



Emotional Sobriety requires us to live consciously. When we live consciously we become aware of our patterns and habitual attitudes and beliefs about:

- Our Problem
- Our Self
- Our Relationships with Others



Toxic Attitudes

Undermine our recovery and relationships, and always act against being who we really are.

The Price we Pay for Our Toxic Attitudes

- Interfere with our ability to be an active determining force in our emotional well being.
- Interfere with our **freedom** to experience ourselves, our world, and our recovery **in our own way**.
- Cultivates **fear**, **shame** and **alienation** from others.
- Create a **fragmented** and rigid (fixed) self that is **unable to cope with life on life's terms**.
- Reinforce our false-self and keep us operating in the consciousness that is creating our problem.



Nourishing Attitudes

Support recovery and the discovery of new possibilities, and honor and support our authentic or true-self.

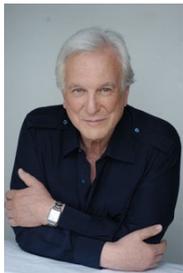
The Effects of Nourishing Attitudes

- Provide self-support.
- Foster emotional sobriety and freedom.
- Create a passion and joy for living.
- Heighten our awareness.
- Create authenticity and flexibility.
- Encourage an acceptance of our individuality and that of others.

Emotional Sobriety and Self Esteem



*Low Self-Esteem means that to an extreme extent **we base our experience of ourself on what we think others think about us.***



Dr. Nathaniel Branden

*"In my emotional impoverishment, I tend to see other people essentially as **sources of approval or disapproval.** I do not appreciate them for who they are in their own right. I see **only what they can or cannot do for me.**"*

Nathaniel Branden (1994) - The Six Pillars of Self-Esteem.



*A person with low self-esteem has a great **sense of anxiety and uncertainty about himself.***



*"Low self-esteem causes an
"...excessive preoccupation with
gaining the approval and avoiding the
disapproval of others, hungering for
validation and support at every turn of
our existence."*

Dr. Nathaniel Branden

Nathaniel Branden (1981).

Emotional Sobriety and Stage II Recovery

Stages of Recovery

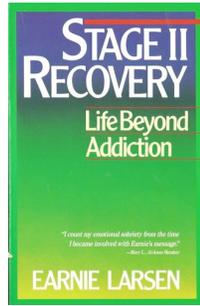
Earnie described Stage I Recovery as breaking the hold of our primary addiction.



Earnie Larsen

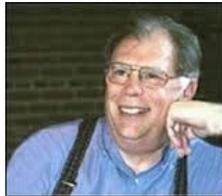
*“Abstinence may get you out of a bad place, **but getting out of a bad place just gets you out; it is not the same as getting to a good place** (p. 10).”*

Stage II Recovery



The concept of Stage I and Stage II Recovery was discussed in 1985 by Earnie Larsen in the book he wrote entitled, **Stage II Recovery: Life Beyond Addiction.**

Earnie described Stage Two Recovery as “...rebuilding of the life that was saved in Stage One.”



Earnie Larsen

“...Stage II Recovery gets at the **underlying patterns and habits that caused us trouble in the first place.** And if nothing changes, then nothing changes...the same results will pop up through our whole life (p. 83).”

“Victims of dry drunks have made a First Step relative to their addiction, but have not made a First Step relative to the **living problems that underlies all addictions and ultimately limits their ability to function in loving relationships.**”



Earnie Larsen



Earnie Larsen

*"I believe that **learning to make relationships work** is at the **core** of full recovery (p. 15)."*



Stage II Recovery is **contingent on emotional sobriety.**

Core Concepts of Emotional Sobriety

Core Concept 1

*Emotional dependency
obstructs and delays
our emotional maturity
and creates a set of
unenforceable rules.*

“...co-dependency is
caused by those self-
defeating, learned
behaviors that **diminish
our capacity to initiate or
participate in loving
relationships** (1987, p. 14)
Stage II Relationships: Loving
Beyond Addiction.”



Earnie Larsen

*“Our **dependency** makes **slaves out of us**, especially if this dependency is a **dependency of our self-esteem**. If you need encouragement, praise, pats on the back from everybody, then you make everybody your **judge**.”*



*“**Expectations** lead to the **erosion** of any relationship.*

The myth that the resolution of loneliness will result because we have found an intimate one-on-one relationship is a cop out.

*It begins a **toxic process** which **dissipates** the **mutual nourishment** that occurs when both people are **committed to sustaining nourishing interaction and growth of their separate selves**.”*

Dr. Jerry Greenwald (1980). *Breaking Out of Loneliness*.
Simon & Shuster: NY.

Core Concept 2

Maturity involves moving away from a reliance on environmental support towards self-support.

“...**maturing** is the **transcendence** from environmental support to **self-support**. (p.28). ”



Fritz Perls, M.D. - Founder of Gestalt Therapy

Fritz Perls (1969). Gestalt Therapy Verbatim.

Core Concept 3

Emotional sobriety is the result of true independence of spirit.

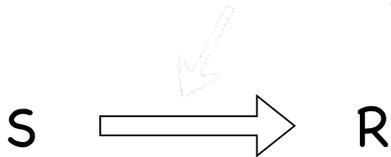
We strive to live between the stimulus and response.

The Essence of Emotional Sobriety



Viktor Frankl, M.D.

*“There’s a **space** between the Stimulus and our Response. In that space **is our power to choose our response**. In our response lies our growth and our freedom - try to live there.”*



S Space Between the Stimulus and the Response Emotional Sobriety Lives Here R

- Autonomy
- Individuality
- Holding on to Yourself
- Soothing and Supporting Yourself
- Keeping a Physical, Emotional and Spiritual Balance
- Maintaining Your Emotional Center of Gravity
- Validating Yourself
- Having Flexibility in your Response-Ability
- Letting the Best of You Run the Show

Core Concept 4

Emotional sobriety involves keeping our emotional center of gravity over our own two feet - anchored in our actual or true self or true essence.

The Shift in the Location of the Emotional Center of Gravity in Emotional Sobriety



If I'm OK, even if ? ? ?

Core Concept 5

Emotional sobriety involves claiming our experience instead of letting our experience claim us by searching for creative adjustments or solutions to our problems.

“If our freedom depends exclusively on another person allowing it, we lose our own sense of the part we must exercise in protecting and defining our own psychological space...”



Drs. Miriam and Erving Polster

*Erving and Miriam Polster, Ph.D.
Gestalt Therapy Integrated: Contours
of Theory and Practice (1973).*

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

Plainly, I could not avail myself to God's love until I was able to offer it back to Him by loving others as He would have me. And I couldn't possibly do that so long as I was victimized by false dependencies.

For my dependencies meant demand, a demand for the possession and control of the people and the conditions surrounding me. While those words 'absolute dependence' may look like a gimmick, they were the ones that helped to trigger my release into my present degree of stability and quietness of mind, qualities which I am now trying to consolidate by offering love to others regardless of the return to me.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

..... If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependence and its consequent demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling demands. Then we can be set free to live and love: we may then be able to gain emotional sobriety.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

Of course I haven't offered you a really new idea only a gimmick that has started to unhook several of my own "hexes" at depth. Nowadays, my brain no longer races compulsively in either elation, grandiosity, or depression. I have been given a quiet place in bright sunshine."

Relevant Psychological Concepts

"As long as you fight a symptom, it will become worse. If you take responsibility for what you are doing to yourself, how you produce your symptoms, how you produce your illness, how you produce your existence, you get in touch with yourself - growth begins, integration begins (p.178)."



Fritz Perls (1969). Gestalt Therapy Verbatim.

"...the human individual given a chance ... will develop the unique and alive forces of his real self..."



Karen Horney, M.D.

Neurosis and Human Growth, the Struggle Towards Self-Realization, 1950







*“Where a person experiences a loss or trauma in childhood that undermines his sense of security and self-acceptance, he would **project** into his image of the future the **requirement** that it **reverse** the experiences of the past.”*



Alexander Lowen, M.D.

Lowen, A. (1975). *Bionergetics*. Penguin Book.

*“We will lose sight to their origin in childhood (the claims generated by the traumas imperative) and will **sacrifice** the **present** to fulfill it’s goal.”*



Alexander Lowen, M.D.

“Neurosis is not seen as the deviation of what a person ought to be, but precisely as the method the individual uses to preserve his own centeredness, his own existence.”



Rollo May, Ph.D.

***“Desperation
creates Illusions -
illusions create
desperation.”***



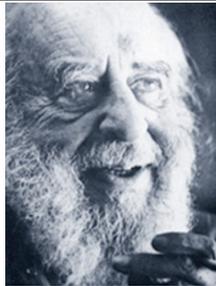
Alexander Lowen, M.D.

“We are being lived
by the forces within
ourselves.”



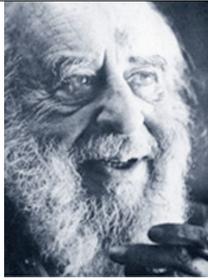
Sigmund Freud, M.D.

*“The critical point during the
development, both
collectively and individually,
is the ability to differentiate
between self-actualization
and the actualization of a
concept.”*



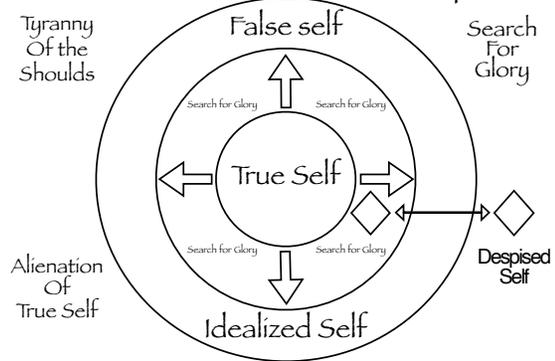
Fritz Perls, Gestalt Therapy and Human Potential, 1975,
p. 74.

“Many people **dedicate** their lives to **actualize a concept** of what they should be like, rather than to actualize themselves...This is again the **curse** of the ideal. **The curse that you should not be what you are.**”



Fritz Perls (1969). Gestalt Therapy Verbatim.

True Self Model of Personal Development



Basic Anxiety

Basic Solution

True Self

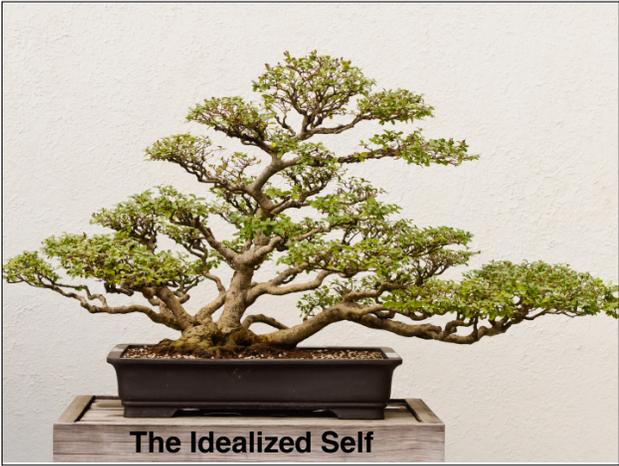
False Self

Appeal of Mastery

Appeal of Love

Appeal of Freedom

Demand, Claims and Expectations



“The fostering of the **phony self** is always at the **expense of the real self.**”



Karen Horney, M.D.

Self Analysis - 1942, p. 23



*“At the core of this alienation from the actual-self... is the **loss of the feeling of being an active determining force in our own lives.**”*



Karen Horney, M.D.

Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle
Toward Self-Realization

*“The self-actualizer expects the **possible**. The one who wants to actualize a concept attempts the **impossible**.”*



Fritz Perls, Gestalt Therapy and Human Potential. 1975,
p. 74.

“The integrity of a person is impaired because of the alienation from the self ... all these forces lead to ... a diminished capacity for being sincere with oneself.”

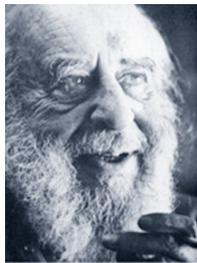


Karen Horney, M.D.

Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle Toward Self-Realization

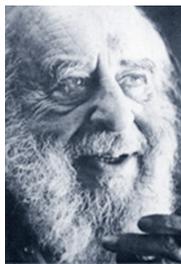
The Curse of Perfectionism

"In responding to should demands, the individual plays roles not supported by his genuine needs. *He becomes both phony and phobic. He shies away from seeing his limitations, and plays roles unsupported by his potential...He constructs an imaginary ideal of how he should be and not how he actually is.*"



Fritz Perls, Gestalt Therapy and Human Potential. 1975, p. 74.

"By turning his **perfectionistic demands toward himself, the neurotic tears himself to pieces in order to live up to his unrealistic ideal. Though perfection is often labeled an ideal, it is actually a cheap curse which punishes and tortures both the self and others for not living up to an impossible goal.**"



Fritz Perls, Gestalt Therapy and Human Potential. 1975, p. 74.



*“Demands for perfection **limit the individual’s ability function within himself**, in the therapeutic situation, in marriage, as well as other social situations.”*

Fritz Perls, Gestalt Therapy and Human Potential. 1975, p. 74.

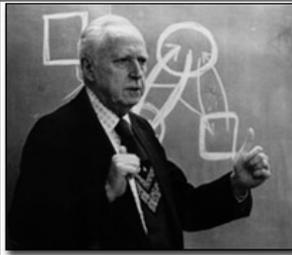


“Growing in a healthy way means liberating those evolutionary constructive forces inherent in man which urge him to realize his given potentialities.”

Karen Horney, M.D.

The Therapeutic Process: Essays and Lectures - 1999, p. 248.

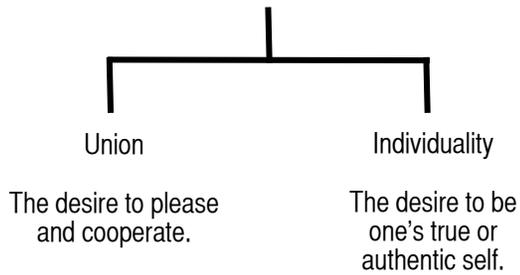
Differentiation and Emotional Sobriety



Dr. Murray Bowen

Drs. Murray Bowen's work - he denied differentiation as reflecting our level of functioning in relationships.

Differentiation



Effects of Low Differentiation

- Creates Emotional Fusion that causes:
 - Dysregulation.
 - Taking things personally.
 - Other validated self-esteem.
 - A reflected sense of self (Schnarch, 1999).
 - Poor psychological boundaries.
 - Taking responsibility for things you are not responsible for like your partner's feelings.
 - Experiencing your partner's emotional reaction as your own feelings.
 - Emotional Reactivity - Anger, Depression and Anxiety

*Trying to reassure
someone who
demands reassurance
reinforces the myth
that more closeness is
needed.*

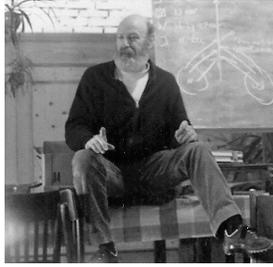
Emotional Fusion

Creates one of three responses:

- Submission or compliance.
- Control, domination, scapegoating or rebellion.
- Emotional withdrawal or detachment.

High Differentiation

- ⊙ Maintains a solid and flexible sense of self.
- ⊙ Thoughtful and reflective before reacting.
- ⊙ Unenforceable s are non-existent.
- ⊙ We rarely take things personally.
- ⊙ I to You relations.



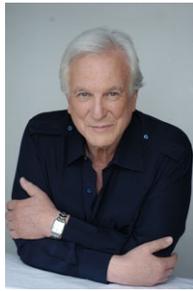
“**Separateness** is a dimension of relatedness, **not a disruption** of it.”

Emotional Dependency and Its Effect on Our Relationships



*“It only takes one clear person
to have a good relationship.
(p. 104).”*

Byron Katie (2005). *I Need Your Love - Is That True*. Three River Press: NY.



Dr. Nathaniel Branden

"If I do not feel lovable, then it is **very difficult to believe** that anyone else loves me."



Virginia Satir, Ph.D.

"We are always trying to get out of our **emotional jail**.... Mostly we try by begging, threatening, or pleasing other people, **trying to get them to do it for us.**"

Dr. Jerry Greenwald (1975). *Creative Intimacy: How to break the patterns that poison your relationships.* Simon & Schuster: NY.

"It is not possible for me to relate to others intimately and allow (and enjoy) their full expression of themselves if I have not discovered how to do this for myself."



Virginia Satir, Ph.D.

“If you are not eternally showing me that you live for me, then I feel like I am nothing.”

Virginia Satir, PeopleMaking.

“We use our beauty, our cleverness, our charm to capture someone for a partnership, as if he were an animal. And then when he wants to get out of the cage, we’re furious.

That doesn’t sound very caring to me. It’s not self love (or mature love).

I want my husband to want what he wants. And I also notice that I don’t have a choice.

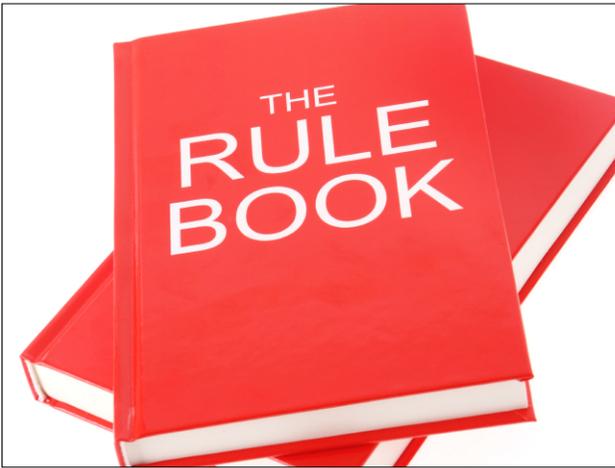
*That’s self love. He does what he does and I love that. That’s what I want because **when I’m at war with reality, it hurts** (p.73).”*

Byron Katie (2005), I Need Your Love - Is That True. Three River Press: NY.





We don’t have relationships - we take hostages.



“One of the truly basic problems is that our society bases the marital relationship almost completely on love and then imposes demands on it that love can never solely fulfill.
If you love me you won’t do anything without me.
If you love me you’ll do what I say.
If you love me you’ll give me what I want.
If you love me you’ll know what I want before I ask.
These kinds of practices soon make love into a kind of blackmail, I call the clutch.”



Virginia Satir, Ph.D.

Virginia Satir (1972) - Peoplemaking.



*“Once we begin to question our thoughts, our partners alive, dead or divorced, are always our **greatest teachers.** There’s no mistake about the person you’re with; he or she is the perfect teacher for you, whether or not the relationship works out, and once you enter inquiry, you come to see that clearly. (p.90).”*

Byron Katie (2005). I Need Your Love - Is That True. Three River Press: NY.

Four Principles that Operate in Our Relationships

James Hollis (1998), *The Eden Project: In Search of the Magical Other - A Jungian Perspective on Relationships*.



James Hollis, Ph.D.

What we do not know about ourselves and what we cannot do for ourselves will be projected onto our partner.



James Hollis, Ph.D.

We project our childhood wounds, our infantile longings, and our individuation imperative onto our partner.

We project onto our partner the responsibility **to do for us what we aren't able to do for ourselves.**



James Hollis, Ph.D.

*Since our partner **cannot, nor should not**, bear responsibility for our wounds, our narcissism or our individuation, our projections (demands) give way to **resentment** which results in the problem of power (manipulation).*



James Hollis, Ph.D.

*The only way to **heal** a faltering relationship is to take responsibility for our **individuation (raise our level of differentiation).***

Love and Emotional Sobriety

Trouble in a relationship doesn't mean something is wrong, it means something is right. Relationships are people growers.

*"So if your partner is angry, good. If there are things about him that you consider flaws, good, because **these flaws are your own, you're projecting them**, and you can write them down, inquire (own them), and set yourself free.*



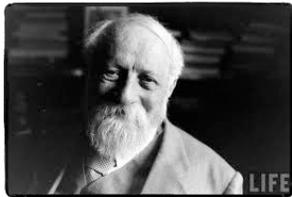
People go to India to find a guru, but you don't have to: You're living with one. Your partner will give you everything you need for your own freedom. (p.90)."

A healthy relationship has room enough for two, instead of insisting on making room for unenforceable rules.



Eric Fromm, M.D.

Mature love is ***“union with the preservation of integrity.”***

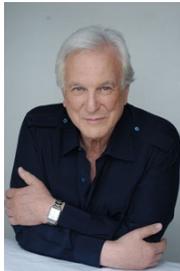


Martin Buber

Discussed the difference and importance of the **“I to Thou”** relationship in contrast to the **“I to It”** relationship.

A healthy relationship is when differences are seen as desirable, struggle as beneficial, and grief as necessary.

"This is one of the reasons why attempts at relationships so often fail - not because the vision of passionate or romantic love is intrinsically irrational, but because the self-esteem needed to support it is absent."



Dr. Nathaniel Branden

Nathaniel Branden (1994) - The Six Pillars of Self-Esteem

The Emotional Sobriety Inventory Form



In relationships, my lot in life changes not when I first demand change in others, but when I seriously take stock in myself.

E. Larsen (1987). Stage II Relationships: Love Beyond Addiction.



Virginia Satir, Ph.D.

*“When something goes wrong I try to make a picture in my mind of a circle with myself in the middle and then I ask myself **what part in my problem are my thoughts playing, my fears, ...my expectations, my interpretations.....and my lack of faith to be able to grow .**”*

Emotional Sobriety begins by becoming aware of our emotional dependency and how we react to its gravitational pull.

A Suggestion from Bill W.



“If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependency and its consequent unhealthy demand.”

Emotional Dependency Inventory

Upsetting Event	Your Reaction - What you did (be specific).	Unreasonable Expectation: Claim or Demand or Unenforceable Rule	Unhealthy Dependency	What I need to do to stay Centered.
She didn't celebrate my 6 months sober.	I got upset and withdrew.	I want her to feel good about what I am doing regardless of what I have done to her.	The value of my sobriety depends on her reaction.	?

To identify your demand or unenforceable rule, answer the following question:

If _____ would have _____, I would feel _____.

Some Tips on Holding on to Yourself and Personal Sharing

"As long as you fight a symptom, it will become worse. If you take responsibility for what you're doing to yourself, how you produce your symptoms, how you produce your illness, how you produce your existence, you get in touch with yourself - growth begins, integration begins (p.178)."



Fritz Perls (1969). Gestalt Therapy Verbatim.

The Therapeutic Goals of Emotional Sobriety

The aim of therapy is "...
to help a person
**abandon his drive to
actualize the idealized
self and move towards
self-realization.**"



Karen Horney, M.D.

The Therapeutic Process: Essays and
Lectures - 1999, p. 177.

"The therapeutic value in the
disillusioning process lies in
the possibility that, with the
weakening of the obstructive
forces, **the constructive
forces of the real self have
a chance to grow.**"



Karen Horney, M.D.

Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle Toward
Self-Realization - 1950.

"The essential goal of
therapy is to help
patient's **liberate** and
strengthen the
**constructive forces
within them**, while
**weakening the forces
that are obstructive to
growth.**"



Karen Horney, M.D.

The Therapeutic Process: Essays and Lectures - 1999, p. 177.

*"If responsibility and blame are fused in our minds, then our defenses will marshal to avoid any responsibility. However, the **self-contempt of blame is quite different from the self-empowerment of responsibility.** By **suspending self-blame**, we can look more **calmly and soberly at how we may be responsible for our choices and accountable for our actions.** Only then will we become wiser and stronger. Only then can we grow emotionally and spiritually."*



John Amodeo, Ph.D.
Love and Betrayal (1994).

Tips on Holding on to Yourself

*"This is why I am absolutely dogmatic in regard to the fact that **nothing exists except in the now, and that in the now you are behaving in a certain way that will or will not facilitate your development, your acquisition of a better ability to cope with life, to make available what was unavailable before, to begin to fill in the voids in your existence.... Learning is discovering and uncovering what is there.**"*



Fritz S. Perls, M.D. (1970)

Four Lectures in Gestalt Therapy Now, Eds. Fagan and Shepard.

Learn from your mistakes,
don't run and hide from
them.

Learn from the past and
then get the hell out of
there.

Thom Ruttledge

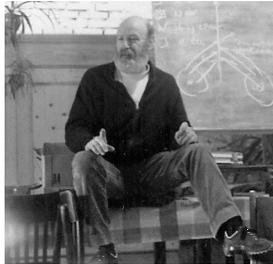
*"By responsibility I do not mean self-blame or labeling ourselves the cause of the problem. Rather I speak of 'response-ability' - that is the ability to observe ourselves and others in interaction and to **respond to a familiar situation in a new and different way.**"*



Harriet Lerner, Ph.D. The Dance of Anger: A Woman's Guide to Changing the Patterns of Intimate Relationships. Harper & Row

*If we try to obtain a sense of security and safety by regulating others - the world will **never** be a safe place.*

*-In order to be more **personal** in a relationship, you need to stop **taking your partner's behavior personally.***



Walter Kempler, M.D.
Personal Communication (1985)

Stop taking things personally and instead focus on what you are learning about the person you are interacting with.



Virginia Satir, Ph.D.

*"We must not allow
other people's
limited perceptions
to define us."*

Stop making what other people
think about you more important
than what you know to be true.

Claim your experience, don't let
it claim you.

Accept yourself instead of demanding that other people accept you as you are.

Support yourself instead of expecting other people to support you.

Stop pressuring other people to change to make you feel better, instead pressure yourself change and become more grounded.

Focus on soothing yourself rather than controlling the behavior of others.

Give up being rescued or saved, save yourself.

Stop turning others into your parent needing their validation, approval, or permission.

Extract from your trouble the unresolved issues in your life and get to work on resolving them.

Respect everyone's need to follow their own truth or their own path.

Live aware that we are all evolving individuals.

Bumper Sticker

Please be patient with me, God
isn't finished with me yet.

Remember, the problem is
not the problem, the
problem is in how you are
coping with it.

Stop erasing yourself.

Own you own projections as
an act of integrity.

Remember what Bill said, "It's a
spiritual axiom, that when I am
disturbed, no matter the cause,
there is something wrong with
me."



When you face trouble
add more "self" don't
subtract "your self"
from the conflict or
difficulty.

Listen to yourself. Don't get lost in the situation. Oftentimes you will have the answer to a problem. You just have to listen to yourself to find it.

Dr. Jerry Greenwald (1975). *Creative Intimacy: How to break the patterns that poison your relationships*. Simon & Shuster: NY.

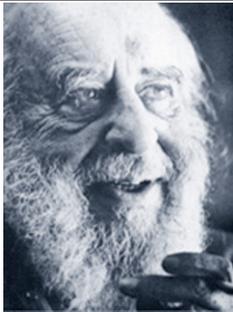
“One of the hallmarks of creative intimacy is the absence of ‘shoulds’ or ‘musts’ or other demands on ourselves or others.”

Session 9 A Vision for You

Allen's Experience



"If you understand the situation you are in, and let the situation which you are in control your actions, then you learn how to cope with life."





Virginia Satir, Ph.D.

*"Life is not what it's supposed to be. **It is what it is.** The way you **cope** with it, **is what makes the difference.**"*



Viktor Frankl, M.D.

*"We had to learn ourselves and, furthermore, we had to teach the despairing men, that it **did not really matter what we expected from life, but rather what life expected from us.....we needed to think of ourselves as those who were being questioned by life... Life ultimately means taking the responsibility to find the right answer to its problems and to fulfill the tasks which it constantly sets for each individual.**"*

Viktor E. Frankl (1959). Man's Search for Meaning.

Step 10

*·Finally we begin to see that all people, including ourselves, are to some extent **emotional ill** as well as **frequently wrong** and then we approach **true tolerance** and see what real love for our fellows actually means. It will become more and more evident as we go forward that it is **pointless to become angry or to get hurt by people, who like us, are suffering from the pains of growing up.**"*

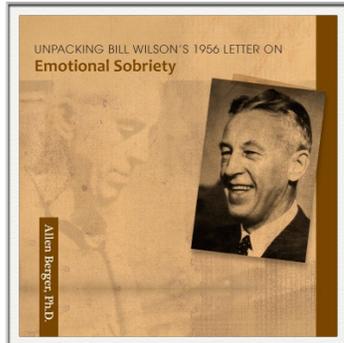


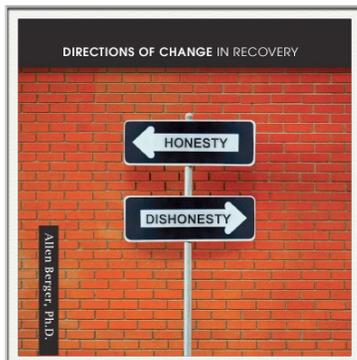
Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, 1952 - 1981.

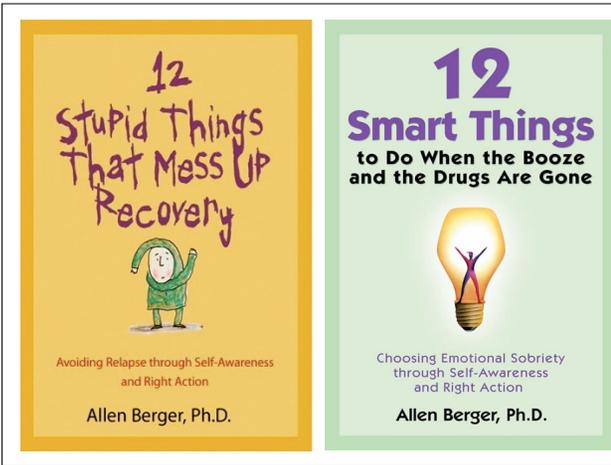
“...sobriety is only the bare beginning. It is only the first gift of the first awakening. If more gifts are to be received, our awakening has to go on. And if it does go on, we find that bit by bit by bit we can discard the old life – the one that didn't work – for a new life that can and does work under any conditions whatever. Regardless of worldly success or failure, regardless of pain or joy, regardless of sickness or health or even of death itself, a new life of endless possibilities can be lived if we are willing to continue our awakening.”

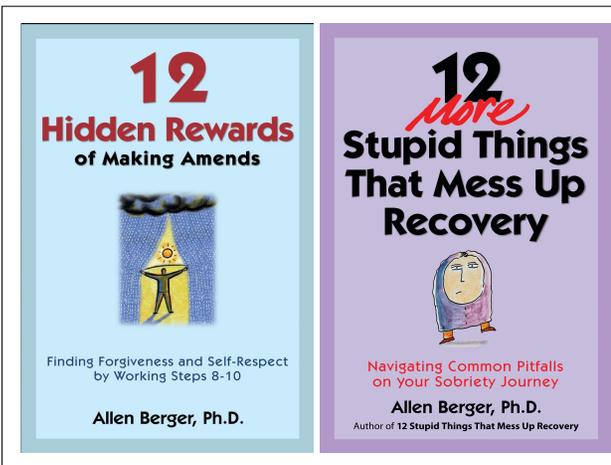
Bill Wilson (1957).











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