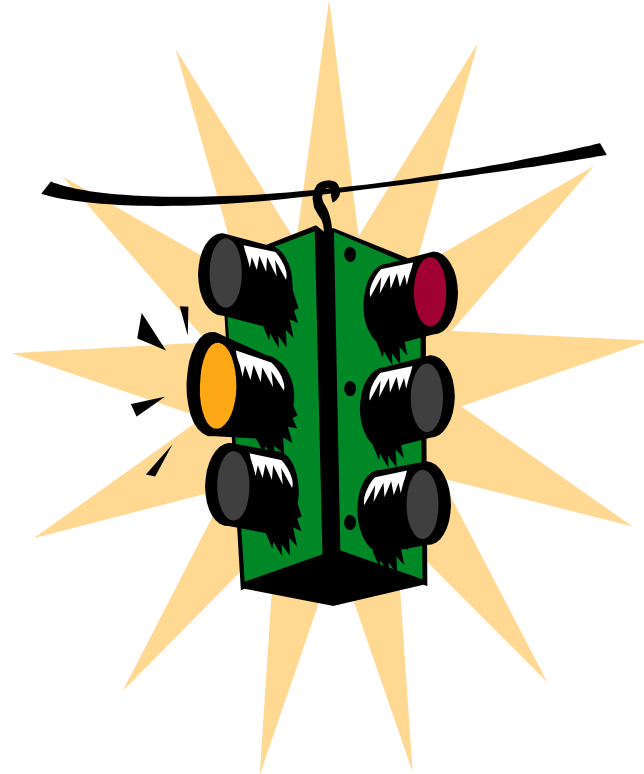
- *Will you agree to this...?*
- *I would like to find a solution, together.*
- *Would you consider...?*
- *I would like to assist you...*
- *Your thoughts?*
- *Please see handout*





Training the Brain

- Please go to handout
 - Hear It
 - See It
 - Say It
 - Write It
 - Read It
 - Repeat It





Five (5) Stages of Relationships

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





Honeymoon Stage

- Please take a Trip down Memory Lane with me
- Were you, at one time, looking for that prince or princess?
- Think back to the beginning of that time, the beginning of the relationship, what did you feel and what did you do?
 - Exciting
 - Scary
 - Fun
 - Lots of communication
 - Few feelings
 - Hopes
 - Dreams
 - Careful
 - Thoughtful
 - Sex was great
 - Cards and notes
 - Special nights out



Disillusionment Stage

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



More Disillusionment

- If the flaws are more serious - such as dishonesty or deceit - the relationship can become confusing and discouraging.
- If you want the relationship to keep evolving, you need to be able to communicate effectively and resolve conflict.
- Sex has become more familiar, and maybe the fun sleepwear has changed to less enticing wear.
- Communication tends to go down. There is less time spent sharing and it is less positive
- The things that attracted you to the person now detract you from them.
- Arguments over money, friends, priorities, sex, etc., begin to happen with less agreement on how to solve these new differences.



Misery Stage

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



More Misery

- Couples remain in this stage, building resentment and frustration until they either decide to:
 - End the relationship in some manner
 - Avoid the issues and remain in the relationship
 - Seek some means to resolve the conflict in the relationship
- Misery can last for years and years. There are couples (and you might have experienced this or seen others in this stage) remaining in Misery for 10, 20 or 30 years, often citing kids, financial constraints or fear of changing the familiar as reasons for staying together.
- Many couples do not evolve from this stage and decide to end the relationship here.
- However, if a couple can resolve conflicts here, then they move on to the next stage - [Awakening](#).



Awakening Stage

- This is also called the **Stability**, **Friendship** or **Reconciliation** stage.
- Couples who make it this far express feelings of stronger commitment, connection, trust and love.
- You know neither one of you is perfect, but this concept is no longer threatening.
- You are confident in your ability to resolve most of your issues.
- You begin to reestablish your own outside interests (unlike the Honeymoon stage, where you only had eyes for each other).
- There is some danger of boredom with your partner, so you have to work to maintain the connection you made in the Honeymoon stage.
- Most couples are comfortable and content at this stage.
- To help a couple move to this stage, it is vital that they learn how to listen and communicate with each other.



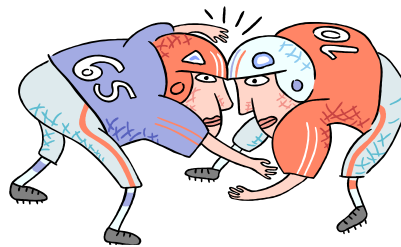
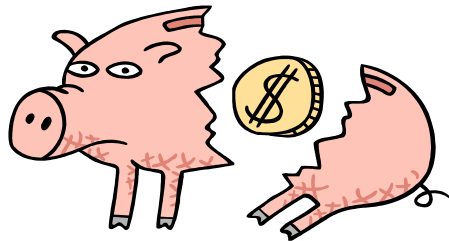
More Awakening

- “Listening with the heart” is a term we use to express the skill of empathy. It involves remaining “present” with the person and hearing all he or she is saying - the deep feelings being expressed, their affect and fears and concerns as they relate to the relationship - without thinking about and trying to develop words you are going to use to respond.
- In this practice of “listening with the heart,” it is also vital to learn from each other, to learn what each needs - not wants, but really needs - to be in relationship with the other. In other words, what are the “basic needs” for that person to feel safe, secure and ready to fully participate in the relationship?



Need..to be in Relationship

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



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

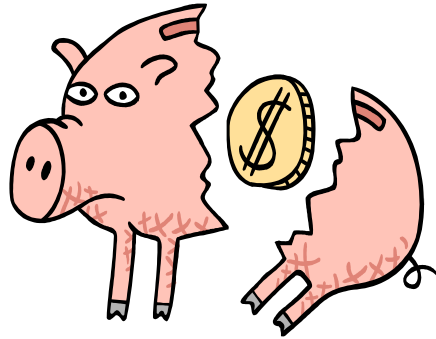


Peace & Calm Stage

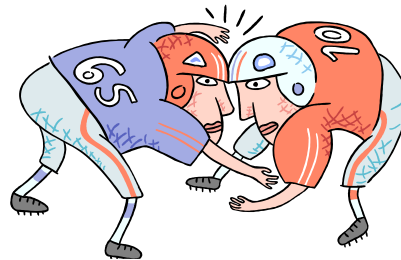
- Other names for this stage are **Commitment**, **Acceptance**, **Transformation** or **Real Love**.
- It is estimated that less than 5% of couples make it to this stage.
- You are with your partner because you have chosen him/her, faults and all, not because you need him or her.
- You and your partner are a team and look out for each other's best interests.
- At this stage, your relationship becomes a **true partnership**.



Four (4) Types of Agreement



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





Financial Agreements

- What do you need to be in financial agreement?
- Who works?
- What amount of money do you need for the household? (Don't fool yourself: if you are a \$75,000-a-year expectation person, and your partner only makes \$35,000, then there will be conflict.)
- Is it one joint checking account or two separate checking accounts?
- Is there savings, money for retirement and money for vacation?
- And what about donations? Is tithing something you believe in?



Financial Agreements and Budget

- Do you keep a budget that is agreed to? (Refer to “[Budget Table](#)” worksheet on page 45 of the workbook.) Is it projected out?
- A budget will keep financial arguments down since there is agreement on what the budget will be. When considering a new purchase, go to the budget and ask “*Does it fit?*” It no longer becomes an argument of “you don’t want me to have this”; it becomes a discussion of the budget and whether a purchase fits.
- What about credit cards? Can you use them? How much can you use them? Have you and your partner agreed to internal limits?



Financial Philosophy

- Is the other person from a family that had enough money to live on and the philosophy was “there is always enough”
- Is the other person from a family that struggled with money and people held tight to the money they did have?
- Who taught you what you believe about money?
- What are the rules?
 - Are there rules to save or spend?
 - How much money should be saved?
 - When is it okay to spend?
- Is there a rule about a savings account?



Physical/Spatial Agreements

- What are your physical expectations for the sexual relationship, physical exercise, the manner in which you keep up yourself (body, hair, etc.)?
- What type of physical space do you need—a crowded room, a sparse room, a house in the open, a house in the woods or in the city?
- What about physical abuse? What is okay with you? What is not negotiable (such as pushing, shoving, beating, hitting, scratching, etc.)?
- What is physical safety to you and appropriate boundaries in your relationship for all the above areas?
- What about own “body bubble”? How close do you like your partner and how often? Are you a cuddler or do you prefer to have more space?



Body Bubble's

- We all have our own personal “body bubble,” formed as we grew up, that advises us how close we want others to come to us or when we get to the place when we know someone “enough” to allow them closer.
- People who have been physically or sexually abused might have a different experience of closeness
- It is likely take more time, trust and patience in allowing others to come closer.
- As you build a relationship with a person, it is important to learn his or her body bubble styles and respect them.



Emotional/Social Agreements

- Emotional agreements also take into account those times when the other person is just “off” emotionally
- We don’t always know the whys of it and just needing a little extra special consideration to get through whatever it is.
- This kind of emotional support goes both ways, for the nature of emotional agreement is reciprocal.
- Part of the discussion on the emotional agreement is to learn your partner’s emotional strengths and weaknesses.



Emotional/Social Support

- Are there certain situations (times of the year, seasons) that are more difficult emotionally for your partner? This might be related to a loss (death, divorce, accident, etc).
- When does your partner feel he or she needs more support from you? In what type of situations?
- When does your partner want you just to listen, and (possibly) hold them, rub their back or just be “present” with them?
- What do you need from your partner for positive emotional support?



Emotional/Social Supports (cont)

- Do you expect unconditional love and support?
- Do you expect understanding and a person to listen to your hurts?
- How is that played out at the end of day, on the weekend, after an argument?
- Do you go to bed on your fight, in anger?
- What do you need there in terms of resolution?



Spiritual Agreements

- Every person comes to this life with a spiritual piece
- How we relate to that spiritual side is dependent on the fabric of our background
- Not everyone identifies their spiritual side
- Yet, everyone goes about trying to fill it in some manner



Spiritual Agreement Support

- What does spirituality mean to you? How do you want to express it?
- How do you want your partner involved?
- Where is your source of strength? How do you express it?
- Do you want to do this together or separately?
- Is there reading, praying or worship that you expect?
- What are your other spiritual expectations?



Completing the “Agreements” Loop

- Once this is done, it helps to write each of these on paper.
- Put them in a dual frame - and in the bedroom - so that when an issue or argument begins to rise, it can be agreed to revisit these agreements and to remind each other to put their needs first, not their wants.
- When a couple makes these types of agreements, after really listening to each other, a peace and calm is achieved.



Completing the “Agreements” Loop (cont)

- There is a sense that they know how to resolve conflict, they know what is expected and they know how they can meet these, specifically, in each of those areas.
- It does not mean that there won't be future disagreements or that everything will be peaceful and calm.
- The difference is that there is agreement to work and live in peace, understanding and mutual support for each other.



What It Takes to Have a Healthy Relationship

Building a Healthy Life



- Being with someone – no matter what.
- We are inter – dependent on each other – interconnected. We need each other.
- Must be entered in – heart and soul. Don't worry about the outcome.
- All you want is their highest good.



What It Takes to Have a Healthy Relationship

This type of relationship means:



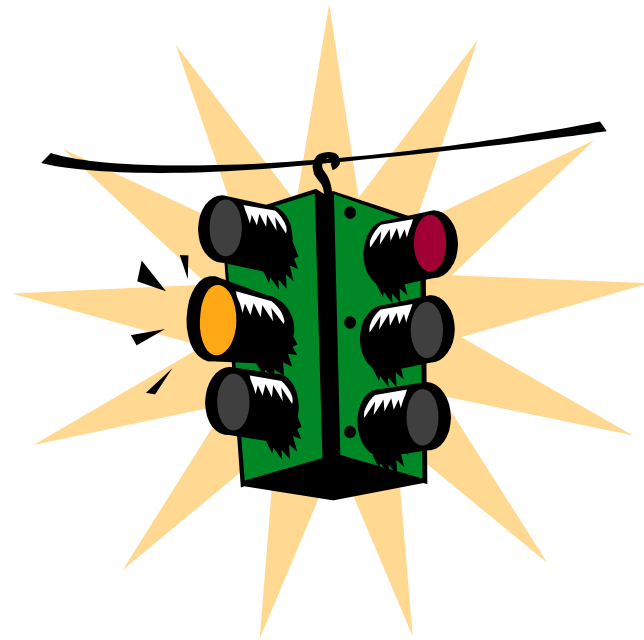
- You are willing to do what is right to rescue the relationship.
- It is what you do with what has happened – NOT what happened.
- Doing all this means taking risks. The biggest risk is not basing the relationship on ME.
- It requires the ability to forgive.



What It Takes to Have a Healthy Relationship

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

- A cause
- A goal
- A Crisis
- Financial Gain
- Workplace
- Recreation





A HEALTHY Relationship DOES NOT Intend to:

- Manipulate
- Keep Score
- Control
- “You owe Me” Attitude





Costs of a HEALTHY Relationship

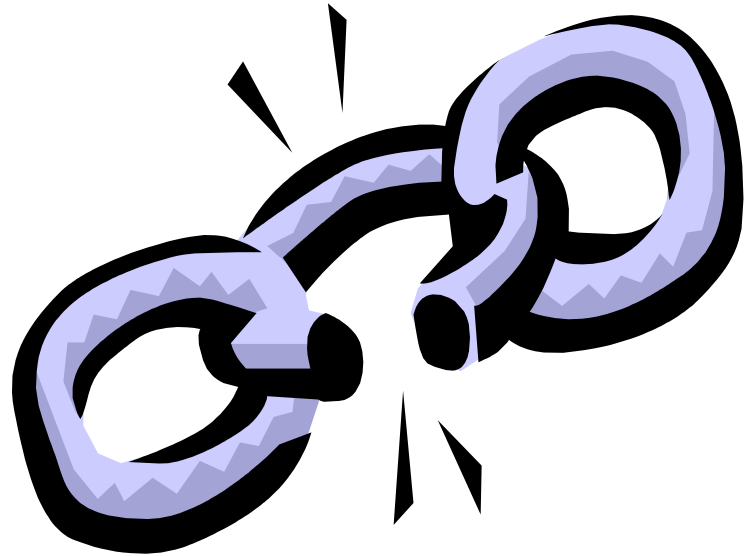
- Risk
- Time
- Money
- Energy
- Reputation
- Heart
- Dreams
- YOUR Agenda
- YOUR Customs
- YOUR Taste/Style





It Can be Broken by the Following Behaviors

- X Lying
- X Stealing
- X Sexual Deviance
- X Abuse of ANY Type
- X Outside Sexual Relationships





Family Relationships – Needs & Wants

- Ask your partner and children to identify the things that they need (what they cannot live without) as opposed to what they want in a relationship
- Ask them to help you organize the list by type of agreement—financial, physical/spatial, emotional/social and spiritual



Creating A Mantra

- **Self-control** is not a natural instinct. It is learned.
- Some of us learned higher levels of self-control by the discipline we were taught or saw as children.
- Still, others of us were in families with limited self-control and our behaviors are low-impulse control.
- Learning a higher level of self and impulse control is possible and attainable.
- It truly is a “brain choice.”
- This higher level of self-control can be achieved by creating mantras that help you “stand still in the moment” or “slow down your jets” when an angry or mean-spirited impulse wants to run loose!
- The key to this technique is to create a mantra that has meaning and enough significance that you will remember it and then to use it.



Mantras Are Used To

- ✓ Maintain control
- ✓ Slow down reactions
- ✓ Control impulses
- ✓ Avoid shame and blame
- ✓ Motivate oneself



Your Mantra Homework

- Create several different types of mantras.
- Choose a mantra that you can easily memorize and practice that will help you to think through your angry thoughts and reactions—before you act on them!
- Ideas:
 - *“This too shall pass.”*
 - *“Life is too short for this to get me all that bothered.”*
 - *“God’s grace is sufficient for me.”*



Motivating Mantra's

- You might also choose to create a mantra to motivate yourself to do something. This could be a task you need to accomplish, an exercise you are doing or anything else you want to do that takes extra effort.
- Some ideas are:
 - *“I think I can, I think I can, I think I can.”*
 - *“Just go for it.”*
 - *“I have the ability to make this happen.”*



The Empowerment of a Mantra

- Begin your day reminding yourself of your mantras and in what circumstances you plan to use them.
- End the day with these thoughts, as well.
- You are logging these phrases and anticipated behaviors into your “computer brain” so that your brain automatically spits these out when you discover you are in one of these situations.
- You are becoming more in touch with yourself and developing a deeper sense of yourself and others through these exercises.
- You are also creating a positive change in your behaviors, thereby creating a life with more personal power and self-control that leads to a feeling of empowerment and self-esteem!



Repairing Relationships

- Life offers many situations and circumstances that damage relationships.
- A person does not get through any relationship without some damage.
- It is not always the damaging effects of “what happened” that make the damage so destructive
- It is the manner in which individuals involved deal with the damage that causes the ongoing hurt and deep feelings of unresolved resentment, lack of forgiveness and loss.



Repairing Damaged Relationships

- The first step in repairing a damaged relationship - identify the relationship that has been damaged and the root cause of the damage. Was the surface issue that you and the other involved individual identified as the source of the problem the actual root cause or was there something deeper and more difficult to identify that lead to the hurt?
- Next step is to validate your feelings around the hurt, unresolved resentment, lack of forgiveness or loss. Being able to identify your feelings helps reduce any chaos or “feelings of craziness” around the situation.



Repairing Damaged Relationships

- Now, here comes the tough step.
- Check in with the other party or parties to see what they recall and how they feel about the situation or circumstance. This is more than just asking their perception of what happened. It also attempting to understand the context in which it happened.



Life Happens

- We all know that “life happens.”
- Yet when it is happening to another person and that person then affects us in a negative manner, we tend to take it personally.
- Understanding the other person’s life situation might also help you to see that what was going on for them was not “all about you.”
- Maybe it was about them.
- Their life situation caused an inability to really see or feel what was happening to you at the time.



Repairing Damaged Relationships - Steps

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

- Check out their perception of the situation.
- Listen without judgment (that is, suspend judgment).
- Do not jump in as he or she tells the story. The person is telling you what was actually happening in his or her life at the time.
- Stand still in the moment (use your mantra if need be) to just sit and listen.



Repairing Damaged Relationships - Steps

- Take notes if you need to in order to keep quiet and allow the other person to have his or her say.
- Ask clarifying questions or ask him or her to tell you more if you feel that the person is holding back or needs encouragement to be more detailed.
- Listen with your heart, because this level of listening has the chance of opening up a new door in the relationship.



Other Methods for Repairing Damaged Relationships

- Writing a letter or a series of letters to the person(s) involved, explaining without judgment what is causing you to write and describing the hope to clear up some unresolved feelings. Include in the letter your perceptions of the events and situations leading up to the unresolved hurt, resentment or lack of forgiveness.
- Using audio or video tapes in addition to letter writing. The addition of body language, gestures, facial expressions, voice and personal sounds and expressions that are familiar to both parties can be very powerful.



More Repairing Methods

- Visiting a gravesite to have the conversation
- A time of meditation with a ritual of letting the hurt, resentment and/or lack of forgiveness go in some manner – lifting it out.
- Meet, if possible if the person with whom you have the damaged relationship is alive.
- If no longer alive, the ritual might involve a simple prayer, followed by the hurt being expressed in writing and then burned at the gravesite.
- A blessing can be said as the burned papers fly off in the wind or scatter on the ground.



Decision-making

- Many of us are faced with making minor to major decisions on a daily basis.
- How do we assess the importance of these decisions and the best way in which to make a “good” decision?
- Decision-making is best done when certain steps are taken.
- Not all decisions require all of these steps.
- The critical and complex decisions are best decided after some work in the following steps.



Decision-making

Effective decision-making steps:

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



Styles of Communication

- **Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument**
- Answer each question as if “push comes to shove”
- Answer each question the closest to your response – what you most likely do – “A” or “B” response
- 30 Questions total – add your responses



Five Styles of Communication

“Five Styles of Communication”

- 1) Competing
- 2) Avoiding
- 3) Compromising
- 4) Accommodating
- 5) Collaborating



Conflict Resolution in Recovery



Compete



Competing Style

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



Conflict Resolution in Recovery

Avoid



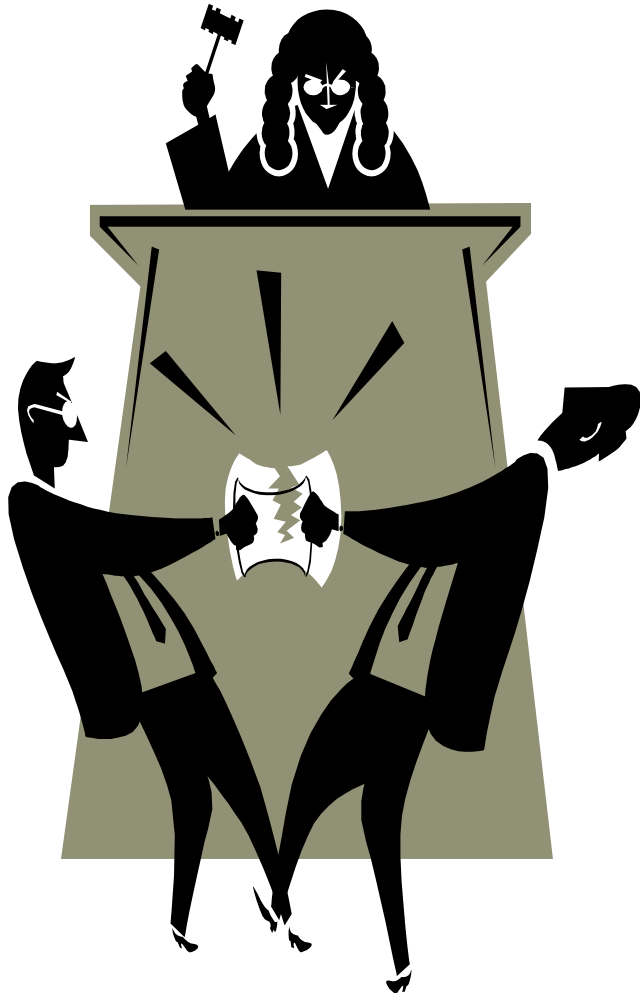


Avoiding Style

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



Conflict Resolution in Recovery



Compromise



Compromising Style

- You get half the cookie, and I get half the cookie. We both lose a little and compromise. It's better to get something than nothing.
- A secret variation of losing/winning.
- Soften the effects of losing by limiting gains of the other person.
- Arrive at compromise by somebody playing the “judge.”
- Ringing oratory invoking everything from “the democratic process” to “the rules.”
- Nobody wins, and nobody loses.
- Evokes the attitude that “war is hell.”
- Method of control: **RULES**



Conflict Resolution in Recovery

Accommodate





Accommodating Style

- The primary concern for the effect of conflict is on the well-being and durability of relationships.
- The assumption is that human relationships are fragile, that they cannot endure the trauma of working through differences.
- There is a fear of losing the relationship.
- Appease others by ignoring or denying their behavior and avoid conflict by ignoring or denying how you feel about their behavior.
- Personal objectives are set aside, and the relationship lends itself to one-sided domination.
- There is an attitude of forced, cheerful compliance.
- Eventually, the “Mt. St. Helens” effect will play out (“Tic, Tic, Boom!”) or it is like a time bomb (“TIC TOC, TIC TOC ... BOOM!”).
- Method of control: **GUILT**



Conflict Resolution in Recovery



Collaborate



Collaborating Style

- This has an altogether different attitude that results in a different behavior.
- We can both win.
- Importance is attached to the well-being of the members of the relationship and to the relationship simultaneously. The two sets of goals are not seen as mutually exclusive as with other styles.
- Conflict is inevitable because we are different from one another. This leads to differences in opinion. The most common reasons for differences are incomplete understanding and commitment to inequality.
- A collaborator has a tolerance and acceptance of differences.
- You have the right to feel, and so does the other person in the conflict.

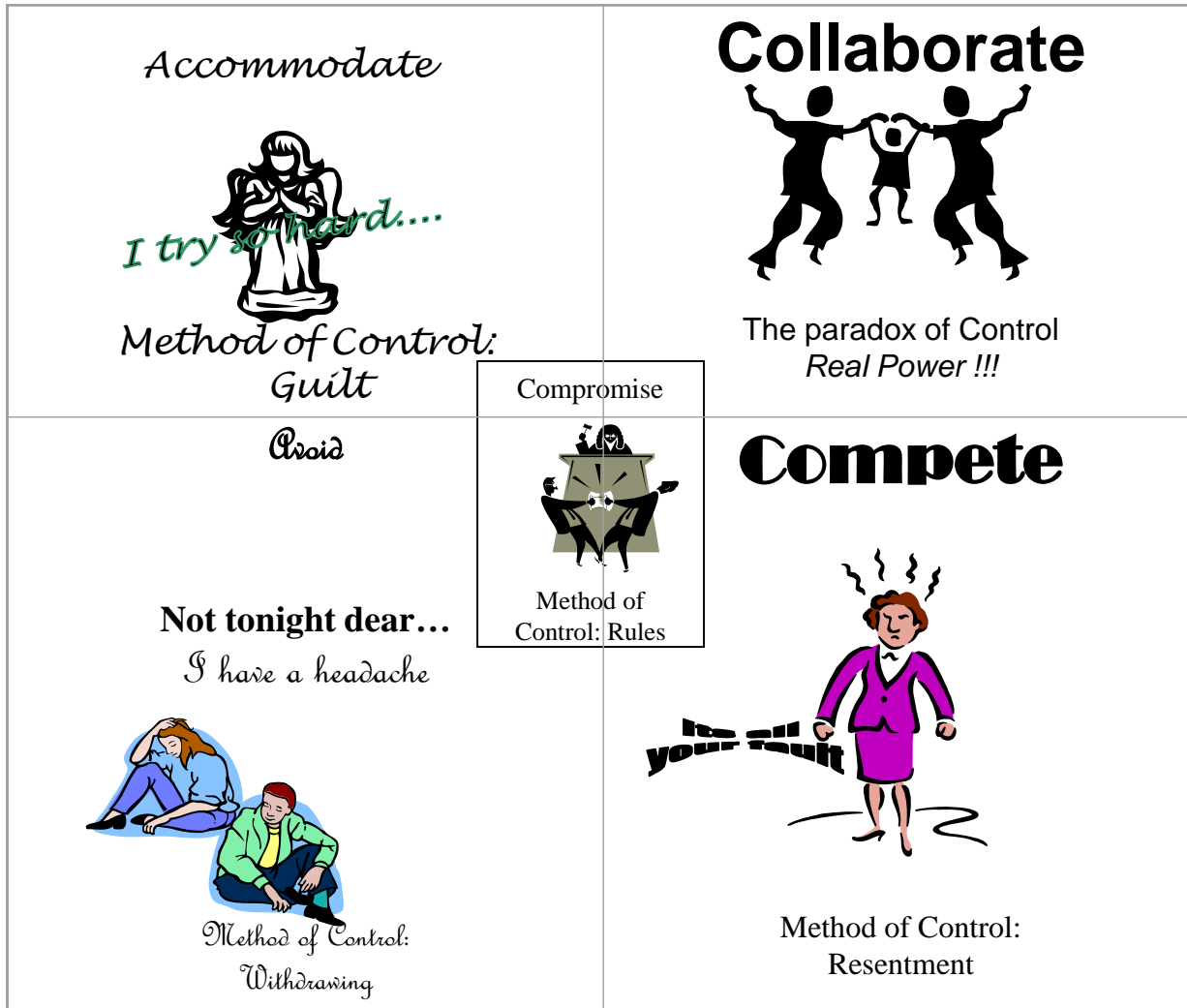


More Collaborating...

- Let's differentiate (and get out of our feelings) and then integrate (and create more closeness ... let's be solution focused).
- The real paradox of control is to **not control!** The real power comes into play when you both allow each other to get out your feelings and then think of the other's perspective to the point of creating more closeness through the understanding and then, through that, you come to a place to problem solve that takes the feelings, points of view, background and perspectives of both parties into play. This is true integration of both parties.
- The paradox of control: **REAL POWER**



Conflict Resolution in Recovery





Healing the Brain

- What would happen if we learned to “romance” those around us and ourselves?
- What would happen if we worked through the trauma of our lives?
- What would happen if we learned to live happy and healthy?



Tip 1 – Stand Still in the Moment

- Reverse of flight or fight (Limbic)
- Take your time
- Delay a reaction and consider your actions (is about what I am going to say and do...)
- Indecision can be your best friend in order to get to mutual problem solving
- Third reaction Stand still in the moment
- Is What I am About to SayGoing to Build



An “Uncluttered” Brain

- the brain is uncluttered, we can begin to set priorities; for example:
 - Make a list of priorities
 - Refine the list by indicating those items that you need to get done and those that you want to get done
 - Decide which items you can delegate, distribute, disregard, or postpone
 - Determine whether you have all the information you need or whether you need to partner with someone to accomplish a task
- Can use meditation with music (for example, heavenly music with harps and/or flutes) along with positive affirmations or mantras to help bring about a sense of calm



Tip 2 - Do Not Assume Intent

- Another version of the “Blame Game”
- People within sticking distance – those close enough for us to “stick it to” get the worse of our love.....
- Let go of presumptions or premeditated attacks
- Misunderstandings and accidental collisions
- Accountability as a “WE” issue – change is the responsibility of both parties



Check it Out!

- Information is useful.
- Inner agreement not to follow what you “might know”.
- Ask for clarification or information.
- “Call out” words and behaviors that are hurtful.
- Seek out the intention of the other person.
- Watch for your own “baggage” getting in the way.
- Ask the other person to tell you what they meant by the words or behaviors.
- Remember – not to go “limbic”!



Tip 3 - Dig Deeper into Conflict and Anger

- Digger deeper into conflict and anger is like being an archaeologist
- There is reasonable expectation that there is a some type of “treasure” below the surface
- Our treasure is our “fabric” of our life
- “Fabric” is our: culture, race, religion, values, creativity, ideas, past experiences, family’s past experiences, unresolved grief, layers of happiness and love and go on.



Being an Archaeologist

- An “archaeologist for humans “understands at a deeper level – dig for the deeper issues
- Everyone has wonderfulness and desperation
- No comparison game – more like a reality show
- Using the Tips helps us to view the show without assumptions
- It means putting aside your well-developed defense mechanisms
- Put on your solution-focused glasses



Back Up The Train

- The more you back up the train Oops...
- did not mean to say it that way
- in that manner
- with those assumptions
- and dig deeper...

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

Work not to bring shame/blame/pain back!



Tip 4 - Cultivate Confusion

- A powerful tool for resolving problems and conflicts
- Withhold judgment, guessing and blame
- Most likely your first impression in a conflict has a more neutral second impression – if you can just get there!



Leading with Confusion

- “I’m confused. How did we get to this place of anger? Let’s find another way.”
- “I am confused. Did we not have an agreement to do such and such?”
- “Help me understand why I am feeling a distance between us...did I say or do something to offend you?”
- “Help me understand how we can move away from this impasse to a place of positive movement.”
- I’m confused. I felt like we were connected and in agreement on this issue before. What has happened since we last spoke about it? Did something change your mind?”



Tip 5 – The Paradox of Control

- A paradox is a seemingly contradictory statement that may be true.
- The paradox of control means the more and harder I try to control you, the less and less of you I am in control of you.
- The common denominator of being human = we look for power and control over people, places and things....and
- Become less of who we are in the process and use....
- Emotional manipulations to control others



Tip 6 - Look to the Misunderstanding

- People, in general, think they know THE TRUTH with a capital “T”.
- If things do not go their way, they feel compelled to interrupt or point out an error in the other persons reasoning
- See the world in black or white – no grays or rainbows
- In interpersonal communications...there is always – all ways – more than one truth!



Misunderstanding Allows

- The parties to start over and say what they meant to say in the way they meant to say it.
- What was heard may not be what was meant.
- Divorce yourself from the first reading of the conflict.
- You may have different views saying the same thing!
- Your brain may have saved the memory in a different way than the other person's brain.
- Pushing for your understanding of what the other meant creates a wall – let it be what they meant.
- No one wins when the wall is in the way!



Tip 7 – Having a Blameless Relationship With Yourself

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



Tip 8 – Avoiding Premature Forgiveness

- The first response of a peacemaker is to shut down in an conflict or disagreement – People who avoid or accommodate conflict also do this.
- They work quickly to smooth it over
- Major problem in close or intimate relationships
- Act as if the most important thing is to re-establish harmony
- Happens at their and the others personal expense
- Tick - Tick - Tick - Boom!!!



Keep the Conversation Going

- The under-reactor needs to bite their lip from saying the usual “I forgive you’s”.
- And...keep the conversation going or take a break and agree to come back to the conversation when things have cooled.
- Say what you don’t like – words, behaviors and what you want to see different in the future.
- Share the responsibility of solving the problem by changing your behavior.
- Your needs are important, too.



Tip 9 – Put Down Your Dukes

- Getting angry, taking the offensive and attacking someone verbally is offensive and hurtful and is a behavior that people who have learned to compete do often.
- People who compete are in your face with an over-reactive style
- People who accommodate and avoid have an ultimate same result: Tick–Tick-Tick- Boom
- The mantra is... best offense is a good defense



Is the Best Offense a Good Defense?

- Cumulative effects of defense over time...all the negative behaviors of defending
- Major source of damage to the people who matter most in your life – the ones you are suppose to be the closest
- All said and done – putting up your dukes as an attempt of cutting off communication – kills most relationships



What Causes This Defensiveness?

- We start out in Honeymoon (the Stages of Relationships) and are kissing up to each other.
- We move into Disillusion – real life come into play and the styles of communication, family origin issues, come to the front of the relationship
- Misery sets in – and the blame for the deception – you are not the prince or princess I started out with!
- Opposites attracted – now are detractors.
- This is when the “Four Agreements” come in – if we could only figure out what we really want. Hopefully get to the stages of Awakening and Peace & Calm



Tip 10 Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

- What is the Life Script you are living?
- Listen to your words and pick it out.
- Change the inner dialogue to the positive outcomes you want in your life!
- Agree not to go *limbic* with yourself.
- How could this be played out differently using the tips?



Getting to Win/Win

- Getting to Win/Win first means learning your true feelings in conflict
- Primary feelings – these “push” the Limbic
- Feelings from end of the spectrum to the other....scared, fearful, jealous, embarrassed, overwhelmed

or

- Love, joy, happiness, mischievous, empathic, trusting (See “**Primary & Secondary Feeling/Wall of Misunderstanding**” handout in workbook)



Win/Win is Not Mine...

- Getting to win/win is not **MY** truth
- It is not **YOUR** truth
- It is **OUR** truth
- Non-blaming
- Non-shaming
- Finding the fabric of both persons and discovering the solution together



Getting to Collaboration Win/Win

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



Phrases to Lead You...

- *“I see you are very upset. Please tell me what I might do to assist you.”*
- *“Is there something I did to offend you? That really was not my intention.”*
- *“I am feeling like you are mad or distant from me, and I do not like that feeling. Please tell me your perception of what is happening between us.”*
- *“I feel overwhelmed when your behavior is aggressive. Please tone it down a bit so that we might consider what is going on and find a mutual solution.”*



Courageous People

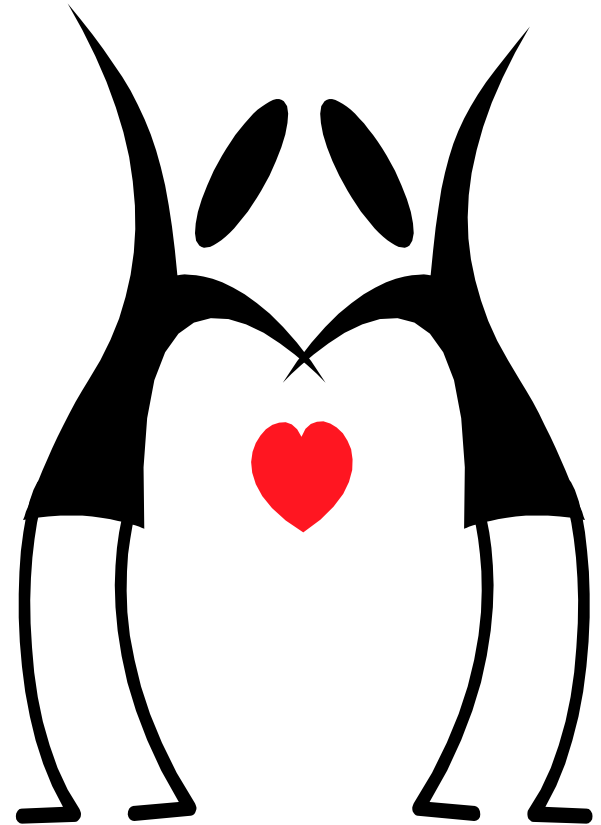
- Courageous people make big efforts to be transparent
- Put their dukes down
- Create meaningful conversations
- Risk their ego for the possibility of creating a new life change – intimacy
- Intimacy is broken down to four interconnecting words:

“In – To – Me - See”



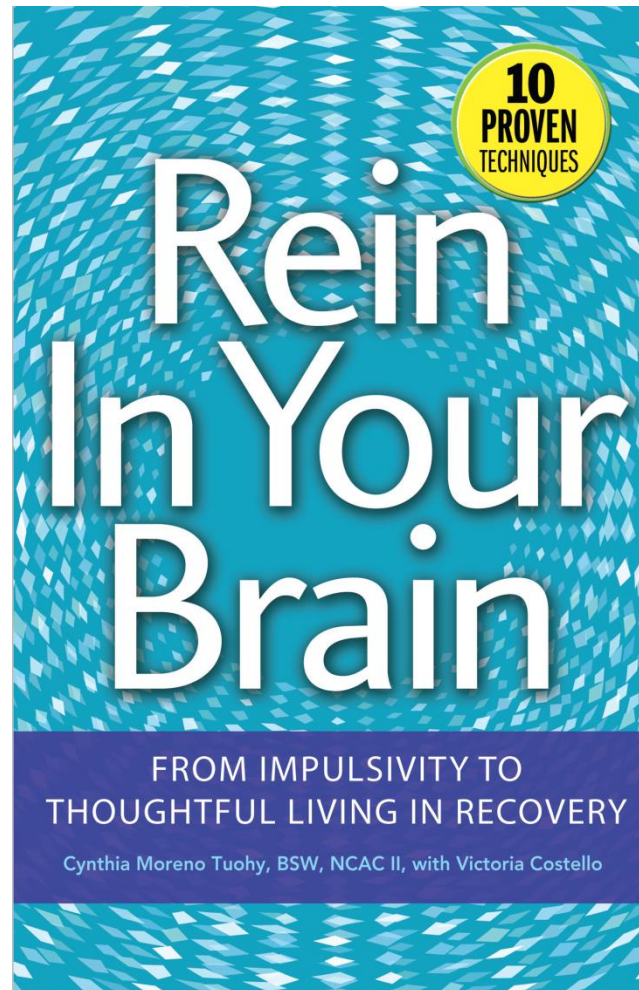
Getting to... Collaboration = Win/Win

- Mutual Benefit
- Mutual Understanding
- Builds Mutual Trust
- Builds the Emotional Bank account (for future withdrawals without bankruptcy)





Cyn's Book



A Component of NAADAC's Life-Long Learning Series



Counselor's Tool – NIDA SBIR



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Thanks and Blessings

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

Thank you for participating in the class!

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