

Reparenting My Inner Child

whose only plea is,

“Love me, protect me, hear me, hug me, and heal me.”



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Introduction

Adult Children of Alcoholics is a spiritual program based on action coming from love. Our Inner Children are those precious beings inside who survived childhood without parents that could provide a stable, nurturing, and consistent environment. In ACA recovery we need to have an ever-present connection to our Inner Children who are part and parcel of our Higher Power. The Steps give us the framework and discipline for recovery. In ACA we learn that the solution to dysfunction is to become our own Loving Parents. As our own Loving Parents, we reach out to our Inner Children because we are the adults. We review the past from our vantage points of adults and provide the fragmented children inside us with ways to develop:

- A relationship with us as adults
- A solid foundation for natural emotional growth
- A complete identity
- A process for grieving
- A plan to resolve the neglect, abandonment, abuse, and trauma of childhood that stunted our emotional growth to complete the life stages we did not finish.

To do so, we use ACA tools and get the emotional support of our ACA family that will allow us to build healthy, happy, and functional adult lives through ACA meetings that incorporate and emphasize reparenting.

A. Our Own Loving Parent Meetings

In our meetings, we present a question on which to focus to build relationships with our Inner Children. We share our experience, strength, and hope on that topic. We read passages in the workbook to reinforce the concept. We work through exercises about the topic. Then we read through activities we can do in the ensuing week to work on that aspect of recovery. Following that, we briefly share what we have done this past week for our Inner Children as we progress in integrating what we have learned.

B. Workbook with Open Sharing Meetings

Workbook with Open Sharing meetings spend 20 minutes opening the meeting with the readings, announcements, 7th Tradition, and welcoming newcomers. Thirty to forty minutes are allocated to the workbook. The remainder of the time is devoted to open sharing on any topic. We included a meeting format at the back of the workbook for the 1.5-hour meeting.

C. Workbook-Only Meetings

Participants in an ACA group may elect to form a separate meeting to concentrate on reparenting their Inner Children. Workbook-only meetings last for about an hour. Participants typically start and end with the ACA Serenity Prayer and use the workbook.

Our Inner Child and Inner Children

When we experience loss, abandonment, abuse, or trauma without emotional support from parents or caretakers, we fragment. At the extreme end, we split into separate personalities (multiple personality disorder). More often, some of us shatter emotionally into multiple Inner Children, while others psychologically separate into one Inner Child. In this workbook we do not make the distinction between Inner Child and Inner Children. Instead we use the term “Inner Child” to avoid constantly writing “Inner Child(ren).” We do, however, use the term “Inner Children” as the plural form of “Inner Child” throughout this workbook.

Exercises are Self-Assessment Inventories and Educational Tools; *then* the Recovery Work Begins

In this workbook we focus attention on a topic and provide exercises that guide ACAs to address in their recovery work. The exercises are designed to focus the user’s awareness on what to work on. These are mini self-inventories or informational tools. Recovery largely depends on doing the work listed in “Things You Can Do in Recovery This Week” between meetings and sharing insights about the work with Sponsors, program friends, and participants at meetings during open sharing.

Pacing - Meetings are free to decide how long they spend on each chapter. The work is comprehensive and thorough. Some sections require far more time than others.

Acknowledgments

Just as Adult Children of Alcoholics recognizes its 12 Step roots in Alcoholics Anonymous, ACA recovery reaps the benefits of advances made in the therapeutic community. Recovery techniques presented here are based on the work of many individuals. We stand on the shoulders of giants in using their ideas to progress in our recovery, and we appreciate their efforts that are collectively providing the pathway to our becoming happy, joyous, and free from dysfunction.

Dysfunctional Families – Claudia Black in It Will Never Happen to Me explored the interplay in alcoholic families (1981). John Bradshaw on: The Family (1986) explored the dynamic in dysfunctional family systems.

Emotional Foundations – Logic applied to dysfunctional family systems results in the supposition that children growing up in dysfunctional homes did not complete healthy emotional development. To that end, we propose that to complete the stages of development that were interrupted, we complete them.

Identity Development – In dysfunctional families the children choose or are forced to choose to survive abuse by identifying themselves as abusers or as victims. These children have no coherent sense of self, no clear identity, having mimicked or accepted the behavior of the perpetrators and/or their victims to survive. In recovery we explore what our core values are (what we'd die for), and systematically align our thoughts, words, and behaviors with them.

Becoming a Loving Parent to Our Inner Children – Carl Jung explored the notion of a child within us in Memories, Dreams, Reflections. (1962). Eric Berne in Games People Play (1964) laid out his theory of Transactional Analysis between the various parts of the human psyche – the parent, the adult, and the child. Claude Steiner described the adoption of abuse survivors living life according to self-developed dysfunctional scripts in Scripts People Live (1974).

Lucia Capacchione used the idea of reparenting the Inner Child in her art therapy work in 1976 that she explained in her book, Recovery of Your Inner Child (1991).

Charles Whitfield detailed recovery in his book, Healing the Child Within: Discovery and Recovery for Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families (1987).

Listing Traumatic Experiences – We loosely borrowed from Peggy Pace (Lifespan Integration: Connecting Ego States through Time (2003) the idea to chronologically list traumatic experiences of childhood and included a grid. We added the recognition of joyful events and milestones.

Grief Work – Elizabeth Kubler-Ross developed model of five stages of grief. In her book On Death and Dying (1969), she first discussed her theory of the five stages of grief for terminally ill patients.

Life Stages – We expanded on Erik Erikson's psychosocial model of human development from an observational model about life stages discussed in his writing, Identity and the Lifecycle (1959), to using those observations to complete each stage of development.

Disconnections between Core Beliefs, Thinking, Speaking, and Behavior – Alcoholics Anonymous uses the term "Stinkin' Thinkin'" to describe confusion in beliefs, thoughts, words, and actions. Eric Berne, in Games People Play, (1964), described this phenomenon as the "critical parent." Francine Shapiro, in her method to reprogram information in brain cells, Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR) developed in 1988, focuses on removing "false, negative beliefs" and replacing them with true, positive beliefs. In ACA recovery we are rethinking what is real for us and ridding ourselves of the vestiges of ideas we came to adopt in moments of life-threatening abuse and trauma if our efforts to survive. The goal is to align our true beliefs with our thoughts, words, and behavior.

Thanks

We give thanks to our Higher Power. We thank Tony A. and the Alanon children who, too old for Alateen, continued to pursue the connection between their lives growing up in alcoholic homes and their dysfunction. We thank our program fellows whose shared wisdom allowed us to create this workbook and the WSO Literature Committee that inspired us to improve the original manuscript.



Learn About Dysfunctional Families – Chapter 1

Question: How do we become alcoholics/addicts or codependents?

Reading



Dysfunctional Family Systems

Parents in a dysfunctional family include one alcoholic/addict and one codependent, two alcoholics/addicts, or two codependents. The codependent parents relinquish control to the alcoholic/addict parents, taking on long-suffering roles. Children in dysfunctional families make decisions of how to survive the family abuse since they cannot escape or fight back. They often pattern their lives after the parent-abuser or the parent-victim.



Alcoholics or Addicts

Alcoholics and addicts are people who misuse substances, engage in behaviors, or adopt beliefs to dull their pain, escape their feelings, or feel alive. Substances include, but are not limited to, alcohol, caffeine, drugs, and tobacco. Behaviors may include excessive use of technology or media, pornography, sexual abuse of self or others, raging, gambling, risky or dangerous activities, and hoarding. Adopted beliefs may be grandiosity, superiority, and “right” to control, exploit, and/or manipulate others. They

- Fluctuate between reactive positions:
 - 1). I am the victim; you are my savior; he is the perpetrator
 - 2). You are the victim; I am your rescuer (and you will owe me for it); he is the perpetrator
 - 3). You are the perpetrator who has betrayed me; I am the victim; I will find another Super-Hero
- Charm others to manipulate them (eye contact, listening, touch, intimate social proximity, compliments, gifts, parental nurturing, and protection)
- Isolate the codependent from all others
- Intimidate codependents with superior education, intelligence, skills, station in life, creativity, etc.
- Undermine, ignore, minimize, and shame efforts and accomplishments of codependents and disparage their pride
- Rally codependents to fight causes and quietly enjoy watching the mayhem
- Bait others into arguments and competitions where the addicts have unfair advantage; they must “win” and others must “lose,” be hurt, or humiliated
- Erratically create, define, assert, and enforce their constantly changing family rules
- Dramatize plights to create urgency and allegiance
- Work the angles (preferring indirect, convoluted, and “quick-fix” solutions)
- Are hyper-vigilant and unforgiving when THEIR boundaries are violated, using such “violations” to manipulate others.
- Manipulate codependents (push and pull) with conditional love, abandonment, and violence



Codependents

- Allow or insist others use them or their services, time, skills, creativity and so on
- Believe they deserve to be used and abused; it is their role
- Believe they are too afraid, weak, stupid... and cede control and responsibility
- Become self-effacing and self-destructive to please abusers and/or avoid abuse
- Try to read the minds of their controllers to pre-empt outbursts and avoid violence; believe others also read their minds
- Adopt and champion the opinions, attitudes, behavior, and causes of the controllers to gain their approval or avoid abuse of self or others
- Live for hints of compliments and recognition from the controllers
- Keep trying to please their controllers and everyone else because everyone else is more important
- Sell out or minimize value of other codependents
- Suffer in silence, sigh a lot (martyrdom), or whine loudly and “guilt” others



When a Family Member Changes Behavior

When someone stops playing by the dysfunctional family rules, the family dynamic becomes unbalanced and uncomfortable. As a result, the disrupter who is “making waves” and “ruining” the lives of everyone else in that dysfunctional system becomes the person the others try to force back into his/her dysfunctional role by:

- Escalating control through guilt, abandoning, whining, crying, undermining, threatening...
- Threatening to disown or exile the disrupter
- Replacing the renegade immediately with a more compliant person to prove how worthless and expendable the disrupter is
- Attacking the renegade physically, his/her reputation, or livelihood



Letting Go of Dysfunction - Associate with Functional People

At the beginning of recovery, it may be easiest to step out of the baiting game by staying away or distancing yourself from all people (relatives, friends, co-workers...) who bring out your dysfunctional behavior. When you have learned what your limits are, how to communicate them, how to assert yourself, and to stand your ground, you will no longer feel threatened or be lured into dysfunctional roles and games. As you progress in recovery you will be more comfortable interacting with dysfunctional people because you will know how to handle them and keep yourself safe.



Letting Go of Dysfunction - Refuse to Play

It is not always possible to avoid family members and others you interact with daily who are dysfunctional. Remember that the point of a dysfunctional game is for the one who introduces the game to “win”. The rules of the game ensure that outcome every time. So when a “game” is introduced, the sane response to it is to:

1. recognize that your adrenaline has increased because you have been baited

2. see that you are being lured to play the game (understanding that your role in it is to lose)
3. refuse to play

If the game is “Rescue Me”, your response might be, “Let me know how you solve that problem.” If the game is “Give Me Your Nifty Thing”, your answer can be, “No, I really enjoy it and treasure it myself!” The solution to the game, “Let Me Use All Your Time, Ability, Energy, and Resources”, can be to say, “No” or “I’ll have to check my calendar.”



Letting Go of Dysfunction - Say No

If you choose to do things for someone, you need to question your own motives before you commit to any action. If *you* are willing to do it, you ought to be getting something healthy from the transaction. You then need to determine if you have the *extra* time, energy, and ability to do it. Do not commit yourself if you have any doubt. Give yourself permission to say, “No.” You might even use this opportunity to set up a reciprocal trade – “I’ll do this one thing _____ if you do this other thing _____ for me first”; *without an equal trade no healthy relationship exists.*



Letting Go of Dysfunction - Decide On, Communicate, and Enforce Boundaries

Recovery depends on figuring out who you are, what your likes and dislikes are, and what your limits are. Recognizing the feelings of your Inner Child is the easiest, fastest way to figure out what your limits are. Once you know what they are, then communicating them to others is essential. Communicate them, in advance if possible, but definitely when your boundaries have been violated. Others cannot read your mind; they will not stop violating your boundaries if you do not tell them to stop. If your boundary is crossed again, you need to immediately act on the consequence you decided on. If the boundary is violated the third time by the same person, you need to end the relationship because that person is consciously abusing you and will continue to do so. You are not bound by guilt to put up with boundary violations.



Letting Go of Dysfunction - Respect Yourself

To become emotionally healthy, you need to make the decision to respect yourself. To do that you focus on yourself instead of others and become rigorously honest in taking your inventory: who you are, who you aren’t but want to be, what you actually need, and what you want. As your own loving parent, you then find healthy ways to supply those needs and wants yourself.


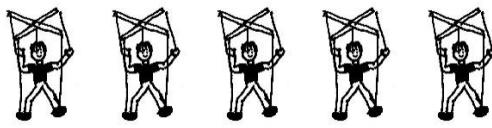


Letting Go of Dysfunction - Realize Why You Do What You Do

Becoming aware of what you do allows you to look at why you do it. You are then able to trace your dysfunctional behavior to old messages (stemming from childhood instances of abuse, neglect, abandonment, loss, and trauma), silence the messages, and resolve the issues. Then you will act more appropriately in daily interactions and respond rather than react to dysfunctional people and life disruptions.







Exercise – Identify Characteristics of Addicts and Codependents

List 3 – 5 characteristics of an alcoholic/addict and 3 – 5 traits of a codependent. Share your answers with members of your group.

	
Addicts/Alcoholics	Codependents
1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Exercise – Identify the People in Your Life

Below each gingerbread person, write the name of 3-6 people you interact with regularly. Write an A on the chest of the gingerbread person if your person has alcoholic or addiction characteristics. Write a C on the chest of the gingerbread person if your person has codependent traits. Share with members of your group one or more alcoholic/addict or codependent characteristics each person exhibits.

Exercise – You Might be an Alcoholic or Addict

Put a checkmark next to all the items that are true for you. Share with members of your group one or more alcoholic or addictive characteristics you see in yourself.

	✓	
1		I misuse substances, engage in behaviors, or adopt beliefs to dull my pain, escape my feelings, or feel alive.
2		I misuse substances such as alcohol, drugs, caffeine, or tobacco.
3		I engage in excessive use of technology, media, pornography, sexual abuse of self or others, raging, gambling, risky or dangerous behavior, or hoarding
4		I am greater than and superior to others.
5		It is my job, my responsibility, to control and use others and make them do what I want them to.
6		I variously take on the position of victim, savior, or perpetrator to manipulate others; I assign the roles to others.
7		I charm others to manipulate them using eye contact, listening, touch, social proximity, compliments, gifts, parental nurturing, and/or protection.
8		I like to isolate the codependent from all others.
9		I deliberately overwhelm codependents with my superior education, intelligence, skills, station in life, creativity, etc.
10		I undermine, ignore, minimize, and shame the efforts and accomplishments of codependents and disparage their pride
11.		I get codependents to fight my causes and quietly enjoy watching the mayhem they create
12.		I bait others into arguments and competitions where I have the advantage; I must “win” and others must “lose,” be hurt, or humiliated
13.		I erratically create, define, assert, and enforce my constantly changing family rules; it keeps others off balance.
14.		I dramatize plights to create urgency and allegiance to get others to do what I want them to do.
15.		I work the angles (preferring indirect, convoluted, and “quick-fix” solutions) to solve my problems.
16.		I am hyper-vigilant and unforgiving when my boundaries are violated, I make others feel guilty by reminding them when they violated my boundaries so they will do what I want them to do.
17.		I manipulate codependents (push and pull) with conditional love, abandonment, and violence.



Exercise – You Might be a Codependent








Put a checkmark next to all the items that are true for you. Share with members of your group one or more codependent characteristics you see in yourself.

	✓	
1		I allow or insist others use me or my services, time, skills, creativity...
2		I believe I deserve to be used and abused; it is my role
3		I believe I am too afraid, weak, stupid..., so I give up my control and responsibility to stronger people
4		I become self-effacing and self-destructive to please abusers and/or avoid abuse
5		I try to read the minds of addicts and alcoholics to pre-empt outbursts and avoid violence; I believe others read my mind, too
6		I adopt and champion the opinions, attitudes, behavior, and causes of my alcoholic/addict to gain his/her approval or avoid abuse for myself and/or others
7		I live for hints of compliments and recognition from my addict/alcoholic
8		I keep trying to please my alcoholic/addict and everyone else because everyone is more important than me
9		I sell out or minimize value of other codependents like me
10		I suffer in silence, sigh a lot, or whine in the effort to make my alcoholic/addict feel guilty

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

Read through each scenario given. Group participants take turns answering the questions in the third column.

Scenario		In Recovery I Can Do This
You break the family rules and everyone in the family pressures you to act like you always have.	<p align="center">Breaking the Family Rules</p> 	<p><i>What can you do to stop being forced back into dysfunctional behavior?</i></p>
You are around dysfunctional family members, neighbors, co-workers, and acquaintances.	<p align="center">Associate with Functional People</p> 	<p><i>Who can you be around who is safe and functional?</i></p>
You feel adrenaline pumping because you have been baited to play a dysfunctional game that you will lose. You name the lure that got your attention. You refuse to play.	<p align="center">Refuse to Play</p> 	<p><i>What can you do instead of playing a dysfunctional game?</i></p>
Someone tells you how much he needs <u>your</u> help.	<p align="center">Just Say No</p> 	<p><i>Ask yourself:</i> <i>Do I want to help?</i> <i>Why do I want to help (right thing to do, codependence, or gain an advantage)?</i> <i>Do I have the extra time, energy, ability, and resources to help?</i></p>
A meeting secretary asked you to lead a meeting. You start reading through the meeting format, but the meeting secretary keeps interrupting you. You feel like you have been set up for abuse and betrayed.	<p align="center">Enforce Boundaries</p> 	<p><i>What can you say respectfully to the meeting secretary to stop the boundary violation?</i></p>
You help others a lot. You do not stand up for yourself. You allow others to use and abuse you. You do not like yourself or your life.	<p align="center">Respect Yourself</p> 	<p><i>Recite and live the ACA Serenity Prayer</i> <i>Answer these questions:</i> <i>Who are you now?</i> <i>Who do you want to be?</i> <i>What do you need that you do not have?</i> <i>What do you want that you do not have?</i> <i>List and prioritize your unmet needs and wants and then supply them.</i></p>
You gave your friend the money you saved up for 6 months to go on vacation because she said she needed it to pay her rent. Instead, she bought new clothes "for job interviews" with that money and slept with the landlord to "pay" the rent.	<p align="center">Realize Why You Do What You Do</p> 	<p><i>Answer these questions:</i> <i>How do you feel?</i> <i>What event in your childhood made you feel like this?</i> <i>What can you do to resolve your feelings about the childhood event?</i> <i>What can you say or do to resolve your current problem with your friend?</i></p>



Build a Solid Emotional Foundation - Chapter 2

Question: How do I build a strong emotional foundation for my Inner Child?

Reading

With a strong, solid emotional foundation, our Inner Children can grow up emotionally. Without it, we keep building our lives on shifting sands and wondering why we fail.

In recovery, Loving Parents ensure that their Inner Children get all their physiological, safety and security, loving and belonging, esteem, and actualization needs met.

Exercise – How I Provide my Inner Child with a Solid Emotional Foundation






In column 1, circle any item listed that your Inner Child is getting enough of from you. In column 2, note those items not circled in column 1. In column 3, write your plan to supply it. Example: You circle everything except “sleep” in column 1. In column 2, you jot down “sleep.” In column 3, you decide to stop drinking coffee after 10 am daily.

Inner Child's Needs	Basic Needs My Inner Child Lacks	One Thing I Will Do to Supply It
Physiological Clean Plentiful Air Food Water Shelter Clothing Sleep Warmth Intimacy		
Safety & Security Mind Body Employment Resources to live comfortably Health Worldly Goods & Property		
Love & Belonging Love Friendship Intimacy Family / Program Family Connectedness		
Esteem Respect Self-esteem Social Status / Rank Recognition Strength Freedom		
Freedom to Be & Become Explore Learn Grow Reach Potential		

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

Put an X on all the statements in the grid that are true for you. Write N.A. for "Not applicable." Work on one area of recovery you did not cross out.

	AIR The air I breathe is clean, pure, and abundant	FOOD The food I eat is nutritious	SHELTER I live in a clean, safe, temperature-friendly shelter	
CLOTHING My clothes are clean, well-fitted, and appropriate for my activities	SLEEP I get enough, uninterrupted, and restorative sleep	INTIMACY My intimate relationships are legal, consensual, respectful, reciprocal, and mutually satisfying	MIND I keep mentally healthy & alert by learning new things; I keep mentally safe by avoiding toxic people, places, things, and information	BODY I keep healthy by eating nutritiously, exercising regularly, seeing doctors and dentists often, taking my prescriptions, keeping my home safe, and avoiding unhealthy people, places, and things.
EMPLOYMENT I enjoy a safe, mentally stimulating job I have the aptitude and skills to do. I can study and work to elevate my responsibilities and salary.	ASSETS I have the savings, income, investments, possessions, and property I need to live comfortably.	 <p style="text-align: center;">BUILD YOUR EMOTIONAL FOUNDATION</p>	PROPERTY I keep my property and/or investments in order, well-maintained, and paid up or paid for.	FRIENDS I keep in contact with my close friends regularly and work at maintaining our friendships.
INTIMACY I have loving, reciprocal, warm, respectful, and intimate relationships with a few special people.	FAMILY I recognize the virtues of my parents and siblings. I work to maintain healthy relationships with the family I have today.	BELONGING I am grateful for the people and programs that give me opportunities to volunteer and give service for the things I believe in.	RESPECT I work at being the person whose core values, thoughts, words, and actions match so I can respect myself and others can respect me.	SELF-ESTEEM I am a wonderful person. As a child of my Higher Power, I was perfect the day I was born. I value and respect who I am.
STATUS I have status in my home, neighborhood, work, program, and community because I have earned respect and trust from others.	RECOGNITION I am recognized for my strengths and contributions in my home, neighborhood, work, program, and community	STRENGTH I am building a solid emotional foundation which gives me the support I need to live my life fearlessly and positively.	FREEDOM I allow myself to say and do what I want to say and do, go where I want to go, and take care of my own needs and wants.	EXPLORE I am allowing myself to freely explore people, places, and things.
	LEARN I am free to learn new things and ways to do new things.	GROW I am allowing myself to grow up emotionally and take on the responsibilities of adulthood.	REACH POTENTIAL I allow myself to use all my intellect, experience, aptitude, and intuition to become all I can be.	



Realize Your Identity - Chapter 3

Question: Who am I?

Reading



Swiss Cheese Identity

Children brought up in alcoholic and dysfunctional homes learn from their families who they are, what to believe, what to think, what to say, and how to act. If the family messages are delivered with healthy parenting, the children grow up with a healthy identity. If a child is abandoned, neglected, abused, and/or traumatized, the child often adopts the thoughts, words, and behaviors of the abuser(s) to survive that environment.

When that child grows up and is finally free of his/her family's ever-present influence, unfortunately, the child too often continues the pattern of self-abuse. The critical, vicious, and terrifying name-calling and life-threatening experiences endured as a defenseless child are seared into the child's memory. They keep resurfacing and replaying as the child becomes an adult. The adult continues believing, thinking ("critical parent tapes" or "stinkin' thinkin'"), saying, and acting out the self-abuse.

Even so, as the child grows up, he/she is exposed to new beliefs, ideas, expressions, and behavior that he/she adopts that are in conflict with the childhood values, thoughts, words, and actions. That adult, therefore, endures a constant internal struggle of who to be and what to do and lives in constant discord and chaos.



Putting Humpty Together Again

In ACA recovery, we fill in the holes of the Swiss cheese that is the current state of our identity. Our own Loving Parents guide us through the process of sorting out who we currently are and who we want to become. We challenge the false, negative beliefs ("critical parent tapes" or "stinkin' thinkin'"), grieve our losses, and decide what we really believe. We align our core beliefs with our thoughts, words, and behaviors.

Beliefs ▶ Thoughts ▶ Words ▶ Actions

Aligning What We Believe with How We Think, Speak, and Act

As our Inner Children begin to trust us, our job as Loving Parents is to guide our Inner Children through a process of discovering who we really are today in the self-discovery inventories in Exercises 1 – 5 below.

In Exercise 6, we explore continuums of beliefs, thoughts, words, and actions to see if they are aligned. When they are, we are able to make choices and decisions easily, quickly, and effectively. When they are not in agreement, we hesitate due to confusion, make no decisions, or

make bad choices. In these instances, we appear to be untrustworthy or unreliable to others. Our goal in recovery is to align our core values with what we think, do, and say. To align our beliefs, thoughts, words, and actions, we become aware of the disconnect, challenge the misaligned piece and restate it, grieve the roots of the misalignment, and correct ourselves each time when we become aware of the misalignment.

Exercise 1 – My World View

Complete the sentences below. There are no wrong answers.

1. The universe began when _____
2. My idea of God is _____
3. Man’s purpose (my purpose) on earth is _____
4. I would kill for _____
5. I would die for _____

Exercise 2 – My Heritage

Complete the sentences below.

1. I was born (gender) _____ Men are _____ Women are _____
2. I was born (birthplace) _____ which is _____
3. My race, ethnicity, and nationality are _____
which are _____
4. I speak these languages _____ that are _____
5. Religiously, I was taught to believe _____

Exercise 3 – My Childhood and Family

Complete the sentences below.

1. What I loved/hated about my father is/was _____
2. What I loved/hated about my mother is/was _____
3. My brothers and sisters are/were _____

4. My role in my family was to _____
5. My favorite classes in school were _____
6. My favorite toys were _____
7. My favorite games / sports were _____
8. My favorite music, arts, and crafts were _____

9. I played it safe because I _____
10. I did these risky things as a child _____
11. After school I used to _____
12. The clubs and organizations I belonged to were _____

Exercise 4 – My Life Today

Complete the sentences below.

1. I like / hate how old I am now because _____
2. Three things I do well are _____
3. My highest level of education so far is _____
4. I like/dislike my job as a _____ because _____
5. In my career, I see myself in 5 years as a _____
6. My 3 greatest achievements are _____
7. I spend my spare income today on _____
8. I rent/own and live in a _____ that is _____
9. The 3 nicest things I own are _____
10. My mode of transportation is _____
11. I take care of my health by _____
12. My favorite hobbies are _____
13. Activities I do in my spare time are _____
14. Places I have / want to travel to are _____ because _____
- _____
15. My family consists of _____
16. My best friends are known for _____
17. My favorite pets are/were _____
18. My attitude about sex is _____
19. My immediate goals are _____

Exercise 4 – My Community Involvement

Complete the sentences below.

1. I give service in my program(s) because I _____

2. I volunteer at _____ because _____
3. I socialize with _____ because _____
4. I am politically active because _____

Exercise 5 – Reflections

Complete the sentences below.

1. The best thing about me is _____
2. The best thing I ever did was _____
3. The best person in my life is/was _____
4. I wish I had more time to ___ _____
5. I want ____ to know _____
6. I did this in the hope it would make the world better _____

Exercise 6 – Aligning My Beliefs with what I Think, Say, and Do

In each row below, is an example of the belief/thoughts/words/behaviors continuum that is a result of being raised in a dysfunctional home. Circle the part of the continuum in each row that does not line up with the rest of the continuum.

	Belief	Thought	Words	Behavior
1.	I don't deserve to make enough money to have the home or car I want.	I will never make the money I want.	I can have the home, car, and lifestyle I want anytime I want.	Lives in unsafe, cheap apartment. Drives 10-year-old vehicle.
2.	Fidelity in marriage is important.	It is wrong to cheat on my spouse.	I love my spouse.	Cheats on spouse.
3.	My Higher Power is a vengeful God.	God is a benevolent God.	God will kill me if I make a mistake.	Is a perfectionist in fear (s)he will be killed for making a mistake.
4.	Everyone lies.	I tell the truth when it serves me.	I always tell the truth; why wouldn't I?	Misstates information, lies, obfuscates, tells half-truths.
5.	I am worthless.	I will justify my life by ignoring what I need and want and help others.	I am a wonderful person doing God's work humbly.	Helps others; ignores own needs and wants.
6.	Spouses have equally important roles in families.	I am important because someone pays for my expertise and time.	People who do not earn money for work are worthless.	Tells spouse to stay home to raise the children.

Answers may be found on page 110

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

1. Tombstone

Write your name on the line on the tombstone below. Enter your responses into the 6 sections of the tombstone.

I loved these 3 people with all my heart	Three things I enjoyed doing in my life were
My 3 greatest accomplishments were	I want to be remembered for 3 characteristics (adjectives)
I made the world better by	My hope for the future is

2. Peruse journals, previous step work, personality inventories, etc. to help with this exercise.



Why We Become Our Own Loving Parents – Chapter 4

Question: Why do we want to be our own Loving Parents for our Inner Children?

Reading

To Stop Them from Sabotaging Us

If we do not recognize our Inner Children, they do what real children do when they are ignored. They retaliate and find ways to sabotage our best efforts. Our Inner Children withdraw when they are afraid, worried, or angry, and we, as adults, lose energy, time, money, creativity, and spontaneity. We remained stuck at various life stages where we were so emotionally stunted that we stopped growing up. Examples of sabotage are addictions and compulsions that include adrenaline, alcohol, codependence, dangerous or risky behavior, gambling, food, drugs, sex, tobacco, workaholism, hoarding, etc. Sabotage also includes non-productive or negative behaviors such as:

Abuse of self or others	Inability to trust
Anxiety	Low self-esteem
Attitude that the world owes me	Lying
Avoiding intimacy	Manipulation
Blaming others	Paranoia
Codependence	Passive aggression
Defensiveness	Pretending to work a program
Demand for immediate attention	Sulking
Drama Queen/King	Procrastination
Embarrassment	Rage
Emotional outbursts	Rescuing and fixing others
Extreme cautiousness	Rescue seeking
Focus on detail, not the big picture	Revenge seeking
Fixation on slights of others	Self-sabotage
Habitual coercion of others	Shame

To End the Internal Conflict

The fragments of ourselves all have different needs and wants, so we remain in constant internal conflict for as long as the parts of our fractured selves operate in isolation.

To Integrate the Fragmented Parts of Ourselves

When we help our Inner Children complete the life stages they missed, they begin to integrate their needs and wants with those of our Loving Parents. When they are all integrated with our adult selves, we then have solid, unified personalities. As whole people, we then go on to build happy, healthy, and serene lives.

To Become Happy, Joyous, and Free

When our integrated Inner Children feel safe, loved, and respected by us, they provide us with curiosity, abounding energy, the ability to play, and an intuitive trust in a Higher Power.

Exercise

Each person in the group may share his/her answers on the following questions (or pass).

1. How does your Inner Child sabotage you (see the list above)?
2. What are your examples of wanting to do different things at the same time or not knowing what is the right thing to do?
3. Share one need or want of your Inner Child.
4. When you were a little child, share one thing you were intensely curious about, one time you were really excited about something, or one time you had outrageous fun.
5. What do you do today that you are intensely curious about, excited about, or is great fun?

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter’s information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

1. Write your version of this affirmation on a notecard or poster and read it three times a day for one week:

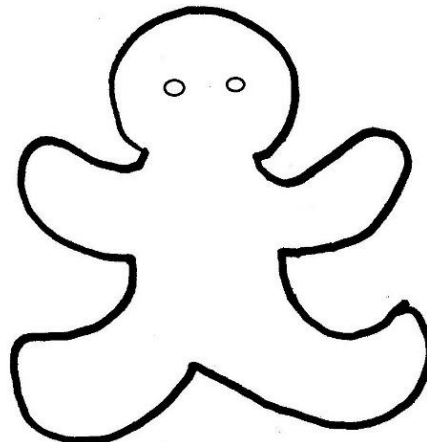
*I am becoming my own Loving Parent
to help my Inner Child
grow up emotionally.*

2. Fill in the blanks next to the outline of your Inner Child below of what your life will be like when you are happy, joyous, and free.

Relationship I will be in

Job I will be doing

Where I will live



Things I will do

Fun I will have

Friends who will support me



Overview: What Loving Parents Do; What You Can Do – Chapter 5

Question: What do actual loving parents do for their children?

Reading

Loving parents provide their children with solid emotional foundations, and nurture healthy identity development. They love, protect, listen to, appropriately touch, and guide their children gently through the trials and tribulations of growing up. This chapter is an overview of what you can expect in your recovery.

A. Loving parents provide their children with strong, solid emotional foundations

In functional homes, parents automatically provide their children with basic needs of air, food, water, shelter, clothing, and sleep. They provide safety and security. They foster a sense of being loved and belonging in the family, extended family, neighborhood, community, and world. They model how to be trustworthy. They have supportive people around them who give them energy. They bolster their children's self-esteem. They support the children's efforts to explore, learn, grow, and reach the extent of their abilities.

Exercise

Circle the things you already do as your own Loving Parent for your Inner Child. For recovery, start doing the things for your Inner Child that you did not circle.

1. Provide basic needs: air, food, water, shelter, clothing, and sleep.
2. Ensure safety and security.
3. Foster a sense of being loved and belonging in the family, extended family, neighborhood, community, and world.
4. Recognize trustworthiness and be trustworthy.
5. Gather supportive people around you who give you energy.
6. Bolster your Inner Child's high sense of self-esteem.
7. Support your Inner Child's efforts to explore, learn, grow, and reach the extent of their abilities.

B. Loving parents encourage healthy identity development

Good parents model to their children how to present themselves in the world for success. They model and teach their children healthy core beliefs about hope and trust, will and autonomy, purpose and initiative, competence and industry, fidelity and identity, love and intimacy, caring and pride in accomplishment, as well as wisdom and integrity. They keep their promises.

Exercise

Circle the things you already do as your own Loving Parent for your Inner Child. For recovery, start doing the things for your Inner Child that you did not circle.

1. Model how to suit up, show up, listen, participate, and let go of the results.
2. Model and teach your Inner Child healthy core beliefs (hope and trust, will and autonomy, purpose and initiative, competence and industry, fidelity and identity, love and intimacy, caring and productivity, and wisdom and integrity).
3. Teach your Inner Child how to set limits and enforce boundaries.
4. Keep your promises.

C. Loving parents show their love in how they communicate with their children

Loving parents speak to their children gently and respectfully. They guide their children through the tiny steps of learning new things to ensure success. They cheer their children on to the next step and applaud their progress. They teach by breaking tasks into smaller increments so the children will succeed, tell the children how much they admire their efforts, and summarize the process the children used to do the task. Praise, not punishment and shame, is used to encourage their children. They address misbehavior by pointing out the behavior their children can change rather than shaming their children. They immediately and gently provide appropriate consequences for misbehavior. They teach their children that through honest self-evaluation, planning, hard work, and follow-through, they can accomplish most things. They teach their children to keep a healthy balance each day between work and play.

Exercise

Circle the things you already do as your own Loving Parent for your Inner Child. For recovery, start doing the things for your Inner Child that you did not circle.

1. Speak to your Inner Child gently and respectfully.
2. Guide your Inner Child through the tiny steps of learning new things, ensuring success.
3. Cheer your Inner Child on to the next step and applaud the progress.
4. Teach by breaking tasks into smaller increments so your Inner Child will succeed.
5. Praise the efforts of your Inner Child and restate the process of the task.
6. Use praise, not punishment and shame, to encourage your Inner Child.
7. Point out misbehavior your Inner Child can change.
8. Work with your Inner Child to come up with appropriate, immediate consequences for misbehavior by your Inner Child (including an apology, ways to atone, and changes in behavior).
9. Teach your Inner Child that through honest self-evaluation, planning, hard work, and follow-through, they can usually accomplish most things.
10. Teach your Inner Child to keep a healthy balance each day between work and play.

D. Loving parents protect their children

Loving parents allow their children to freely express themselves and explore, but they are ever vigilant to keep their children healthy and safe. Loving parents allow their children to make mistakes, fail, and be disappointed at times.

Exercise

Circle the things you already do as your own Loving Parent for your Inner Child. For recovery, start doing the things for your Inner Child that you did not circle.

1. Keep your Inner Child safe as he/she freely expresses him/herself and explores.
2. Allow your Inner Child to make mistakes, fail, and be disappointed.

E. Loving parents respect their children by listening to them

Loving parents make time each day for their children. They focus on and listen to what their children need and want from them. They hear the words and tone and read the body language. They ask their children clarifying questions.

Exercise

Circle the things you already do as your own Loving Parent for your Inner Child. For recovery, start doing the things for your Inner Child that you did not circle.

1. Make time to listen to your Inner Child.
2. Focus on and listen to what your Inner Child needs and wants from you.
3. Hear the words and tone and notice the body language of your Inner Child.
4. Ask your Inner Child pertinent questions to clarify your understanding.

F. Loving parents appropriately reassure and encourage their children with touch

In their mothers' wombs, children experience full-body hugging. Upon birth, children are swaddled and lovingly cradled. Their parents look them directly in the eyes and murmur sweetly to them. As children grow up, appropriate hair tussling, shoulder squeezes, hand-holding, back pats, hugs, and respectful massage (head, face, neck, shoulders, back, hands, and feet) are appropriate. Good parents touch their children with love and respect.

Exercise

Circle the things you already do as your own Loving Parent for your Inner Child. For recovery, start doing the things for your Inner Child that you did not circle.

1. Tussle your Inner Child's hair.
2. Squeeze his/her shoulder.
3. Hold his/her hand.
4. Pat your Inner Child on the back.
5. Hug your Inner Child.
6. Occasionally massage your Inner Child (head, face, neck, shoulders, back, hands, and feet).

G. Loving parents guide their children through grieving

When a beloved person or pet dies, someone moves away, or a child's hopes have been dashed, loving parents express their feelings in healthy, safe, acceptable, and productive ways. They carefully show and guide their children through the grieving process.

Exercise

Circle the things you already do as your own Loving Parent for your Inner Child. For recovery, start doing the things for your Inner Child that you did not circle.

1. Model how to feel and express feelings in safe, acceptable, and productive ways.
2. Help your Inner Child work through the process of grieving (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance).

H. Loving parents raise their children to work through life stages naturally

Healthy families experience disappointments, setbacks, losses, and woes, and good parents show their children how to feel, share their feelings, and work through the process of grieving (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance). They teach their children to experience their own feelings and express those feelings in acceptable and productive ways.

Exercise






Circle the things you already do as your own Loving Parent for your Inner Child. For recovery, start doing the things for your Inner Child that you did not circle.

1. Allow my Inner Child to feel loss, disappointment, and sadness.
2. Encourage my Inner Child to verbalize his/her feelings or write about them.
3. Offer a sympathetic ear and a hug.
4. Assure my Inner Child that feeling feelings is okay and that the feelings naturally pass.

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

What is one thing you can do this week in each category below to help your Inner Child?

What Loving Parents Do	What I, as My Own Loving Parent, Will Do for My Inner Child This Week
 <p>Ensure child has a solid emotional foundation</p>	
 <p>Help child find own identity</p>	
 <p>Meet child's needs (love, protection, listening, reassurance, guidance to grow up emotionally)</p>	
 <p>Model and share own grief</p>	
 <p>Integrate and accept life stages</p>	



Learn to Be Your Own Loving Parent – Chapter 6

Question: How can we learn what loving parents do for their children?

Reading

In ACA meetings people shared various methods they have used to learn how to be good parents to their Inner Children. They took note of how their parents behaved. They used what was nurturing, but sometimes did the opposite of what they felt was their parents' bad behavior. Sometimes they adopted the behavior of good parents modeled in movies and on television. Sometimes they saw examples of good and bad parenting in public places and may have adopted the healthy behaviors. Sometimes they read books about healthy parenting and took parenting classes.








Exercise - What's Your Story?

Briefly share ways you have learned about good parenting.

1. Remembering how my parents behaved and adopting what I thought was right
2. Remembering how my parents behaved and not doing what I thought was wrong
3. Seeing parenting in movies and on television shows and adopting the good traits
4. Emulating parents of friends and relatives who exhibited good parenting
5. Seeing good parenting behavior in public places and adopting those behaviors
6. Reading books on good parenting
7. Taking parenting classes to learn good parenting skills

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

	What is one...	Your Responses
	1. Example of good parenting by your Mom or Dad?	
	2. Example of parenting by Mom or Dad you will not use raising your child(ren)?	
	3. Example of good parenting seen on TV or in a movie?	
	4. Example of good parenting you saw from someone's parent growing up?	
	5. Example of good parenting you saw in a public place?	
	6. Title and author of one parenting book and where you can get it?	Title: Author: Location:
	7. Agency, address, & phone # where you can enroll for a class on Parenting?	Agency: Address: Phone: Date & time of first class:



Learn to Recognize and Communicate with My Inner Child – Chapter 7

Question: How can I recognize and communicate with my Inner Child?

Reading

Our Inner Children emerge when we experience traumas that are too overwhelming for us to emotionally process. Emotionally we fragment or compartmentalize parts of our personality. Without parental modeling, instruction, tools, or support to work through the events that we thought would seriously harm us or someone we loved, we become emotionally stunted.

We may block out the traumatic events and forget them, but they still are recorded in our unconscious mind. They rise up automatically and immediately when similar things happen in our lives. Listed in the exercise below are some ways we have contact with our Inner Children.

Exercise - Ways I Recognize , Communicate With, and Connect With My Inner Child(ren)

In the interests of time, allow only one person to share per topic on his/her experience with his/her Inner Child.

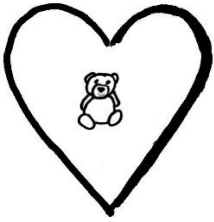
1. Activities / play / toys of children	7. Recognizing our own childlike behavior	13. Experiencing strong feelings (anger, joy, fear...)
2. Daily writing or journaling	8. Rages and tantrums	14. Recalling memories that trigger emotions
3. Drawing with crayons (or other art forms)	13. Role play Loving Parent & Inner Child conversation	15. Visualization / Guided Meditation
4. Non-dominant handwriting	14. Unguided meditation	16. Unusual or illogical behavior
5. Photos of ourselves as children	15. Positive sensory stimulants – visual, auditory, taste, smell, touch	17. Wants, urges, and yens
6. Procrastination or inability to make decisions or act	16. Spontaneous, playful activity	18. Withdrawing, isolating, and being Depressed

These are techniques you can use in recovery to connect with your Inner Child.

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

Put an X on each way you connect with your Inner Child during the week. Select one or more you do not currently use and try out those ways to communicate.

<p>Activities – do children's activities or adult versions of them – parties, play days, sports, gardening, building...</p>	<p>Gut Punch - Write down troubling incidents you encounter this week, your feelings, & how you reacted</p>	<p>Sensory Auditory - What pleasant things did you hear this week? What memory did you recall?</p>	<p>Sensory Visual - What pleasant things did you see this week? What memory did you recall?</p>	<p>Wants, Yens, & Urges – What unrelenting desires arose? What did you do? What might have evoked them?</p>
<p>Art - Create art (draw, paint, sculpt, craft...)</p>	<p>Meditation / Visualization – meditate about or visualize your Loving Parent talking with your Inner Child</p>	<p>Sensory Smell - What pleasant aromas/scents did you smell this week? What memory did you recall?</p>	<p>Talk Each Morning - Set a time for each and every morning to talk to your Inner Child for 10 minutes. What time did you set? How many mornings did you keep your commitment?</p>	<p>Weird Behavior – When did you act in ways you found odd or strange? What happened just before that?</p>
<p>Childhood Photo -Talk to the child in a photo of yourself as a small child</p>	<p>Mired – note times you cannot get yourself to do something or you put something off</p>		<p>Talk Each Night - Set a time for each and every evening to talk to your Inner Child for 10 minutes. What time did you set? How many evenings did you keep your promise?</p>	<p>Withdraw or Isolate – When did you withdraw or isolate this week? What triggered your reaction?</p>
<p>Dance - Move to music</p>	<p>Reacting – note one time you acted out like a mad, hurt, or fearful child and what triggered that</p>	<p>Sensory Taste - What pleasant things did you taste this week? What memory did you recall?</p>	<p>Talk Throughout the Day – When you suddenly feel angry, afraid, sad, confused, or stunned, talk briefly talk with your Inner Child to calm him/her, resume activity, and thoroughly discuss it during evening talk.</p>	<p>Write - Write notes to your Inner Child with your dominant hand; answer as your Inner Child by writing with your non-dominant hand</p>
<p>Game – play child's game or adult version of it</p>	<p>Run, Jump, Laugh, Wiggle - When did you act silly, loose, and carefree this week?</p>	<p>Sensory Touch - What pleasant touch did you receive from someone this week? What memory did you recall?</p>	<p>Toys – play with child's toy or adult version of it</p>	<p>Write - Write poem, story, or song</p>



Meet Your Inner Child Visualization – Chapter 8

Question: How can you meet your Inner Child?

Reading

Visualization is a helpful tool that gives participants actual images of their tiny Inner Children. That image allows us to more readily accept the Loving Parent-Inner Child idea.

Some of us have found that when we actually meet our Inner Children, they are wary of us. This is understandable. Once we were adults, we continued to surround ourselves with people who mistreated us as our parents and caretakers had. Worse, we mistreated ourselves. Our Inner Children know that and do not trust us.

When we began our Inner Child work, some of our Inner Children did nothing, waiting to see if the abuse would finally stop. They were willing to give us a chance. All our Inner Children really want is our love, our attention, and our commitment to stop the insanity. Others release their pent-up rage, much like a real three-year-old who screams, “I hate you! I want to kill you.” Their frustration with us is understandable. In the end what they REALLY want from us is love, protection, true attention, and guidance to grow up emotionally so they can live happy, healthy, functional lives.

Exercise - Meeting Your Inner Child Through Visualization

As someone reads the narrative for the visualization, you may choose to participate or not. If at any time you begin to feel uncomfortable, you may stop participating, too. A program person has been designated to talk you through your discomfort. If you continue feeling discomfort after this experience, you may want to get professional help from a counselor or therapist.



Visualization

We are going to do some guided imagery so you can meet your Inner Child today. Seat yourself comfortably. Sit up straight. Relax your arms. Uncross your legs, and put your feet flat on the floor. Relax.

Close your eyes now. Inhale slowly and notice how you are breathing. Inhale; exhale slowly. Inhale deeply; exhale slowly. Feel your breathing coming from the bottom of your lungs. Breathe in and breathe out slowly and evenly. Breathe in; breathe out. Breathe in; breathe out.

Today you are going to explore a cavern not far away. It is a beautiful, sunny day with blue skies and white, puffy clouds. It's not too warm, and it's not too cool. A gentle breeze caresses your face. You hear birds chirping. As you walk along the path toward the cavern, you see butterflies flitting near the wild flowers and lush, green grass. You see brown squirrels chasing each other up and down a huge oak tree as you pass.

You walk up and down the gentle slopes of the path. You come to the entrance of a cave. As you walk forward and descend into the cave, the tunnel opens up into a subterranean room. Light reflects from an iridescent pool casting beautiful, translucent, dancing silhouettes on the cavern walls.

You make your way to the pool on the cavern floor. As you approach the pool, you see a little child perched on the other side of it dangling his or her feet into the water. When you stop, you notice what the child looks like, how the child is dressed, how old this child is, and the child's facial expression and body language.

You inadvertently kick a stone with your foot. The little child looks up toward the noise and sees you. The child watches as you approach your side of the pool.

You smile and wave to the child. You say hello and tell the child your name. You wait for the child to respond. You notice how the child behaves toward you. You tell this child you are happy to meet him or her. You ask this child how he or she feels about meeting you. You tell the child how happy you are to see him or her. Then you ask, "Is there anything can I do for you right now?" You wait for an answer and respond to the child.

Then you tell the child that you need to leave but promise that you will talk again, soon and often. You listen to the child's response, say goodbye, turn, and walk across the cavern floor. Reaching the stairway, you turn back, wave to the child, and climb up the stairs out of the cave. You emerge into the world of dancing butterflies and brown squirrels chasing one another.

When you are ready, open your eyes.

Debriefing

Pair up with a partner. Both partners address each question before going on to the next question. You have ten minutes to discuss these 5 questions.

1. How do you feel right now?
2. What feelings came up when you saw your Inner Child?
3. What happened when you talked with your Inner Child? How do you feel about that?
4. Did you set up a time, date, and place to meet again?
5. What do you want to tell your Inner Child the next time you meet?

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.



1. **Talk Each Morning** - Set up a time each morning and meet with your Inner Child. Tell him/her how much you love him/her. Talk about what is expected to happen. Discuss feelings about that. Consider ways to be most effective.



2. **Talk Each Night** - Set up a consistent time each evening and talk with your Inner Child about your experiences throughout the day, how your Inner Child felt about them, what your Inner Child is proud of, and what your Inner Child wants to do better if a similar situation arises.



What Does Your Inner Child Want From You? – Chapter 9






Question: How Can You Prove to your Inner Child you will Finally Be a Loving Parent?

Reading

If we ask our Inner Children what they want from us, each one will give us some variation of: “Love me, protect me, hear me, hug me, and heal me.”

Exercise - What Your Inner Child Wants From You

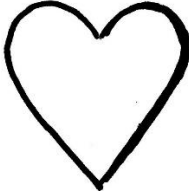




Take a few minutes to fill in the chart below and then go around the room and share on each topic.

My Inner Child Tells Me	How are you showing this to your Inner Child? <i>Circle those that you are already doing</i>	What is one thing you will do to reassure your Inner Child?
 Love Me	SHOW YOUR LOVE Schedule time to communicate daily Plan to play daily In a mirror tell your Inner Child you love him/her Praise and reward good behavior Provide something he/she wants	
 Protect Me	PROTECT YOUR INNER CHILD Remove unsafe people, places, and things Stand up for yourself and your Inner Child Set strong limits and enforce boundaries	
 Hear Me	LISTEN TO YOUR INNER CHILD Communicate every morning and night Ask questions and listen to the answers Note your strong reactions Be aware of pumping adrenaline Notice numbness Be aware of feeling cold Notice symptoms of shock	
 Hug Me	HUG YOUR INNER CHILD Offer to hug someone each day Accept hugs from safe people Get a massage Hug yourself, pillows, stuffed animals, and pets Pet animals in petting zoos Give service in programs Volunteer in your community Designate a home meeting Get a support system	
 Heal Me	HEAL YOUR INNER CHILD Build a solid emotional foundation Define your identity Grieve your losses Make progress toward completing life stages	

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

Fill in the last column with one thing you will do this week to meet each of your Inner Child's needs.

My Inner Child Needs From Me		This Week for my Inner Child I Will
<p>SHOW YOUR LOVE Schedule time to communicate daily Plan to play daily In a mirror tell your Inner Child you love him/her Praise and reward good behavior Provide something he/she wants</p>		
<p>PROTECT YOUR INNER CHILD Remove unsafe people, places, and things Stand up for yourself and your Inner Child Set strong limits and enforce boundaries</p>		
<p>LISTEN TO YOUR INNER CHILD Communicate every morning and night Ask questions and listen to the answers Note your strong reactions Be aware of pumping adrenaline Notice numbness Be aware of feeling cold Notice symptoms of shock</p>		
<p>HUG YOUR INNER CHILD Offer to hug someone each day Accept hugs from safe people Get a massage Hug yourself, pillows, stuffed animals, and pets Pet animals in petting zoos Give service in programs Volunteer in your community Designate a home meeting Get a support system</p>		
<p>HEAL YOUR INNER CHILD Build a solid emotional foundation Define your identity Grieve your losses Make progress toward completing life stages</p>		



Building a Relationship with Your Inner Child – Trust – Chapter 10

Question: How can you build trust with your Inner Child?

Reading

Our Inner Children, like flesh-and-blood people, assess what we say and do to them and others. They have been quietly watching us for years. They know when we allowed others to abuse them. They know when we have abused them.

We know what they want from us as their loving parents. They want to be loved, protected, heard, reassured physically of our love, and guided to grow up emotionally into happy and healthy adults. Our job in recovery is to become the loving parents they want who will do those things.

To that end, our first job is to actively, daily, work to become trustworthy. Trust depends on communicating clearly, being reliable, being respectful and sincere, being honest, being consistent, keeping commitments we make, and being competent.



Communicate Clearly

One way some of us survived in our dysfunctional homes was to respond to parents and caretakers without actually saying anything that could get us in trouble. We learned to mumble. We learned to obfuscate. We gave “answers” that did not have any bearing on the questions we were asked, or we changed the subject. We learned quickly not to take a moral position or venture any definitive viewpoint that could be used as evidence against us. In recovery, we learn to clearly say what we mean and mean what we say.



Be Reliable

We could not depend on our parents or caretakers in our childhood homes. In program recovery, we become people others can depend on. We regularly show up on time, suitably dressed, with the knowledge, experience, and tools to do the tasks we are given. We do the tasks efficiently and effectively in a timely manner.



Be Respectful

Dysfunctional people with deep-rooted, unresolved anger are sometimes disrespectful. This often warns others to leave them alone or suffer the consequences. In program recovery, we learn to treat ourselves and others with respect. We trace our anger back to its childhood roots, then we grieve our losses. We reparent ourselves to make certain that the words we say are from our hearts.



Be Honest and Sincere

Growing up, we often heard parents and caretakers fibbing, telling half-truths, omitting important information, and outright lying to us, one another, and others. They said one thing, but did another. They cheated. They stole. They blamed others for what they did. Some of us adopted those family rules. In recovery, we challenge our sense of superiority as well as our inferiority. We tell the truth. We align what we believe with what we think, say, and do. When we catch ourselves being dishonest, we stop, analyze our words or behavior, make amends, and then practice new words and behaviors that represent what we sincerely believe and think.



Be Consistent

We grew up in homes where adults or caretakers behaved erratically. In recovery, we turn that around and learn to behave consistently. Our views on people, places, and things remain consistent regardless of circumstances. We solve problems, make decisions, and work towards goals following a sane process each time. Our values, thinking, words, and behavior all match.



Keep Commitments

We grew up in homes where promises were broken constantly. In recovery, we take steps to ensure that promises we make to our Inner Children and others are kept. Before we make any commitment, we consider if we want to do it and why we want to do it. We decide if we have the time, the energy, enthusiasm, and resources to do it. If we decide to make the commitment, we follow-through, do it, and keep our promises.



Be Competent








Many of us were told as children to do things we did not know how to do. Parents and/or caretakers did not show us what to do or what steps to take to do what we were told to do. In recovery, we become aware of our strengths and limitations. We freely admit what we can and cannot do. We make sure we are able to do the things we volunteer to do by, for example, taking classes to learn how to do things or asking others for direction.

When We Become Trustworthy, We Can Trust Ourselves

As our own Loving Parent, we provide for our Inner Children's needs of love, protection, communication, acceptance, and guidance growing up. We become trustworthy by clearly speaking. We become reliable, respectful, honest and sincere, and consistent. We keep the promises we make. We are competent to do the things we do.

Exercise – Ways to Show My Inner Child and Others I Can Be Trusted








Circle the statements in the last 2 columns that are true for you.

How to Become Trustworthy	I Will NOT	I Will DO This
 <p>Communicate Clearly</p>	<p>Mumble Babble to avoid confrontation Change the subject Free associate without answering the question Lie about or minimize my needs/wants Agree or keep silent when I disagree Assume others read my mind</p>	<p>Say what I believe Correct erroneous assumptions of others about me Verify what I think someone says</p>
 <p>Be Reliable</p>	<p>Show up late or not at all Dress inappropriately to do the task Take on a job I do not know how to do Take on a job I don't have experience doing Take on a job I don't have the tools to do Put off doing the job Do part of the job and leave Take the job and do nothing</p>	<p>Show up on time, regularly Dress for the occasion Have or get the knowledge for the task Have or get experience to do the task Have or get the tools to do the task Do the task efficiently & effectively Do the task in a timely manner</p>
 <p>Be Respectful</p>	<p>Treat others disrespectfully Treat myself disrespectfully Be impolite Mock or demean others</p>	<p>Trace own anger to childhood roots Grieve the losses of childhood incidents Treat ourselves with respect Treat others with respect</p>
 <p>Be Honest and Sincere</p>	<p>Fib, lie, or tell half-truths Omit important information Say I will do one thing but do another Cheat on anyone Steal Say or do insincere things Blame others for my actions Convince ("gaslight") others to doubt their senses</p>	<p>Challenge my sense of superiority Challenge my sense of inferiority Tell the truth; say what I mean Align my thoughts, words, and actions with my beliefs When I'm dishonest, I will stop, analyze my behavior, make amends, and change my behavior</p>
 <p>Be Consistent</p>	<p>Behave erratically</p>	<p>Behave consistently Express my true views Follow a sane process to solve problems, make decisions, and work towards goals Match my thoughts, words, and behavior with my true values</p>
 <p>Keep Commitments</p>	<p>Break my commitments Break my promises</p>	<p>Keep my promises Before commitment, I will consider if I want to do it consider why I want to do it decide if I have the time, energy, enthusiasm, and resources If I make the commitment, I keep it</p>
 <p>Be Competent</p>	<p>Volunteer to do things without knowing how Do things without knowing how Plow through a job without analyzing it Start a job without having a plan</p>	<p>Become aware of my strengths Become aware of my limitations Admit what I can and cannot do Volunteer for things I know how to do Get training or seek help to do things I do not know how to do</p>

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

In the second column, list one negative thing you will stop doing this week. In the third column enter one thing you will start doing to earn the trust of your Inner Child.

How to Become Trustworthy	I Will NOT	I Will DO This
 <p>Communicate Clearly</p>		
 <p>Be Reliable</p>		
 <p>Be Respectful</p>		
 <p>Be Honest and Sincere</p>		
 <p>Be Consistent</p>		
 <p>Keep Commitments</p>		
 <p>Be Competent</p>		



Building a Relationship with Your Inner Child – Communication – Chapter 11

Question: What do you want to say to your Inner Child?

Reading

Communication Basics

Inner Children often tell us, “I want ice cream, a new computer, or a Ferrari.” An Inner Child may constantly say, “Gimme,” but what that really means is “Pay attention to me!” Inner Children throw tantrums when Loving Parents break promises. This results in the adult procrastinating, taking risks, and destroying relationships (to name a few).

Our relationships with our Inner Children improve as we treat them with more respect. They quickly and automatically tell us if we are hurting them in some way. When they do, we, the Loving Parents, need to stop, make amends, and change our behavior. They will also tell us when other people are abusing them so we can confront the abusers or get away from them. Working with our Inner Children will allow us to be more productive, have more fun, and become more serene.

Converse Honestly

Trust-building requires our Loving Parents to have an honest, one-to-one conversation with our Inner Children. After introducing ourselves, we have simple conversations with our Inner Children. The conversation topics vary depending on the ages of the Inner Children who emerge.

Topics of Loving Parent Led Conversations

1. How lucky I am we are finally meeting
2. How sorry I am about past abuse from me or others
3. How sorry I am that even as an adult I allowed myself and others to continue the abuse
4. Promise to stop any further abuse
5. Make amends to my Inner Child
6. Keep my promises to my Inner Child
7. Promise to deal with difficult situations by talking openly and honestly with my Inner Child (ask gentle questions, listen and accept responses, and answer questions)
8. Promise to love, protect, listen to, hug daily, guide safely through grief of the past, and help complete life stages

Considerations in Communicating with Inner Children

- How to Communicate: gently, clearly; honestly, and openly
- Forms of Communication to Use: verbal, written, fine arts, physical expression (dance, sports, role play...)
- Communicate Regularly: morning and/or evening
- Communicate When: feelings are triggered, problems come up, you withdraw, isolate, or act out, perception of limited time or urgency to solve a problem causes discomfort
- Ways to Talk: out loud, inside your head, or through movement, body language, facial expression, or gesture

- **Topics to Discuss with your Inner Child:**

1. Problem that came up that day and how to solve it
2. Strong feeling that came up that day, trigger for it, and how to deal with it
3. Own acting out or withdrawing from others, trigger for it, and how to resolve it
4. Feeling overloaded and unable to deal with a particular problem
5. Noticing that you discounted your Inner Child
6. Awareness that you allowed someone to violate your boundaries
7. Fear that you will fail
8. Fear that you will succeed
9. Needs and wants of Inner Child AND Loving Parent
10. Steps to take to make better decisions
11. Steps to take to solve problems
12. How to play more
13. How to work smarter
14. How to work on ACA recovery
15. What to focus on first in putting your life in order
16. How to have fun
17. Keeping promises



Exercise - Loving Parent Talks with Inner Child

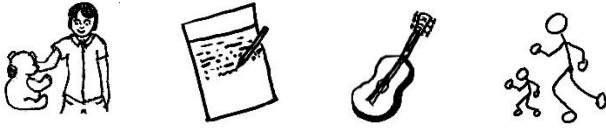


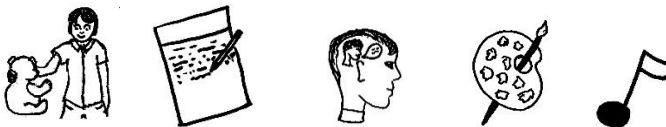
Roleplay these scenes with another person where one is the Loving Parent and one is the Inner Child.

1. Introduce yourself to your Inner Child.
2. Tell your Inner Child how good you feel to finally meet him/her.
3. Apologize for hurting your Inner Child.
4. Tell your Inner Child how you will change your behavior to avoid hurting him/her further.
5. Tell your Inner Child how you will atone for hurting him/her.
6. Apologize for letting others hurt your Inner Child.
7. Explain how you will stop letting others hurt your Inner Child further.
8. Tell your Inner Child how you will atone for allowing others to hurt him/her.
9. Promise respectful, open, and honest communication.
10. Ask your Inner Child what he/she needs and wants.
11. Tell your Inner Child what you need and want from him/her.
12. Promise you will love, protect, listen to, hug, and heal your Inner Child daily.

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

Circle, check, or write in your answer to the question in each row.

<p>How will you connect with your Inner Child?</p>	 <p>Other _____</p>
<p>When will you talk to your Inner Child?</p>	 <p>24/7</p> <p>Other _____</p>
<p>Make notes when triggered, problems come up, you withdrew or acted out, or made bad decisions in haste; share your thoughts</p>	 <p>Other _____</p>
<p>Favorite way to talk to your Inner Child</p>	 <p>Other _____</p>
<p>Some things to talk about</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Topics in the exercise about introducing yourself to your Inner Child ○ Problem that came up that day and how to solve it ○ Strong feeling that came up that day, trigger for it, and how to deal with it ○ Own acting out or withdrawing from others, trigger for it, and how to resolve it ○ Feeling overloaded and unable to deal with a particular problem ○ Noticing that you discounted your Inner Child ○ Awareness that you allowed someone to violate your boundaries ○ Fear that you will fail ○ Fear that you will succeed ○ Needs and wants of Inner Child AND Loving Parent ○ Steps to take to make better decisions ○ Steps to take to solve problems ○ How to play more ○ How to work smarter ○ How to work on ACA recovery ○ What to focus on first in putting your life in order ○ How to have fun ○ Keeping promises



Building a Relationship with Your Inner Child – Negotiation – Chapter 12

Question: How do you negotiate with Your Inner Child?



Reading

Loving Parents and Inner Children have equally important needs and wants. By the time we are adults, we have discounted the needs and wants of our Inner Children for a very long time. When we ensure that the needs and wants of the Loving Parents and Inner Children are met, we grow up naturally into unified, functional people.

Healthy negotiating is a learned skill that we practice in recovery. In ACA recovery, the point of negotiating is not to “win.” It is for both parties to get their needs met.

If the adult needs to finish reports for work or get the laundry done, the Loving Parent initiates a deal with the Inner Child. The Loving Parent tells the Inner Child (s)he needs to get the work done. The Inner Child might want to play computer games or go shopping for a new automobile. They negotiate so both get their needs or wants met. The dialogue might go like this:

Loving Parent: I need to finish these reports this morning, Sweetie Pie.

Sweetie Pie: I want to go look at new cars instead.

Loving Parent: How about you let me get these reports done, and then we can go look at new cars at the dealership this afternoon after lunch?

Sweetie Pie: Okay, but only if I get to buy one today.

Loving Parent: I can't afford to buy a new car today, but we can try to find the one we will get when I have the down payment in the bank. You can pick the color of the one we eventually get. All right?

Sweetie Pie: Candy apple red! I want candy apple red!

Loving Parent: If you let me work on these reports now, you get candy apple red when we do buy the car.*

**The Loving Parent needs to keep the promises made in order to maintain the trust of our Inner Children.*

As our own Loving Parents, we respond to the desires of our Inner Children as we would if we were dealing with actual children. Generally, our Inner Children just want attention and

reassurance. When actual children ask for ponies, parents automatically divert attention to something else, like coloring books of horses or plastic horses. So it is with our Inner Children. It isn't the objects that are important; it is our undivided attention that our Inner Children really want. So we give our Inner Children the attention they desire.

Exercise: Conversation between an Inner Child and a Loving Parent

For each scenario below, two volunteers negotiate so both can get their needs or wants met.

	INNER CHILD WANTS	LOVING PARENT WANTS
1.	Pizza	Fulfilling job
2.	Trip to the Super Bowl	Reliable transportation
3.	Expensive sports car	Upscale, low-maintenance home
4.	African lion	A good relationship

	INNER CHILD NEEDS	LOVING PARENT NEEDS
1.	Bath	Clean house
2.	Nutritious meals	Pay bills
3.	Help to learn something new	Get a better job
4.	Practice caring for animal	Get to work on time

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

Read the scenario below. Then read the conversation between you, the Loving Parent, and your Inner Child. After that you will simply identify the key aspects of that negotiation.

Scenario

Your boss, Robert, told you to develop a computer program that will allow the corporation to pay contract employees in many nations for their time. This includes making automatic monetary conversions which change constantly, deducting pertinent taxes for the country, and reporting the wages to the governments of each employee.

When the system you created was debuted, the Corporate CEO commended Robert on his great work. Robert thanked the CEO and accepted a promotion and a substantial raise in salary. Robert did not mention your work.

You were furious but politely left the celebration. As you left the room, you kept repeating to yourself inside your head, "I need to keep quiet right now, get away from here, get back home, and sort this out so I can continue working for this corporation; I need to pay the rent." On the way home you, as an ACA in recovery, decided this was an opportunity to communicate with your Inner Child!

The Conversation Between the Loving Parent (LP) and the Inner Child (IC)

LP Thank you for allowing us to get out of that situation quietly. I know that was really hard for you. Tell me now how you are feeling.

IC I'm going to pummel that ratfink so bad his mommy won't recognize him. What a creep! I do all the work, and that son-of-a-pea-picking-polliwog gets the promotion AND the raise. And THEN, and THEN he doesn't even bother to give me an honorable MENTION!!!!????!!! Ratfink. I'm gonna drop some baking soda and vinegar in his next cup of coffee!

LP I hear how angry you are, Little One. You have every right to be furious. But I am wondering if there is a way for us to get through this, still keep my job that pays well enough to keep the lifestyle we lead and get you the recognition for your hard work. It won't help either one of us to do anything that will get us fired or arrested. So let's use all the energy from your anger to get creative and take care of both our problems, okay?

IC How about telling Robert you encoded a way to dismantle the whole computer system if he doesn't announce your contribution and give you a raise?

LP Blackmail? No. Let's put all that energy into some kind of POSITIVE solution.

IC Right now I just want to yell at someone, break something, fight someone.

LP *(yelling angrily)* I want to yell! I want to break something! I want to fight someone to the death! I want to yell! I want to break something! I want to fight someone to the death! I want to yell! I want to break something! I want to fight someone to the death!

IC That's it! That IS what I want!

LP I can see that. After dinner we can go over to the batting cages and hit some balls. Does that sound good?

IC Pizza for dinner and busting some balls, too? Sounds great to me!

LP Let's figure this out before dinner, though. You want recognition. Me, I just want to keep doing the job I love doing so we can live as well as we do. How about I schedule a meeting with Robert to RESPECTFULLY explain that I would like him to give me the credit for designing the system that lead to his promotion and raise. You would have to keep quiet, really quiet, no matter what he responds. Are you willing to do that?

IC What if he says, "no?"

LP Then I will start telling people in the company of how proud I am of the new computer system I designed. I can do that in the lunchroom within hearing distance of Robert's supervisor, too. We will get your recognition.

IC Okay. I will keep my lips super-glued together.

LP Promise? If you don't, I am likely to be fired.

IC I promise! We will keep your job.

Identify Key Aspects of a Successful Negotiation with Your Inner Child

Questions	Your Answers
1. Who needs to begin the conversation?	
2. Who needs to express his anger?	
3. Who needs to acknowledge and guide the healthy expression of anger?	
4. Who needs to figure out a way to release the anger in a positive way when it is still festering?	
5. What does the Loving Parent need?	
6. What does the Inner Child need?	
7. What does the Loving Parent propose?	
8. Why does the Inner Child agree?	
9. Who wins?	

Answers at the back of the workbook, page 110



Identify Experiences That Stunted Your Emotional Growth - Chapter 13

Question: What childhood experiences may have stopped you from growing up?

In the chart below, fill in the year you were born next to “birth”. Then write in the corresponding year for every year up to your age today. In the third column enter 3 – 5 experiences where you suffered loss, abandonment, neglect, abuse, or trauma. You may also enter your joyful milestones, achievements, and successes during that time period. Work with your sponsor, program friend, or therapist to grieve each loss or share the excitement. Then add 3-5 more losses and successes. Eventually you will complete the chart up to the age you are. This week is only about identifying the experiences that dramatically impacted your life. The next chapter will address the grieving process. This is difficult work. If at any time you experience an uncomfortable, intense, overwhelming, or unrelenting adverse reaction to this process, stop. Call your Sponsor or a mental health professional immediately to get help.


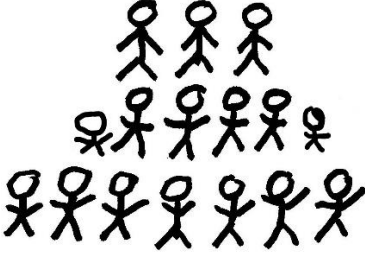


Year	Age	Loss, Abandonment, Neglect, Abuse, Trauma Joyful Milestones, Achievements, Successes		Year	Age	Loss, Abandonment, Neglect, Abuse, Trauma Joyful Milestones, Achievements, Successes
	Birth					
	1				21	
	2				22	
	3				23	
	4				24	
	5				25	
	6				26	
	7				27	
	8				28	
	9				29	
	10				30	
	11				31	
	12				32	
	13				33	
	14				34	
	15				35	
	16				36	
	17				37	
	18				38	
	19				39	
	20				40	

Year	Age	Loss, Abandonment, Neglect, Abuse, Trauma Joyful Milestones, Achievements, Successes	Year	Age	Loss, Abandonment, Neglect, Abuse, Trauma Joyful Milestones, Achievements, Successes
	41			71	
	42			72	
	43			73	
	44			74	
	45			75	
	46			76	
	47			77	
	48			78	
	49			79	
	50			80	
	51			81	
	52			82	
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	60			90	
	61			91	
	62			92	
	63			93	
	64			94	
	65			95	
	66			96	
	67			97	
	68			98	
	69			99	
	70			100	

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

Cross out the boxes in the second column as you complete them.

	<p>Finish filling out the chart on the previous pages. As you talk to people and review public records, add that information to your chart.</p>
	<p>Talk to people about your childhood who may help you put your childhood experiences into context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents, siblings • Aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents • Neighbors • Family friends • Others
	<p>Research your family tree. Trace the patterns of behavior, addictions, codependency, or other dysfunction through previous generations. Trace strengths and positive behaviors as well.</p>
	<p>Review public records that may pertain to your childhood experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper articles about family members • Newspaper announcements – weddings, births, baptisms, divorces, funerals, obituaries • Diaries, scrapbooks, and photo albums • Property records • Court documents • Others



Learning to Grieve - Chapter 14



Question: Why didn't we grieve our losses, abandonment, neglect, abuse, or trauma when they happened?

Reading

Grieving has five basic components: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. This is a guideline based on observation; it does not define everyone's grieving progression.

In re-parenting we refocus our energy. We use our experience, intelligence, and education to work through unprocessed memories, express our feelings about the memories, and explore the life decisions we made to survive.

- We pinpoint specific memories, fragments of memories, or our feelings about memories.
- We express our feelings we did not express when this occurred.
- We determine what erroneous, negative life rule we decided upon as to how to survive the event and live our lives.
 - "Life rule" is another name for "life script." To survive a traumatic event, a child, without parental support or guidance, decides how to protect itself for the rest of its life. A few examples might be:
 - Men can never be trusted; they cheat.
 - I have to take what I want; no one will give me what I want.
 - A good husband beats his wife regularly.
 - Grandpa killed Grandma with a butcher knife for talking back to him in the kitchen. If my wife disrespects me, I will do the same to her.
 - Mommies are unreliable; mommies are women; I'm a female; I will be unreliable.
- We challenge the rules we imposed on ourselves.
- We reject the old survival rule eliminating the power it has over us.
- We replace the negative admonitions with positive, healthy beliefs.

Exercise – Grieving

Select one example of loss, abandonment, neglect, abuse, or trauma from your early childhood (see the chart you developed in Chapter 13). With your sponsor, a program friend, or a therapist, work through the process of grieving to provide closure. An example follows each question.

Grieving the Past

1. Which unresolved experience of loss, abandonment, neglect, abuse or trauma are you focusing on today?
My father passed away when I was 12.
2. Briefly explain what happened to you that left you stunned and/or emotionally stunted.
I had no support to deal with the death of my father.
3. Identify and express the feelings you did not express then about this experience.
I did not believe my father died. I felt I had been rejected and abandoned. I thought it was my fault. I was depressed. I did not allow myself to feel because it was too painful.

4. What life rule did you decide on in that moment in the effort to survive?
I will live out my Daddy's life for him.
5. What can you now say to challenge that negative life rule?
I am a worthwhile person who deserves to live my own life.
6. What can you do each time the negative life rule comes up?
Remind myself about my good traits, accomplishments, future aspirations, and friends who love me.
7. What positive affirmation can you create and repeat to replace the negative rule?
As a child of God, I am perfect just as I am.

Grieving an On-going Situation

1. Which unresolved experience of loss, abandonment, neglect, abuse or trauma are you focusing on today?
My mother continues to criticize me unreasonably.
2. Briefly explain what happened to you that left you stunned and emotionally stunted.
As a child, every time my mother criticized me, I was not allowed to challenge her remarks for fear of being hit.
3. Identify and express the feelings you did not express then about this experience.
I am allowing myself to feel outrage, fear, despair, and depression.
4. What life rule did you decide on in that moment in the effort to survive?
I will survive this onslaught today by not responding to the unfair criticism. I will allow my mother to say what she will, and I will try to minimize the effect of her words.
5. What can you now say to challenge that negative life rule?
Using the broken record technique of quietly but pointedly asserting myself, I will respond to criticism from my mother by stating my feelings and my reality.
6. What can you do each time the negative life rule comes up?
Respond quietly by sharing my feelings and my own adult perspective of the reality of the situation.
7. What positive affirmation can you create and repeat to replace the negative rule (see #4 above)?
I am enough just as I am; Mom's criticism is not true, and it is unfair.

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

As you are ready, continue to work through the incidents you listed in Chapter 13 using this suggested format for each one. Remember that it takes emotional energy to do this work and there are no "musts" or deadlines. Seek your Higher Power's advice on the best pace for you.

Grieving Losses

On the line below R.I.P., write in the name of a person, place, thing, or event you want to grieve. Enter your responses into the 6 sections of the tombstone.

R. I. P.

(the thing I want to grieve)

1. What happened that stunted you emotionally?	2. Identify your feelings about this loss. What is one positive thing you can do to express this feeling?
3. What was the life rule you decided on to survive this?	4. What words can you use to challenge this life rule when it comes up?
5. What can you do each time the negative life rule comes up?	6. What positive affirmation can you create and repeat to replace the negative rule?











Working Through Life Stages We Did Not Complete - Chapter 15

Question: What effect does abandonment, neglect, loss, abuse, and trauma have on emotional growth?

Life Stages *(based on Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development)*

Reading

	Life Stage	Life Stage Issue	Important People & Events	If Grew up in a Functional Family	If Grew up in a Dysfunctional Family
	Infant 0-18 mo.	Trust vs. Mistrust	<u>Mother</u> Feeding Senses Moving Awareness	Faith in environment Faith in future events Has hope and drive	Suspicious Fears future events Has sensory distortion Withdraws Feels unsafe
	Toddler 18 mo. – 3 yrs.	Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt	<u>Parents</u> Toilet Training	Has self-control Feels adequate Has will power	Feels shame Doubts self Is impulsive & compulsive
	Pre-Schooler 3 - 6	Initiative vs. Guilt	<u>Family</u> Exploring	Self-starts Initiates Has direction Has purpose	Feels guilty Unable to be on own Is inhibited Afraid to do, think, & act
	Elementary School Aged Child 6-12	Industry vs. Inferiority	<u>Neighbors</u> School	Learns how things work Understands Organizes Applies methods Has competence	Feels inferior at understanding & organizing Lacks academic skills Frozen or unable to proceed Doubts capacity for success
	Adolescent 12-18	Identity vs. Role Confusion	<u>Peers</u> Relationships Career preparation	Sees self as unique Sees self as part of a group Feels he belongs Has loyalty Trusts self	Unsure of who & what he is Holds extreme views Disconnects Feels betrayed Does not trust self Unclear of who to be
	Young Adult 18- 40	Intimacy vs. Isolation	<u>Lovers, Friends, Co-Workers</u> Relationships	Makes commitments Loves Affiliates	Unable to form loving relationship Promiscuous or asexual Excludes self (isolates)
	Middle Age Adult 40-65	Productivity vs. Stagnation	<u>Children, Community</u> Work Parenthood	Concerned for family & society Produces	Concerned only for own well-being & prosperity Is overly extended Rejects others
	Senior 65+	Ego Integrity vs. Despair	<u>Society, Work, Life</u> Reflection on life	Has integrity Feels fulfilled Able to face death Wise Accepting	Dissatisfied with life Despairs over death Presumes Distains others

Reading

Working through incomplete Life Stages is one systematic framework to recover from the effects of growing up in alcoholic or dysfunctional homes. In this work the ACA in recovery pinpoints the age he/she was when first traumatized and his/her emotional growth stopped. The recovery process from that point is for your Loving Parent to guide your Inner Child to:

1. Identify and grieve the main Life Stage event(s)
2. Grieve the issues about the important person(s) of the life stage
3. Give your Inner Child with what he or she did not get from actual parents/caretakers
4. Address the negative beliefs learned in the dysfunctional household
5. Experience the fun your Inner Child did not have

Life Stage Information

The chart on the previous page gives an overview of life stages: the label and approximate age range of the stage, the major life stage issues, important people in the child's life and life stage events, as well as what functional and dysfunctional behavior looks like.

- **Issue** The major life stage issue for an infant (ages birth to 18 months), for example, is trust. If the child gets what he/she needs from the mother, the child is on his/her way to becoming functional. If the child does not get what he/she needs, he/she starts the life long journey of dysfunction.
- **Important Person** Important persons in the child's life and the life stage events are listed. If the parent or caretaker is not nurturing, supportive, or present, the child may develop some serious issues about that individual. Recovery involves grieving not having the person as well as not learning what the child would naturally have learned. The infant, for instance, learns to feed, becomes familiar with sensory stimuli, begins to learn how to control his/her body, and becomes aware of the environment.
- **In Recovery** In recovery, the Loving Parent ensures the Inner Child now gets all his/her basic needs met. This includes guiding the Inner Child through the events the child might have learned, but did not, in his/her childhood home.
- **A Loving Parent** A Loving Parent also addresses the dysfunctional outcomes of the life stage. If, for example, the Inner Child with trust issues is suspicious, fears future events, has sensory distortions, isolates, and generally feels unsafe, the Loving Parent directly addresses each of those issues, too.

- **Functional Behavior** The chart also features the column, “Functional Behavior,” so the Loving Parent is aware of the end goal of recovery on this lifestage.
- **Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, Activities, Mobility, & Sports** Not in *this* chart, but mentioned below are the arts, crafts, music, toys, activities, games, movement, and sports of the life stage. This information is included so that when the healing work is done, the Loving Parent can help his/her Inner Child complete this necessary aspect of the life stage by having the fun that the Inner Child missed. By engaging in adult versions of those arts, crafts, music, toys, games, and activities (grabbing objects as an infant might transcend to rock climbing with hand and toe holds as a recovering adult), we complete the life stage. If we fail to do this, we are likely to default to dysfunctional thinking and behavior.



Exercise 1 – Identify and Grieve Events of Incomplete Life Stages

Fill in the chart below with 1 or 2 of the emotionally stunting events in your life. Each exercise may address any of the stunting events of your life. Example is given.

Your Age	Year	Stunting Event	One Thing I Will Do to Grieve
<i>Example</i> Age 14	2005	Parents divorced	Voice the negative life rule I used to get through my pain



Exercise 2 – Identify and Grieve Issue with Important Person(s) of Life Stage

Fill in the chart below with 1 or 2 issues you have with one of the important persons in your life. Each exercise may address any of the stunting events of your life. Example is given.

Your Age	Year	Issue with Important Person of Life Stage	One Thing I Will Do to Grieve
<i>Example</i> Age 4	2009	Family Member – Brother raped me	Admit out loud to my sponsor, trusted program friends, and/or therapist/counselor what happened to me, express my anger and confusion, share my bargaining process with my Higher Power to survive back then, allow myself to be sad for my Inner Child, accept the incident as a closed chapter of my life, and move on



Exercise 3 – Give Your Inner Child what He/She did not get from Parents /

Caretakers

Fill in the chart below with 1 - 2 examples of result of family dysfunction and one thing you will supply now to help your Inner Child recover. Each exercise may address any of the stunting events of your life. Example is given.

Your Age	Year	One Thing I Did Not Get	One Thing I Will Do to Supply Inner Child's Needs
Example Age 8	2005	Organization skills	Hire a professional organizer to show me how to organize my home and office for better functionality



Exercise 4 – Address the Negative Behaviors of My Dysfunction

Fill in the chart below with 1 or 2 of the negative aspects of the Life Stage you select to work on. Each exercise may address any of the stunting events of your life. Example is given.

Your Age	Year	Life Stage & Negative Aspect of This Life Stage's Dysfunction	One Thing I Will Do
Example Age 30	This year	Young Adult - All my relationships blow up	Inventory my behavior in my relationships and share with my Sponsor



Exercise 5 – Experience the Fun your Inner Child Did Not Have





Fill in the chart below with 1 or 2 fun toy you did not have or fun activity you did not do as a child. Then write in an adult version of one thing you will do now to make up for that. Example is given.





Your Age	Year	Fun I Did Not Have or Do	One Fun Thing I Will Do
Example Age 2	1985	Pretend to be Super Hero	Go to Comic-Con dressed as Batman

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

Read through each scenario below about adults who experienced such abandonment, neglect, abuse, or trauma at the given life stage that their emotional lives were stunted. In the second to the last column are dysfunctional traits of that interrupted life stage. After reading each scenario, fill the last box with one issue that person might work on to complete the life stage. Discuss your action plan to address that issue.

	Life Stage	Important Person & Events	Scenario	Dysfunctional Traits of This Interrupted Life Stage	One Issue to Work on to Complete This Life Stage
	Infant 0-18 mo. Trust vs. Mistrust	Mother Feeding Senses Moving Awareness	Jefferson is 42. His girlfriend just broke up with him. She said he constantly accused her of cheating on him, worked on his computer or watched television all the time, refused to do anything new, and misunderstood everything he heard from everyone. Jefferson has no ambition and waits for people to give him things. He forgets to eat and is very thin.	Suspicious Fears future events Has sensory distortion Withdraws Feels unsafe	
	Toddler 18 mo. – 3 yrs. Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt	Parents Toilet Training	Naomi came to ACA because, although she has been in 12-Step programs for 20 years and is clean and sober, she still overspends, gambles, and has sex with anyone who offers her the opportunity. She is proud of her 20-year chip, but she's ashamed of the rest of her behavior. She isn't sure ACA or anything can help her, but she is willing to try something new.	Feels shame Doubts self Is impulsive & compulsive	
	Pre-Schooler 3 – 6 Initiative vs. Guilt	Family Exploring	Michael always has a girlfriend who tells him what to do, how to do it, and when to do it. When he is not following directions, he daydreams about being a hero to someone. In his real life, he apologizes all the time and is afraid to do anything except what he is told to do. If his sponsor or his girlfriend doesn't tell him what to do, he watches television or plays video games.	Feels guilty Unable to be on own Is inhibited Afraid to do, think, & act	
	Elementary School Aged Child 6-12 Industry vs. Inferiority	Neighbors School	Barbara didn't do well in school. Her home is always a mess. She has trouble at work because she never knows what to do or how to do it. She constantly gets help from her coworkers because they can't do their jobs unless she does her work. She comes to ACA because she is terrified that her boss is ready to fire her, and she does not know what to do.	Feels inferior at understanding & organizing Lacks academic skills Frozen or unable to proceed Doubts capacity for success	








	Life Stage	Important Person & Events	Scenario	Dysfunctional Traits of an Interrupted Life Stage	Will Work on this One Issue to Complete This Life Stage
	Adolescent 12-18 Identity vs. Role Confusion	Peers Relationships Career preparation	Peter often shares his contempt for the inadequate teachers and professors who gave him mediocre grades when he was in school; he feels they never recognized his genius. He also shares his career goal to be a rodeo clown one week, while at the next meeting he considers selling real estate. After one meeting he talked about moving to India to become a Buddhist lama when his girlfriend broke up with him. He sometimes mentions that he is going to the firing range on the weekend to improve his marksmanship. When others try to talk to him about what he shared in the meeting, he no longer wants to discuss it.	Unsure of who & what he is or who to be Holds extreme views Disconnects Feels betrayed Does not trust self	
	Young Adult 18- 40 Intimacy vs. Isolation	Lovers, Friends, Co-Workers Relationships	Tara enjoys living alone. She has had many lovers, but she has never found one good enough, smart enough, or wealthy enough for her. She often wonders if she is lovable or can love anyone. She is a librarian at the university. She volunteers at the local animal shelter.	Unable to form loving relationship Promiscuous or asexual Excludes self (isolates)	
	Middle Aged Adult 40-65 Productivity vs. Stagnation	Children, Community Work Parenthood	Ben is married to a woman who travels extensively for her job. He has two teenage sons in military schools who come home for holidays. Ben is a high-ranking, law enforcement officer who works twelve to eighteen hour days, six days a week to pay off his loans and credit cards. He has no friends; he is his job. He is proud of his expensive house, car, and gun collection.	Concerned only for own well-being & prosperity Is overly extended Rejects others	
	Senior 65+ Ego Integrity vs. Despair	Society, Work, Life Reflection on life	Christina is about to retire after thirty years working for the City. She feels life has cheated her. She believes that by this stage of her life she should have had a devoted husband, huge house, and influential friends, but she does not. She hates those people around her who have done well, but assumes they prostituted themselves to get what they have. She wishes her ex-husband would have some catastrophic end. She is afraid of dying, but cannot wait until her miserable life is over.	Dissatisfied with life Despairs over death Makes presumptions Distains others	



Completing Life Stages - Trust vs. Mistrust – Chapter 16

Question: How can we rebuild trust with our Inner Children and others?

Life Stage – Infants **Age 0 – 18 Months** **Mother is the Significant Person**

Symbol		Recovery
	Major Life Stage Issue: Trust vs. Mistrust	Identify and grieve the event(s) that led to mistrust Identify and grieve the issues with the Mother
	Parent's Job Mother ensures basic needs are met Love child unconditionally	Supply your Inner Child's basic needs Love your Inner Child unconditionally
	Skills Infants Normally Learn Feeding Sensory perception and sensation Mobility Awareness of environment How to get needs met	Guide your Inner Child to acquire skills he/she did not learn from actual parents or caretakers
	Child Learns in Functional Home Child is loved unconditionally It is okay to express feelings It is okay to ask for needs and wants Learns to trust and hope Has drive and enthusiasm	Teach your inner Child to adopt these beliefs
	Child Learns in Dysfunctional Home I am not safe I am only what I am given Trust no one; be afraid Do not believe what you see, hear, taste, touch and feel, or smell Isolate to be safe	Grieve these false, negative beliefs ("critical parent tapes" or "stinkin' thinkin"), challenge and reject them, replace them with positive affirmations, and change behavior
	Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Children Do Arts – finger painting Crafts – clay, play dough, or food sculpting Music – sing or listen to lullabies & baby songs, move to music Toys – play with crib mobiles, rattles, squeaky toys, rubber ducks, teddy bears, and pull toys Games – Peekaboo	Allow your Inner Child to do these activities or adult versions of them
	Mobility & Sports Opportunities Bouncers Rockers Walkers	Allow your Inner Child to use mobility or sports equipment or adult versions of them

Reading



Recovery From Major Life Stage Issue: Trust vs. Mistrust

If we have no memories, but distrust ourselves and/or others, we focus on completing this life stage by rebuilding trust with our Inner Children so they recognize us as their Loving Parents. We prove to others we can be trusted by changing our erratic behaviors. We learn who we can trust by watching what they do and not listening to what they say.

If we have memories, from birth to about eighteen months, of neglect, abandonment, loss, abuse, or trauma, we can systematically work through our grief on specific events. Our Loving Parents guide us gently through the grief cycle (admit, feel and express feelings, bargain with Higher Power, become depressed, accept the reality and move on).



Parent's Job - Recovery to Get What We Never Got

A mother's job is to ensure the child gets his/her basic needs met and to love the child unconditionally. In recovery our Loving Parent fully meets the Inner Child's basic needs and loves the Inner Child, no matter what.



Recovery to Learn Skills We Did Not Learn as Infants

In recovery, a Loving Parent teaches the Inner Child about the unlearned skills of the life stage and adapts the childhood experiences he/she did not experience to adult activities and participates in them to complete the life stage. For example, the infant learns to feed. The Loving Parent assesses what the Inner Child already does and provides the guidance to learn what was never taught. Feeding, in recovery, may include nutrition or human physiology classes of binging and fasting, or ritual changes to 3 meals a day. The Loving Parent may provide the Inner Child with sensory perception experiences such as playing "See the Differences" in two similar pictures or figure out what ingredients were used in a dinner dish. The Loving Parent may provide sensory sensations such as taking a bubble bath or getting a massage. The Loving Parent may arrange to have instruction in dance, karate, or yoga so the Inner Child learns about body movement. The Loving Parent may take his/her Inner Child on a hike, day in the city, or ride on a train to experience various environments. The Loving Parent may enroll in a class to learn assertive behavior in the effort to teach his/her how to get his/her needs met.



Recovery by Teaching Our Inner Children What Functional Children Learn

Absent a loving parent in childhood, the Loving Parent in recovery begins to provide unconditional love to the Inner Child. When the adult defaults to the "strings attached" condition of childhood, the Loving Parent challenges the automatic thought and replaces it with an unconditional love affirmation (e.g., you are so wonderful and so loved just as you are). The

Loving Parent encourages the Inner Child to express his/her feelings in positive ways. The Loving Parent rewards the Inner Child for asking for needs and wants by supplying some form of what the Inner Child needs or wants (the Loving Parent, however, may provide a toy car instead of a real Lamborghini). Most importantly, the Loving Parent becomes a trustworthy person the Inner Child can count on. With his/her needs met, the Inner Child begins to trust, to hope, and to have enthusiasm to work towards a better life.



Recovery by Grieving False, Negative Beliefs (“Critical Parent Tapes” or “Stinkin’ Thinkin’”) Learned in Dysfunctional Homes

The false, negative beliefs (“critical parent tapes” or “stinkin’ thinkin’”) we were taught as infants can be challenged, rejected, and replaced with positive affirmations. The everpresent feeling of being unsafe changes as we surround ourselves with safe people in safe environments and cease to associate with toxic individuals. As we work on self esteem and assertiveness, we realize we are far more than what we are given. In working on our trust issues, we discover the traits we need to show others we can be trusted. As we know what to look for in others to trust them, our fears subside. We ask others about their sensory experiences to validate our own perceptions about what we see, hear, taste, touch and feel, or smell. When we suddenly feel like withdrawing from a situation, we look for what triggered our urgent desire to isolate ourselves, we grieve the original loss as well as the one that triggered that emotion.



Recovery by Doing Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Children Do

An Adult Child in recovery completes this life stage by engaging in fun or creative activities. He or she may explore art through finger painting crafts by sculpting with clay, play dough, or food, or music by listening to lullabies or moving to music. He/she may play with toys he/she never had as a child. The Adult Child may watch stars at night in lieu of the crib mobile. Squeaky toys may, for adults, be pets. An adult version of playing with rubber ducks may be feeding swans or ducks at a pond or lake. Adults may use eiderdown pillows or Sherpa lined, fleece, flannel shirts in lieu of teddy bears. Push toys for adults may be grocery carts or wheelbarrow races; pushing could also involve moving furniture. Pulling children or pets in little red wagons or playing tug-of-war at picnics may be the adult versions of pull toys to satisfy the life stage completion. Peekaboo may be *pleasant* pranks to surprise loved ones.











Recovery By Providing Mobility and Sports Opportunities

Bouncing may be accomplished as an adult by jumping on a trampoline; rocking may be experienced as horseback riding, mechanical bull riding, enjoying the swings at a park, or even sitting in a rocking chair. Using ride-on toys as an infant might be riding a bicycle, motorcycle, or driving a bumper car, golf cart, motor vehicle, or race car as an adult.

Exercise: How Can I Heal?


Discuss ways a Loving Parent can help the Inner Child heal in each situation

		Situation	What can a Loving Parent do to Help His/Her Inner Child Recover or Learn From This?
	1	I was beaten as an infant when I cried.	
	2	My girlfriend says she's being faithful, but I just don't believe her.	
	3	We were poor, so we never had heat in the house. I still keep my home cold.	
	4	My friends call me an absent-minded professor because I don't pay much attention to what is going on around me.	
	5	A co-worker always says nasty things about my work within earshot of our boss; I keep quiet.	
	6	I never know what to say or do at a party, so I just go home and watch television or play solitaire.	
	7	Years ago, my uncle promised me I could have any toy in the store, so I asked for the big, white stuffed cat. He said it was too expensive and did not buy it.	
	8	I saw photos of my brother, but not me, as a tiny baby jumping up and down on a bouncer and grinning from ear to ear.	

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

Cross out the boxes in the grid below containing statements that are true for you today. Any boxes that are not crossed out are areas you may work on. Select 1 or 2 of those boxes you did not cross out and decide which one to work on this week.








I communicate clearly	I trust myself	I love my Inner Child unconditionally	I have personal drive and enthusiasm	I enjoy objects that make pleasant sounds
I am reliable	Others trust me	I feel and express my feelings	I am safe	I enjoy playing with toys in the water
I am respectful	My mother loved me unconditionally	I ask for what I need and want	I am not afraid	I like to hug soft, furry stuffed animals
I am honest and sincere	My mother provided me with my basic needs - air, food, water, shelter, clothing, and sleep	 <p>I can recognize trustworthy people</p>	I am so much more than what I am given	I like pulling things and people in wagons
I am consistent	I eat in healthy ways	I have hope for good things to happen and good people in my life	I believe what I see, hear, taste, touch and feel, or smell	Bouncing up and down is fun
I keep my promises	I am aware of things I see, hear, taste, touch and feel, and smell	I feel and express my feelings	I enjoy being with others	I like relaxing in a rocking chair
I am competent	I am aware of how I move my body	I enjoy listening to music	I enjoy seeing pretty, sparkly things	I enjoy balancing activities



Completing Life Stages - Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt - Chapter 17

Question: How can we become autonomous (self-governing)?

Life Stage – Toddlers Age 18 Months – 3 Years Parents are the Significant People

		Recovery
	Major Life Stage Issue: Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Identify and grieve the event(s) that led to shame and doubt Work to overcome shame and doubt Grieve the issues you have with your parent
	Parent's Job Toilet training Teach self-control Encourage positive effort Reward putting off gratification	Guide and encourage your Inner Child to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learn proper toileting or hygiene • exercise self-control • put forth positive effort • delay gratification or fulfill needs
	Skills Toddlers Normally Learn Defines boundaries and sets limits Learns to get needs and wants met Learns to interact with the world by watching, poking, grabbing, pulling Imitates adults and cartoon and movie heroes	Guide your Inner Child to acquire the skills not learned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define boundaries and set limits • Identify and meet own needs and wants • Teach Inner Child to appropriately interact with the world • Imitate healthy role models
	Child Learns in Functional Home Teaches child he/she is loved, lovable, and wonderful Shows child how to be creative Breaks tasks into small steps to increase success Encourages, praises, and rewards child's efforts Proudly displays and shares child's accomplishments Allows child to safely exercise free will Allows and encourages child to develop pride Allows child to initiate activities with friends Teaches child to cooperate, take turns, lead and follow Teaches child limits of self-will Teaches child to negotiate to get needs and wants met	Loving Parent teaches and encourages the Inner Child to learn what he/she would have learned in a functional home (see list on left)
	Child Learns in Dysfunctional Home Child becomes unsure of himself, helpless, and ashamed Becomes the bully, the follower, or the watcher Feels guilty Is overly responsible or irresponsible Is overly dependent on others to define him/her Always fearful; often paralyzed Does not use imagination or play freely Acts impulsively or compulsively	Loving Parent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages Inner Child to act on his/her ideas • Teaches Inner Child how to do things independently • Teaches Inner Child to see own strengths and victories • Guides Inner Child to participate and interact with others in healthy ways • Teaches Inner Child to take responsibility and make amends when appropriate
	Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Children Do Arts – finger painting Crafts – sculpting, use ink or paint stamps Music – sing the alphabet & children's songs; dance Toys - building blocks, balls, books, puzzles Games – sorting & memory games; hide and seek Activities – Costume play, connect dots, nursery rhymes	Allow your Inner Child to do these activities or adult versions of them
	Mobility & Sports Opportunities Practices balance in walking Bounces, catches, and chases balls Runs through sprinklers, rolls down hills, chases birds Touches, grabs, opens doors and cupboards Drives a tricycle	Allow your Inner Child to use mobility or sports equipment or the adult versions of them

Reading



Recovery From Major Life Stage Issue: Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt

The Toddler life stage lasts from about from 18 months old to three years. Parents are the most important people to toddlers. If we have memories of events about neglect, abandonment, loss, abuse, or trauma that cause us to feel toxic shame or major doubt, in recovery, our Loving Parents walk us through the grief cycle (denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance).

Children who grow up in dysfunctional homes are often shamed. Such parents subject their children to repeated instances of humiliation. Parents tell their children they *are* bad rather than their *behavior* is bad. Parents dismiss or belittle their children's efforts, ideas, and achievements. They neglect their children or subject them to physical, emotional, spiritual, or sexual abuse. When children experience a traumatic event, they receive no support from their parents nor are they taken to counseling. The children internalize these messages and develop unreasonable expectations for themselves; they become perfectionistic for fear of being shamed.

When we have no memories, but always feel ashamed and doubt ourselves, we work with our Inner Children to grieve the toxic shame and debilitating doubt we received from our very critical parents or caretakers.

To Overcome Toxic Shame

- We realize that shame was used as a tool to manipulate us.
- We do a “reality check” on what is causing us to react, reject the accusation, and reassure our Inner Children they have nothing to be ashamed of.
- We build a support group to check our own reality and reassure us.
- We use our adult perspective to understand our childhood abuse and trauma.
- We understand that all humans have flaws, weaknesses, and make mistakes.
- We identify, sit with, and accept the hurts of the past and present.
- We understand our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to let go of them.
- We accept our past lack of self-awareness and make amends to our Inner Children.
- We respond more and react less.
- We recognize anger as an ineffective coping skill to avoid shame.
- We replace self-criticism with positive affirmation.
- We comprehend that success is good and failures are just steps toward reaching goals.
- We invite our own Loving Parents to come and take care of us.

To Overcome Debilitating Doubt

- We realize we react in the present because of past gaslighting and the undeserved rage we experienced as defenseless children.
- We grieve the abuse of childhood.
- We recognize when we are being triggered and stop criticizing ourselves.
- We act rather than freeze.
- We recite or write down a list of past successes and accomplishments and share them.
- We break down tasks into small steps and celebrate each step toward our goal.
- We recognize and reject unfounded criticism from self and others.
- We prepare for upcoming tasks and performances.
- We keep recovery focus on our own thinking, words, and behavior, and not what others say or do.

- We use positive affirmations, read positive material, and limit negativity.
- We use supporters and support groups as a reality check on self-doubts.
- We converse with our Inner Children each morning, evening, and throughout the day.



Parents' Job - Recovery From What We Never Got

The job of our actual parents was to toilet train us, teach us self-control, encourage us to focus our energy and effort on doing good things, and reward us for putting off gratification. In recovery, the Loving Parent takes on the guiding role our actual parents defaulted on and teach us what did not learn: proper toileting, self control, doing positive things, and extending gratification.



Recovery to Learn Skills We Did Not Learn as Toddlers

As Loving Parents, we guide our Inner Children to learn the skills they did not learn growing up. We focus our recovery by reading or taking classes on defining our limits and enforcing our boundaries. We discover ways to get our needs and wants met without manipulating others. We allow our Inner Children to do the adult version of exploring our environment by watching, poking, grabbing, and pulling.(e.g., watching others behave, performing thought experiments, and performing social interaction experiments). The adult adaptation of mimicking adults or fictional heroes may morph into imitating behaviors of successful speakers, entrepreneurs, statesmen, or real life heroes.



Recovery by Teaching our Inner Children What Functional Children Learn

Our Loving Parents show their Inner Children that they are loved, lovable, and wonderful. They proudly display and share their Inner Child's work and accomplishments and teach them to be proud of themselves for their efforts. Rather than doing things for their Inner Children, Loving Parents show their children how to complete a task by breaking it up into small steps, cheering on the efforts of the children, and patiently wait for the Inner Children to complete the tasks by themselves or with minimum direction and assistance. Loving Parents supply tools and toys and show their Inner Children how to use them. They teach their Inner Children to cooperate, take turns, lead, and follow. They teach their Inner Children how to negotiate to get their needs and wants met. With this encouraging support, our Inner Children develop initiative. They develop the self-confidence to think and act independently. They begin to exercise free will and learn the limits of self-will (avoiding self will run riot). They begin to detach from their parents because of their improved self-esteem.



Recovery by Grieving False, Negative Beliefs (“Critical Parent Tapes” or “Stinkin’ Thinkin’”) Learned in Dysfunctional Homes

Some of us came to believe as children at this life stage that we are vile, inept, stupid, and worthless creatures unworthy of love, boundaries, courtesy, or attention. We learned to keep our feelings to ourselves. We were afraid to be seen, much less respond to a question. We were terrified of our abusers to the point of abandoning ourselves to please them. Some of us became almost catatonic, paralyzed, unable to think clearly to make rational decisions. We learned our worth was in serving the needs and wants of our abusers, that we were never to know what free will and joy were.

In recovery we grieve the experiences that resulted in our shame and doubt. We review what happened to us as children and come to understand we did nothing wrong. The shame was the abusers', not ours, that was projected upon us. The doubt foisted upon us was a tool the abusers used so no one would question or challenge them.

We challenge the false thoughts and confront our own behaviors when we default to feeling shame and doubt. We reject those thoughts by sharing at meetings or scream at couch cushions we hit with plastic baseball bats.

After admitting and owning our worth, we develop and use positive affirmations in place of the negative beliefs ("I am proud of who I am, what I believe, think, say, and do, and the decisions I make"). We catch ourselves when we become frozen, overly submissive to abusers, or run to others to make decisions for us, and we act assertively and make our own decisions decisively, autonomously.



Recovery by Doing Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Children Do

We recreate the experiences with arts, crafts, music, toys, games, and activities of this life stage by playing with adult versions of them in order to mature emotionally. Enrolling in arts and crafts classes such as painting, pattern stamping, sculpting, leatherwork, sewing, or welding may serve to release the creativity of adult children. Reading children's books, comics, graphic novels, fantasies, or science fiction may be the adult adaptation of inspiring imagination in our Inner Children. Singing childhood songs with or without instruments may fill in the gaps of the unfulfilled life stage. Participating in simple dances (Hokey Pokey, simple hula, conga lines, line dances, or horas) may provide missing enjoyment of this life stage. The adult might enjoy putting together unassembled furniture, build firepits with mortar and bricks, or fix automobiles to recreate childhood building block toys. Board games, word searches, crosswords, sorting, connecting dots, etc. can help our Inner Children grow up. Adult activities may include assembling 1000 piece puzzles for the 6-piece puzzle of the toddler. Reciting nursery rhymes may give way to memorizing or acting out historic documents or writing and performing poems and songs. Acting in plays, dressing up for Halloween, or attending Comic Con in costume may help our Inner Children to complete this life stage.



Recovery By Providing Mobility and Sports Opportunities

Some of us did not get to practice mobility activities or have experiences that helped us improve our motor skills or play with wild abandon. In recovery, our own Loving Parents give our Inner Children those experiences. The adult adaptation of balance in walking may be to walk on

balance beams of various heights or do gymnastics. Bouncing, chasing, and catching balls for toddlers may be to play or coach ball sports as adults. Running through sprinklers, rolling down hills, and chasing birds and butterflies may be accomplished at an ACA play day or by borrowing a young niece or nephew and experiencing these things with that child. Touching, grabbing, opening cupboards and doors might be games at ACA Halloween parties or retreats using blindfolds, timers, or prizes. Riding a tricycle may be a recreated experience by riding an adult tricycle, skateboard, bicycle, scooter, or motorcycle.



Exercise 1 – Shame

Examples are given below of ways actual critical parents shame their children.

After reading down each column, participants may share similar examples from childhood.

Body Shaming	Identity Shaming (focus on identity rather than undesired behavior)	Shaming What the Child Wants	Shaming What the Child Feels	Shaming What the Child Needs	Shaming to Manipulate Desired Behavior	Shaming Secrets Shared with Parent or Caretaker
He still wets the bed.	You are stupid.	Look at all the toys I give you. They are never enough for you.	Oh, poor little baby, wants attention all the time.	You don't need to go to the bathroom; hold it until we get home.	This little one always eats his boogers.	This one told me about pretty little Linda kissing him.
He's so fat he can't see his shoelaces to tie them.	You are a real f_____ up.	You don't need to wear what all the other kids are wearing.	You don't mean that.	There are poor people dying without water; you can wait.	He's always got his hands in his pants playing with himself.	She peed in front of her entire class.
She's so little that she has to sit on books to eat at the dinner table.	You are such a cry-baby.	I don't have time to listen to your silly problems; I have real problems.	What do you have to cry about?	You don't need to eat until I get ready to cook.	Princess here is always crabbing and crying to get what she wants.	He let that bully beat him up and take his lunch money again.
She's so clumsy she trips over her own feet.	I don't know why I bother with you, you worthless piece of garbage.		That's your mother you are talking about.	You don't need clean clothes to go to school; you just get them dirty anyway.		
He can't even wipe his butt clean so his clothes are soiled every day.	You are evil, bad to the bone.					
	You are just like your no-good father / mother / brother / sister...					



Exercise 2 – Techniques Abusers Use to Instill Self-Doubt in Others

Examples are given below of some methods abusers use to instill fear, uncertainty, and doubt to intimidate, manipulate, or dominate others. The target of the abuse becomes frozen in fear. Alternatively, the victim becomes

hopelessly confused rendering him/her impotent to protect him/herself or challenge the abuser in any way. The victim questions his/her own memory, sensory perception, reality, and sanity.

Read through the columns below. Participants may briefly share an example of similar abuse and how it made them doubt themselves.

Physical	Verbal	Social	Cyber
Hit	Persistent denial	Lying about the person	Post abuse in texts, email, photos, or videos
Kick	Blame others	Spreading rumors	Exclude others online
Pull	Contradict others	Making negative faces or physical gestures	Post nasty gossip or rumors
Trip	Making up and repeating falsehoods about individuals	Threatening or contemptuous looks	Imitate person online to make him/her look bad to others; humiliate them in some way (catfishing)
Push	Misdirection	Nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate	
Punch	Overwhelming onslaught of repeated, negative statements and innuendos	Mimic behavior unkindly	
Grab at	“Teasing” – taunts, insults, name-calling	Encourage others to socially exclude someone	
Pinch	Assign and repeat unkind nicknames	Saying bad things about a person so others will not accept that person	
Strangle	Racial and ethnic slurs, homophobic remarks, gender abasement, religious smears	Saying bad things about a person so others will think less of that person	
Beat	Threaten death or harm	Campaign of “gas lighting” using barrage of these techniques against another	
Threaten physical harm		Using question form and theatrics to sell the complete lie, verbally paints vivid picture of person saying or doing something “bad”	

Exercise 3 – Ways Loving Parents May Foster Autonomy in Our Inner Children

Read the statements in column 1. Put checkmarks in column 2 if you, as your own Loving Parent, already do this for your Inner Child. In column 3, put checkmarks for the items you will begin to do for your Inner Child.

	I Already Do This for My Inner Child	I Will Start Doing This for My Inner Child
--	--------------------------------------	--

Help Inner Child make good decisions		
Encourage my Inner Child to do things for him/herself		
Show my Inner Child how to do something and practice doing it		
Establish daily activity schedule – brush teeth, shower, dress, eat meals...		
Do daily chores – make bed, hang up clothes, put things away after use...		
Provide proper tools to do daily & weekly chores		
Encourage responsibility by completing daily & weekly chores		
Encourage doing things rather than asking for unneeded help		
Encourage acting on own ideas, taking risks, trying new things, and change how to do things		
Adopt belief that successes are good, and failures are merely steps toward goals		

Exercise 4 – Autonomy in My Life








Circle all the activities below in which you meet your own needs and wants. Prioritize what to work on in those areas where you are not getting your needs and wants met.

Bathing	Driving	Property - own, maintain, & upgrade	Relaxing
Caring for Child / Pet	Eating	Recovery	Shopping
Cleaning the House	Exercising	Relating to Bosses	Sleeping
Cooking	Grooming	Relating to Co-Workers	Studying / Learning
Communicating	Laundering Clothing	Relating to Family	Technology - phone and public media
Dental & Medical Care	Managing Finances - Banking Pay Bills on time, saving, prudent reserve, establishing retirement account	Relating to Lover / Spouse	Toileting / Hygiene
Dressing	Playing	Relating to Neighbors	Working

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

In the last column, write down one thing you will work on this week.

		One Thing I Will Do This Week
Major Life Stage Issue: Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt		
Parent's Job Toilet training Teach self-control Encourage positive effort Reward putting off gratification		
Skills Toddlers Normally Learn Defines boundaries & sets limits Learns to get needs & wants met Learns to interact with world by watching, poking, grabbing, pulling Imitates adults and cartoon and movie heroes		
Child Learns in Functional Home - A Loving Parent - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> teaches child he/she is loved, lovable, & wonderful supplies & demonstrates toys & items to be creative reaches in small steps to ensure success encourages, praises, and rewards child's efforts proudly displays & shares child's accomplishments allows child to exercise free will allows child to develop pride allows child to initiate activities with friends, approach & initiate dialogue, begin projects, persuade others allows child to cooperate, take turns, lead and follow teaches child limits of self-will teaches child to negotiate to get needs & wants met 		
Child Learns in Dysfunctional Home <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be unsure of himself, helpless, and ashamed To become the bully, the follower, or the watcher Always feels guilty Is overly responsible Is overly dependent on adult caretakers to define him/her Always fearful; often paralyzed Has little imagination; does not play freely Is impulsive and compulsive 		
Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Children Do Arts – finger painting Crafts – sculpting, use ink or paint stamps Music – sing the alphabet & children's songs; dance Toys - building blocks, balls, books, puzzles Games – sorting & memory games; hide and seek Activities – Costume play, connect dots, nursery rhymes		
Mobility & Sports Opportunities Practices balance in walking Bounces, catches, and chases balls Runs through sprinklers, rolls down hills, chases birds and butterflies Touches, grabs, opens doors and cupboards Drives a tricycle		










Completing Life Stages - Initiative vs. Guilt - Chapter 18

Question: In your adult life, are you a self-starter or a leader to others?

Life Stage – Pre-School Child

Age 3 – 6 Years

Family Members are Significant

Symbol		Recovery
	Major Life Stage Issue: Initiative vs. Guilt	If have memories of specific abusive events about initiating, exploring, or creating, grieve the abuse If no memories of specific events, grieve the guilt issues
	Parent's Job Encourage child to explore and create Keep child safe	Set up opportunities for Inner Child to explore and create Ensures safety while Inner Child explores and creates
	Skills Pre-Schoolers Normally Learn Interpersonal social skills through play	Set up play dates with ACAs to practice social skills
	Child Learns in Functional Home Self-starts Plan and initiate activities Make up games Make decisions Ask many questions Has direction and purpose	Encourages exploration, play, and creating with safe people Encourages sense of direction and purpose as an ACA committee chair to self-start, plan and initiate activities, make up games, make decisions, and ask questions
	Child Learns in Dysfunctional Home I am a burden I am worthless I can only be a follower I am unable to be on my own I deserve to be punished, forbidden, and restricted I must constrain myself; I cannot be curious or creative I cannot think for myself or do anything I have to control everything or nothing I am a champion of morality, or I have no principles at all	Grieve false, negative beliefs ("critical parent tapes" or "stinkin' thinkin'") Challenge and reject them Replace them with positive affirmations Stop the negative thought-action behavior
	Arts, Crafts, Music, Games & Activities Children Do Arts – color, paint, shapes, draw, balance Crafts – stamp projects, macaroni necklace or picture Music – nursery rhymes, songs, hokey pokey dance Toys - Toy dinosaurs, legos, zoo animals Games – board games, marching, Simon Says, Red Rover Activities – act out community careers – police, fire, nurse, builder, housewife, store clerk; engages in fantasy as pirate, fairy, prince/princess, super-hero...	Engages in arts, crafts, music, games, & activities or adult versions off them Engage in community activities as a volunteer – neighborhood policing, volunteer firefighter, homebuilder, babysitter, fund raiser Get involved in local theatre, fantasy games, or Halloween activities in character
	Mobility & Sports Opportunities Tricycles Soccer drills Wagon – push, pull, ride Bowling	Use mobility devices or plays sports or adult versions of them: Ride on or race adult-sized tricycles Play soccer or other sports in park or on team Push, pull, or ride on wagons and carts Bowl on lawns or in bowling alleys

Reading



Recovery From Major Life Stage Issue: Initiative vs. Guilt

From ages 3 to 6, more or less, pre-school children are exploring their environments and creating. Members of their nuclear family are the important people in their lives. At this age the children are learning to exercise their free will to initiate activities. When they succeed, they feel more confident in doing that.

If they have been discouraged from free exploration, they develop an ever-present sense of guilt. If they have memories of specific abusive events about exploring or creating, they grieve the abuse. Without memories of specific events, they grieve the guilt issues. In recovery the Loving Parent gently guides the Inner Child to talk to ACA members after a meeting, ask for a Sponsor, introduce a plan for where to go after a meeting for fellowship, or ask for a phone number.



Parent's Job - Recovery to Get What We Never Got

In a functional home, loving parents set up opportunities for their children to interact with other children to freely explore the people, places, and things in their environment. The parents supply the paraphernalia to create with building blocks, color with crayons, dance to music, pose for photos, or sculpt with mashed potatoes, cookie dough, or clay. Loving parents supervise the play and the exploration to keep their children safe.

In recovery, Loving Parents help their Inner Children to set up exploratory experiences on an adult level. To find out more about people, the Loving Parent may study archeology or watch people at a public gathering. To learn about places, the Loving Parent may go to a local museum or travel to another country. To learn about things in their environment, the Loving Parent may visit the local nuclear plant or listen to the local farm report.



Recovery to Learn Skills We Did Not Learn as Pre-Schoolers

Some of us did not get the message to go forth, trade off being a leader or a follower with our playmates, or explore the exciting world around us. We were restricted by parents and caretakers because of the mess we might make, the time it might take from their pursuits to supervise us, and the distraction we might be to their melodramatic roles as victims, perpetrators, or heroes. In recovery our Loving Parents set up ACA programs or play dates to improve our social skills through work and play. In our recovery groups, we learn to share by working in a service position, then letting go of that position to allow someone else to serve.



Recovery by Teaching Our Inner Children What Functional Children Learn

A Loving Parent encourages his/her Inner Child to explore, play, and create while keeping the Inner Child safe. One way to ensure safety is to engage with program people who have recovery when setting up play dates. The main goal in the activities is to allow the Inner Child the chance

to talk freely, ask multitudes of questions, plan and initiate activities, create rules, and make decisions. Exploration may include the municipality or countyside around it. Visiting zoos, museums, tidepools, planetariums, or nature preserves and trails may be explored. Playtime may include active games like baseball, goofy golf, tag, paintball, or making up a game. Board games and card games allow the Inner Children to be comfortable interacting socially. Art, music, dance, crafts, and building activities allow Inner Children to discover who they are, what they like and want to do (direction), and gain a sense of purpose.



Recovery by Grieving False, Negative Beliefs (“Critical Parent Tapes” or “Stinkin’ Thinkin’”) Learned in Dysfunctional Homes

We adopted certain false and highly damaging beliefs about ourselves in dysfunctional homes. We were taught to believe that we were such losers that there was no reason for us to act on our ideas, rally others to action, or dare to attempt to do anything. We felt guilty for being, for taking up space, and for consuming oxygen.

In recovery we share the lies we had adopted that we were not valuable enough to have original thought. We trace those false ideas back to childhood to remember where we heard them and why we ultimately adopted them. With that information, we challenge (“I am not worthless”) and reject the guilt we feel (“It’s not my fault; I did nothing wrong”). We affirm who we actually are (“I am acting on my ideas,” “I can inspire others to act with me,” “I can do anything I set my mind to do”).



Recovery by Doing Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Children Do

In the effort to grow up emotionally, it is necessary to fully experience the free, playfulness of this life stage. It is important to fill a void so we do not default to our learned, negative behaviors. We can recreate the childhood experiences and/or explore the adult versions of them.

Art for this life stage includes learning about color, shapes, balance, exploring the materials (crayons, paint, scissors, etc.), and practicing techniques using the materials.

Crafts may include using sculpted potato stamps to make patterns in ink or paint, threading macaroni to create necklaces, or gluing paper dots or squares or pasta onto paper. An adult version of these activities might be taking a class in making jewelry.

For music, rhythm, and dance, reciting nursery rhymes, singing children’s songs, or moving to music or playing kazoos, drums, or tamborines might be the recreation of childhood. Adult variations may include reading poetry, singing contemporary songs, dancing, and playing instruments.

The toys normal pre-schoolers play with are tiny toy dinosaurs and zoo animals as well as building blocks. An ACA in recovery could easily make elaborate dioramas or video creations of

the animals in their habitats. Lego, Erector Set, or model train structures or environments can be built.

Board games, marching, Simon Says, and Red Rover might be replicated by an ACA in recovery. The adult versions may be playing Chess or Scrabble, marching in bands or military exercises, learning techniques in to skydiving (Simon Says), or selecting players on a team or for work projects (Red Rover).

The adult versions of dressing up as community helpers (police, firefighters, nurses, teachers, homemakers, pirates, fairies, royalty, superheroes) might be experienced in related activities. Doing a “ride along” with police or participating in a neighborhood watch assignment, for instance, might be the adult version of pretending to be a police officer as a pre-schooler. Volunteering at the local hospital might serve to fill in the void of playing doctor or nurse. Attending a comicbook convention in a Superhero costume might also be a way to recreate the fun missed as a pre-school child.



Recovery By Providing Mobility and Sports Opportunities

Using the mobility or sports equipment of the pre-schooler, or the adult counterparts of them, will also help complete this life stage. While the pre-school child is working on following directions, learning rules, and mastering his/her coordination, the adult in recovery is filling in the blanks of his/her “Swiss Cheese” identity. The child’s tricycle experience may be created by pedaling an adult-sized tricycle or revving up a Harley Davidson Three Wheeled Trike. Soccer drills of pre-schoolers may be replaced with participation in a local adult soccer team. Wagon play may be replaced with riding on or driving horses, golf carts, or sports utility vehicles. Lawn bowling or bowling in bowling alleys as adults would surely recreate the pre-schooler’s experience knocking down plastic pins with plastic balls.

Exercise 1 – Guilt

Guilt has two basic components: disapproval of oneself which engenders self hate and a belief one can never be happy; and a fear of consequences if the bad act is found out by others which means that no one can help and sadness prevails.

Circle the numbers of the statements below that are true for you.

1. I have no control over myself.
2. I can never do anything right.
3. I am always sad.
4. I am always worried people will find out who and what I really am.
5. I am an awful person.
6. I will never be happy.
7. I should be punished.
8. I am terrified I will be caught or found out.
9. I get angry when someone finds out a secret about me.
10. I don't like who I am.

If you circled most of these, you likely have unresolved guilt issues to address in recovery. Trace your guilt feelings with a childhood event and resolve the original event by expressing your grief. If you still cannot name the event, work on recovery from guilt.

Exercise 2 - Initiative

Children who initiate activities with others are assertive. They feel secure in their ability to take their original ideas, make good decisions to create plans to make those ideas happen, and lead others to participate.

Circle the numbers of the statements below that are true for you.

1. I feel good when I respectfully tell people what I want and need.
2. Figuring out how to solve a problem and sharing my plan is exciting.
3. Brainstorming with others to solve problems and developing a plan is stimulating.
4. I stand up for myself when others say or do abusive things.
5. I like to start new projects.
6. Making sound decisions is important in developing action plans.
7. I like being a leader rather than a follower.
8. I love to see my ideas come to fruition.
9. I like to share information and collaborate with others to work out solutions.
10. I enjoy taking the responsibility that comes with leadership.








If you circled most of these statements, you seem to have mastered the skills of this life stage.

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

Fill in the last column with one thing you will do this week in recovery.

		One Thing I Will Do This Week
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Initiate an activity with safe members of ACA		Activity, date, and time:
Explore, create, or build something		What I will explore, create, or build:
Set up play date to practice social interaction skills		What we will do; who I will invite:
Play respectfully, share, and cooperate		How I will respectfully play, share, or cooperate with others:
Grieve a time I was not allowed to explore, create, or build		What I was not allowed to do & how I will grieve it:
Engage in arts, crafts, music, toys, games, and other activities for pre-schoolers		Adult version of arts, crafts, music, toys, games, or activities I will do:
Participate in adult version of a pre-schooler's physical activity or sport		Adult version of mobility activity or sport I will participate in:



Completing Life Stages - Industry vs. Inferiority - Chapter 19

Question: How can we become industrious when we feel inferior

Life Stage – Elementary Child Age 6 - 12 Years Neighbors & Teachers are Significant People

		Recovery
	Major Life Stage Issue: Industry vs. Inferiority	Grieve memories of specific abusive events Grieve feelings of inferiority if no memories
	Parent's Job Teach good behavior Encourage child to make friends, participate in school and community activities, and solve problems Facilitate participation (transport, pay fees, provide tools...) Keep child safe	Encourage Inner Child to feel industrious (competent, confident, and enthusiastic) in achieving goals Set up participation activities for Inner Child Ensure safety while Inner Child interacts Model kind and healthy behavior
	Skills Elementary Children Normally Learn Work ethic – participate, commit, follow-through Think – abstractly, organize, plan, solve problems, distinguish between fact and fiction Social Skills - Make friends, earn peer approval, work with group or independently Awareness – home, school, and community Confidence – state own opinions Learn how things work; learn to read, write, do math	Loving Parent encourages Inner Child to participate in groups and situations that provide opportunities for children to work together Loving Parent teaches the distinction between an unsafe situation and one that is uncomfortable
	Child Learns in Functional Home Self Care – hygiene, dress, clean up after self Care of Others – younger children & pets Responsibility – chores, homework, follow-through, work & play well with others; admit & atone for mistakes Follow Rules – play games and sports Get Needs & Wants Met - ask for & accept help Activities – explore, experiment, and produce Contribute to society by volunteering	Loving Parent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> models breaking tasks into steps encourages self-care models care for small children and pets teaches taking responsibility, following rules, getting needs and wants met, encourages exploring, experimenting, producing, and volunteering
	Child Learns in Dysfunctional Home Has no skills or abilities; cannot think, organize, plan Is inferior, does not try or hope; will never succeed Trusts no one including self Judges and criticizes self and others harshly Is perfectionist or slob, overly competitive or never competes; always or never takes risks Associates with antisocial people or isolates Lies, breaks promises, rules & laws, hurts others Takes no responsibility – blames others	Grieve false, negative beliefs ("critical parent tapes" or "stinkin' thinkin'") Challenge and reject false, negative beliefs Replace them with positive affirmations Stop the negative thought-action behavior
	Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Children Do Arts – explore elements of art, tools, and techniques Crafts – make jewelry, carve soap, sculpt, mosaics, origami, & string art Music – historic songs, poetry, play instruments, dance Toys - action figures & dolls; toy cars, Legos, balls, puppets Games - word, board, card, and video Activities – fantasy & war games; fly kites, camp; attend marathons Construct models & use science kits	Explore these arts, crafts, music, toys, and activities or adult versions of them Take classes in arts or crafts, sing, dance, and play music, play word, board, card, & video games, participate in local theater, play paintball war games, fly kites, camp, have slumber parties or attend marathons
	Mobility & Sports Opportunities Team sports – track, baseball, football, basketball, soccer, volleyball Individual skills - archery, marksmanship, running, tetherball, handball...	Use mobility devices or plays sports or adult versions of them: team sports, running races, practicing archery, shooting, shooting hoops in the park...

Reading



Recovery From Major Life Stage Issue: Industry vs. Inferiority

From ages 6 to 12, elementary school aged children are learning about work. In recovery, our own Loving Parent guides us to learn what work is, the skills and tools needed to do the job efficiently, how to work alone or with others, how to distinguish fact from fiction, how to think, plan, and solve problems, and how to communicate confidently. When children learn these things, they are constantly active, involved, and working towards goals. If they do not learn them, they become idle, destructive, and feel worthless and inferior to others. If they have memories of specific abusive events about working, or school, or the absence of support when these events occurred, they grieve the abuse. Without memories of specific events, they grieve their feelings of not being good enough.



Parent's Job - Recovery to Get What We Never Got

In childhood, the job our parents were supposed to do was to get us involved in opportunities where we worked with others to achieve common goals. They were supposed to get us the tools to use, the guidance and training to be productive, encourage our efforts, and keep us safe. That is now the job of our own Loving Parent. Our Loving Parent will provide us with the tools, guidance, and training we need to be productive. It will actively assist us to get involved with groups (such as ACA service committees or boards) working toward common objectives and be successful while working with others. The Loving Parent 1) assures us that there are plans in place if a social situation does not go as expected and helps to carry out those plans, 2) cheers us on in our endeavors, 3) rewards our efforts, and 4) assures us that we are not alone – we can always call on our Loving Parent for help and support.



Recovery to Learn Skills We Did Not Learn as Elementary Children

In recovery, our Loving Parent encourages our Inner Child to participate in groups and situations for children to work together effectively. We develop a work ethic when we commit ourselves, show up, listen, participate, follow-through, and let go of the results. Our Loving Parent provides our Inner Children with opportunities to think linearly and abstractly, plan, organize, solve problems, separate fact from fiction, work alone and with others, and become involved in our homes, schools, and communities. It encourages our Inner Children to speak confidently when sharing ideas and opinions. Our Loving Parent supports the efforts of our Inner Children to learn how things work and encourages them to apply their reading, writing, and math and financial skills to real situations and solve the problems that arise.



Recovery by Learning the Lessons Taught in Functional Homes

In a functional home, a child learns to dress appropriately, to clean up after him/herself, and care for pets and younger children. The child learns to do chores, homework, and play fairly

with others. The child is taught to own up to mistakes and atone for them. Through games and sports, the child learns to follow rules and how to win and lose graciously. He or she learns to get needs and wants met and asks for and accepts help. The functional child is encouraged to explore, experiment, and produce. The child learns to contribute to his or her world by volunteering.

In recovery, the Loving Parent guides his or her Inner Child through all of these lessons – dressing, caring for others, taking responsibility, and admitting and atoning for mistakes. The Loving Parent teaches the Inner Child how to follow rules, get needs and wants met, and ask for help when needed. The Loving Parent encourages the Inner Child to explore, experiment, and produce. Finally, the Loving Parent encourages the Inner Child to volunteer.



Recovery by Grieving False, Negative Beliefs (“Critical Parent Tapes” or “Stinkin’ Thinkin’”) Learned in Dysfunctional Homes

In a dysfunctional home a child learns and internalizes a variety of negative “truths.” He or she is told outright or by parents’ behavior that he/she has no skills or abilities. As a result, because the child believes he cannot think, organize, or plan, the child believes he/she is inferior, has no hope for the future, and does not think he/she can ever succeed. This child learns to distrust him/herself and others. He/she judges him/herself and others harshly. The child evolves into a perfectionist or a slob, becomes extremely competitive or will never compete, and takes extreme risks or no risks. This child associates with antisocial people or isolates completely. This child may lie, break promises, violate rules and laws, and deliberately hurt others. This child takes no responsibility for anything and consistently blames others.

“Stinkin’ Thinkin’” may have served us well as survival tools (such as thinking that “Dad thinks I have nothing intelligent to say, so I need to stary quiet and say nothing, so I won’t be belittled”). It takes courage to identify these old, false messages and the underlying traumatic events that caused them. The behavior associated with these false messages may have saved our young lives. It’s okay to continue to use these old survival tools as we work to replace the old false messages with thinking that reflects what we have come to know in today’s reality. Eventually, we learn that the old thinking just does not serve us well, and we can let that old thinking go.

Recovery involves grieving the situations that led to adopting the belief he or she is inferior to others. When the false thoughts arise (“I am inferior to orthers”), are spoken aloud, or are acted out, the ACA in recovery learns to recognize them (“I just had a false thought”), stop to analyze them (“This dysfunctional thought came from my childhood when...”), challenge the validity (“This is a patently false”), reject them (“I don’t believe that for one second”), and replace them with a positive thought, phrase, or action (“I am a wonderful person, a child of my Higher Power, equal to all others, capable of doing anything I choose to do. I am enough”).



Recovery by Doing Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Children Do

In recovery, recreating a happy childhood allows our Inner Children to become complete human beings. To ignore this piece of recovery allows us to default to dysfunctional thinking, words, and patterns of behavior.

Art exploration at this life stage may include color, shapes, patterns, materials, techniques, and placing objects while creating masterpieces in crayons, markers, paint, clay, popsicle sticks, tin foil, beads, yarn, cardboard, or macaroni. Community classes in art abound.

Crafts may include making jewelry with beads, sculpting with clay, creating mosaics with paper or tiles, origami, sewing, tie-dying t-shirts, or using painted string to create three-dimensional art. Community classes in crafts such as welding, metal work, construction, sewing, hand-crafts, and design fulfill this component of this life stage.

Music includes singing children's songs, folk, historic, and patriotic songs, reciting poetry, playing instruments, and participating in dances.

The toys of this Life Stage, or adult versions of them, are action figures and dolls, toy cars and trucks, Legos, balls, kites, balsa wood planes, slinkies, and puppets.

Word games, card games, board games, and video games are enjoyed by children 6 to 12.

Activities to complete this Life Stage include dress up, fantasy and war games, camping or slumber parties. Building models and exploring construction or science kits are also engaging activities.

For recovery, dressing up may mean becoming involved in local theater productions, attending Halloween parties or being a character in a Haunted House, attending a Renaissance Faire in costume, or going to a comic convention as a Super-Hero. Playing paintball war games or staging snowball fights, flying kites or drones or going up in air balloons might be fun.

Slumber parties at the adult level may be having all-night poker games, binge-watching movies, or even attending 24-hour, 12-Step marathon meetings.



Recovery By Providing Mobility and Sports Opportunities

Mobility activities may include camping, traveling in recreation vehicles, ocean liners, or trains, all of which are easily accessible for adults in recovery. Running, skateboarding, riding bikes and scooters are easily replicated by adults. Typical team sports of this Life Stage include track activities, baseball, football, basketball, soccer, and volleyball. Community Centers, Senior Centers, municipal parks, and colleges offer opportunities to participate in team sports that ACAs in recovery can sign up for. Individual skills such as archery and marksmanship may require reservations at archery fields and gun ranges. Running daily or three times a week may require scheduling and personal commitment.

Exercise 1 - Inferiority

Circle all statements below that are true for you.

1. I have no skills or abilities worth mentioning.
2. I cannot think, organize, or plan.
3. I do not bother to try to do anything because I always fail.

4. I have nothing to hope for or lookward to.
5. I do not trust myself or anyone else.
6. I judge and criticize myself just as harshly as I judge and criticize others.
7. I am a perfectionist, or I don't care how or if things get done.
8. I am overly competitive, or I never compete.
9. I take extreme risks, or I never take risks.
10. My friends are all antisocial like me, or I completely isolate.
11. Lying, breaking rules and laws, and hurting others is what I do.
12. I never make mistakes; other people always ruin my life.

If you circled many of these, you may want to help your Inner Child find ways to overcome his/her sense of inferiority.

Exercise 2 - Industriousness

Check all the statements below that are true for you.








1. When I commit to doing something, I show up on time, properly attired, and ready to work.
2. I get jobs done by persevering and solving problems that come up.
3. I take care of the tools I use; I keep them accessible, clean, and orderly.
4. I work respectfully as a leader or follower as part of the team effort.
5. When I have a job to do that I am not sure how to do, I educate myself on how to do it or find someone to show me how to do it correctly.
6. I follow rules, laws, and procedures.
7. I figure out responsible ways to get my needs met.
8. I figure out responsible ways to get my wants met.
9. I like to explore and experiment safely.
10. I volunteer regularly in my program and in my community.

If you checked many of these, you have learned the lesson of this life stage and can now move on to the next one.

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

In the last column on the right, fill in one thing you will do this week.

Recovery Activities to Choose From		One Thing I Will Do This Week
Inventory my industriousness Inventory my sense of inferiority		
Teach your Inner Child good behavior Encourage your Inner Child to make friends, participate in school and community activities, and solve problems Facilitate participation (transport, pay fees, provide tools...) Keep your Inner Child safe		
Demonstrate a good work ethic – participate, commit, and follow-through Think abstractly, organize, plan, solve problems, and distinguish between fact and fiction Improve your social skills - make a friend, earn peer approval, work with a group or independently Become aware of your home, school, and community Build your confidence – state your own opinions Learn how things work; read, write, and use math		
Practice good self care – hygiene, dress, clean up after self Care for younger children or pets Show responsibility by doing chores or homework, follow-through on commitments; work & play well with others; admit & atone for mistakes Follow rules in games and sports Get your needs and wants met - ask for & accept help needed Explore, experiment, and produce Contribute to society by volunteering		
Challenge these examples of false, negative beliefs, grieve them, and replace them with a positive thought, word, or behavior I have no skills or abilities; I cannot think, organize, plan I am inferior, I do not try or hope; I will never succeed I cannot trust anyone including myself I judge and criticize myself and others harshly I am an extremist– I am a perfectionist or slob; I am overly competitive or never compete; I always or never take risks I associate with antisocial people or isolate I lie, break promises, rules & laws, and hurt others I take no responsibility – I blame others		
Explore elements of art and materials Create crafts with beads, carve soap, shape with clay, create paper or tile mosaics, make origami animals, & string art Sing songs & recite poetry, play instruments, and dance Play with adult versions of toys - action figures & dolls Play adult word, board, card, & video games Do activities for adults involving dressing up (theater), fantasy & war games (paintball), fly kites and drones, camp, do sleepover or marathon activities (all-night cards, 12-Step marathons), and build with kits (cars, gazebos, furniture		
Participate in team sports – track, baseball, football, basketball, soccer, or volleyball Participate in individual sports activities such as archery, marksmanship, running, tetherball, handball... Ride bikes, skateboards, scooters		










Completing Life Stages - Identity vs. Confusion - Chapter 20

Question: How have I defined myself sexually and vocationally?

Life Stage – Adolescents

Age 12 - 18 Years

Peers are the Significant People

Symbol		Recovery
	Major Life Stage Issue: Identity vs. Role Confusion	Defines self sexually Defines self vocationally Loving Parents encourage the Inner Child to become independent
	Parent's Job Encourage independence, exploration, and achievement Provide the security of rule compliance	Loving Parent encourages the Inner Child to be independent, explore, and achieve Loving Parent imposes limits and enforces consequences for violations
	Skills Adolescents Normally Learn Personal identity - to separate from parents in values, thoughts, words, and behavior Loyalty to groups Critical thinking Sexual awareness, acceptance, and assimilation Relationship skills Prepare for future careers through education and skills acquisition	Identifies own values, thoughts, words, and behavior Helps Inner Child determine where to place loyalty Provides instruction in critical thinking Models or provides models of people comfortable with own sexual identity Provides instruction in relationship skills Encourages Inner Child to improve career skills
	Child Learns in Functional Home Faithfulness, reliability, and dependability Trust in self and others who earn it Defines identity in independence Defines sexual identity Relationship skills Defines vocational identity Plan a career role Interact in groups Belonging Awareness of family, community, and world	Encourage fidelity, reliability, and dependability Recognize trustworthiness and become trustworthy Make own decisions on thoughts, words, and behavior based on own values Learn to dress and groom for attracting mates Join clubs and groups to meet friends and mates Inventory own vocational assets and improve deficits Determine ideal career, steps to it, and implements plan Encourage Inner Child to participate in groups Defines sense of belonging; inventories self Encourages participation in family, community, & world activities
	Child Learns in Dysfunctional Home Distrust of self and others Unsure of who and what he is or who he will be Holds extreme views; rules are too harsh or too lax Gets needs met in gangs and inappropriate, risky or antisocial behavior, "saving victims," or disconnecting Drawn to people who violate boundaries of others	Learns how to trust and be trusted Defines who and what he is and who he will be Analyzes own views and rules in view of own values Inventories own methods of getting needs met Inventories health of relationships in terms of values and reciprocity
	Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Children Do Arts – draw, paint, sculpt, photography, writing Crafts – see list at back of this workbook Music – sing, play instrument, dance, create Toys – educational, electronic, computer, skill development, and models and kits Games – strategy, intellectual, skill development Activities – dating, club or group participation, and giving service in the community	Helps Inner Child define identity in exploring arts, crafts, music, toys, games, and activities Encourages relationships in dating and groups Volunteers in community activities
	Mobility & Sports Opportunities Outdoor activities, travel, vehicles, team sports	The Loving Parent encourages the Inner Child's participation in outdoor activities and team sports, traveling, and using vehicles

Reading



Recovery From Major Life Stage Issue: Identity vs. Role Confusion

At this Life Stage adolescents are maturing into adulthood. Teenagers are exploring their own values, thinking, expressions, and behavior independent of those of their parents. They are becoming sexually aware, perhaps sexually active, and drawn to potential mates. They are taking note of their academic strengths, weaknesses, and skills in the effort to plan how to support themselves as adults. ACAs, who did not master the lessons of this Life Stage or get the support of their parents or caretakers during it, may need to become their own Loving Parents to guide their Inner Children through the Life Stage lessons.

In recovery, the Inner Child needs to learn what his/her values are and ensure they are in alignment with his/her thinking, speaking, and behavior. In this way the Inner Child learns who he/she is. The Loving Parent guides the Inner Child to define him/herself sexually and vocationally.

Sexually the Loving Parent helps the Inner Child explore feelings about his/her body by mentally scanning the entire body and noting the positive and negative reactions to each body part. The Loving Parent assesses the level of confidence he/she has in relating to others intimately. An inventory is done on what the Inner Child learned about sex when growing up and challenging and changing the negative attitudes. The Loving Parent encourages the Inner Child to communicate with a sexual partner to find out by asking and exploring and sharing what is pleasant and what is not. The Loving Parent also guides the Inner Child to share and ask the sexual partner how each interprets a sexual encounter (intimacy, physical release, power...).

Vocationally, the Loving Parent may focus his/her Inner Child on self-appraisal of intellect, trade skills, interpersonal skills, education, experience, and performance on the job. The Loving Parent encourages the Inner Child to appreciate the strengths and remediate the deficits.



Parent's Job - Recovery to Get What We Never Got

A parent's job is to encourage the adolescent to define his or her identity by espousing his or her views, explore the environment, and achieve something. It is also to set limits for the teenager and enforce consequences for breaking the household rules. When the actual parent or caretaker failed to do these things, the child did not learn to be independent, did not learn how to safely explore his environment, and did not learn to achieve anything.

In recovery, the Loving Parent takes on the role the actual parent failed to do. The Loving parent primarily acts in the capacity of a cheerleader, encouraging independence of thought, word, and deed, inspiring exploration, and supporting efforts to accomplish goals. A Loving Parent also lays down consequences of boundary violations.



Recovery to Learn Skills We Did Not Learn as Adolescents

Skills we were supposed to have learned during adolescence we did not learn. We were supposed to have separated from parents, but some of us became enmeshed. Affiliation to social groups often became unhealthy “loyalty” to unhealthy family practices and behavior. Some of us did not learn to think critically. Some of us became overly sexual, frigid, or asexual. We oft times did not learn how to be in a healthy relationship. Some of us did not learn the information or skills to succeed in careers.

A Loving Parent helps his/her Inner Child to identify and align his/her values with thoughts, words, and behavior. The Loving Parent helps the Inner Child understand that loyalty is earned and is reciprocal. The Inner Child is guided by the Loving Parent to learn how to think critically to solve problems. The Loving Parent puts the Inner Child in proximity of healthy people who are comfortable with their sexuality and sexual identity. The Loving Parent assists the Inner Child to learn good relationship and career skills.



Recovery by Learning the Lessons Taught in Functional Homes

The lessons learned in a functional home include being dependable, reliable, and trustworthy. The adolescent is nurtured to establish his/her identity and independence. This is the Life Stage where the child defines sexual identity, learns relationship skills, and plans for a productive, satisfying vocation. The teenager learns how to behave successfully in groups and how to belong in them. Nearing adulthood, the teenager becomes responsible for self, family, community, and world.

It becomes, therefore, the job of the Loving Parent to provide guidance for the Inner Child to learn these things. Character traits fostered by the Loving Parent are fidelity, dependability, and trustworthiness. The Loving Parent works with the Inner Child to think, speak, and act according to the Inner Child’s actual values. The Loving Parent encourages the Inner Child’s grooming and dressing to attract a mate and join groups to meet friends and mates. The Loving Parent may encourage the Inner Child to take note of vocational aptitude and remediate deficits as well as to develop and follow a plan to attain a chosen career. The Inner Child, following the guidance of the Loving Parent, will define what belonging means and try out various techniques to achieve it. Finally, the Loving Parent converses with the Inner Child and gets a commitment about what to do to voluntarily participate more fully in the family, community, and world.



Recovery by Grieving False, Negative Beliefs (“Critical Parent Tapes” or “Stinkin’ Thinkin’”) Learned in Dysfunctional Homes

In a dysfunctional home a child learns no one can be trusted, not even him/herself. Because efforts in becoming a unique being are pervasively threatened, the child does not dare to have independent thought or act on it. In survival mode, the child does not develop a sense of self, have an idea of his/her capabilities, or dare to aspire to life beyond the chaos of childhood. Instead, the child adopts the extreme views and life rules of the parents and abdicates having any identity of his or her own. In some families, the rules are too loose or non-existent. In others, the consequences for violating family rules are arbitrary and/or abusive. When the child does not get his needs met at home, the child gravitates towards peers who regularly violate boundaries of others and break laws and rules, becomes the “savior” of victims like him/herself, or disconnects and isolates. Without having formed an identity, the child does not know who he/she is sexually or who he/she will become vocationally.

In recovery, the Loving Parent guides the Inner Child to learn what trustworthiness looks like, how to behave so others trust him/her, and how to look for trustworthy traits in others. The Loving Parent guides the Inner Child to explore his/her identity and what career he/she is interested in becoming. The Loving Parent ensures that the Inner Child inventories his values and see if they match with his/her thinking, speaking, and actions. The Loving Parent helps the Inner Child find ways to get healthy needs met in appropriate ways. The Loving Parent assists the Inner Child by providing education from classes, books, and media to understand the dynamics of healthy relationships. The Loving Parent guides the Inner Child to match his skills to potential jobs.



Recovery by Doing Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Children Do

To fill in the emotional gaps of this incomplete life stage, a Loving Parent guides the Inner Child to define his or her identity in exploring arts, crafts, music, toys, games, and activities. The Inner Child quickly learns his or her strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes. Adolescents have or do not have the skills for further exploration. Regardless, they learn who they are.

In the back of this workbook are lists of arts, crafts, music, toys, games, and other activities for recovering ACAs to use to select creative options to try out in the quest for identity. Drawing, painting, sculpting, taking photos, and writing poems, essays, or stories may be of interest. Crafts such as building dog houses, assembling furniture, creating t-shirt art, or putting together a Halloween costume might be fun to try. The teenager’s talents in music may be in listening, singing, playing an instrument, dancing, or writing and performing songs. Toys of note for teens may be educational (microscopes), electronic (computers), developing skills (marksmanship or cooking), and models (space station) or kits (robots, cleaning water). Games for this age teach strategy (Chess, Stratego), logic (Monopoly, Clue), and skill development (communication – charades, vocational – model automobile engine kit to assemble). Activities may include dating, participating with clubs and groups, and volunteering in the community.



Recovery By Providing Mobility and Sports Opportunities

At this Life Stage, teenagers participate in outdoor activities. They are often mobile with access to vehicles and travel short distances from home. They become involved in team sports.

For those who did not get this growing up, the Loving Parent provides the Inner Child with those sometimes uncomfortable experiences. For someone to camp who is used to 5-star hotels may involve a steep learning curve. Conversely, the Inner Child may feel exhilarated sailing, rappelling down a cliff, or backpacking.

The Loving Parent may arrange for the Inner Child to join a community baseball or soccer team.

The Loving Parent may call a travel agent to book a cruise on an oceanliner, travel across the country or continent on a train, or fly to a secluded isle.

The Loving Parent may also provide the enthusiasm to explore various modes of transportation and vehicles from dog sleds to race cars to sidecars on motorcycles.

Exercise 1 - Identity and Role Confusion

Circle all statements below that are true for you.

1. I do and say things I saw my parents do and say that are not right.
2. When people ask me what I want for my birthday, I never have an answer.
3. I need someone to tell me what to do and say.
4. I let people walk all over me, or I walk all over other people if they let me.
5. I try not to make any commitments to anyone, or I take on too many responsibilities.
6. I use sex as a tool to get what I want.
7. I hate sex, or I love having sex constantly.
8. To be safe in my childhood home, I learned to be asexual.
9. Relationships are just too much work.
10. I did not do well in my high school; the classes were boring.
11. In high school I did not know what I wanted to do vocationally.
12. If people want my help, they need to pay me; I do not volunteer.
13. I only work for the money, the connections I can make, or the social experience.
14. I like jobs without responsibility; I hate stress.

If you circled a lot of these, you have not learned the lesson of this life stage. You need to work on completing this life stage in recovery.

Exercise 2 - Healthy Sexual and Vocational Identity

Circle all statements below that are true for you.








1. The things I think, say, and do are consistent with one another.
2. I help friends and family as best I can when I have the extra time.
3. I know what I want and need, and I tell others what I want and need from them.
4. I know how to get what I want and need by setting goals and planning the steps I need to take to reach them.
5. I enjoy helping others and volunteering my time for worthy causes if I have extra time to spare.
6. I am always comfortable and enjoy being with groups of people.
7. I set limits and enforce my boundaries.
8. I only commit to doing things if I have the desire, time, energy, and resources to do them.
9. I enjoy dating.
10. I enjoy being both feminine and masculine.
11. I like to be in healthy, reciprocal relationships.
12. Sex is the physical form of intimacy between my lover and me.
13. The classes I liked best in high school lead me to satisfying career choices.
14. I enjoy the career I have chosen that allows me to make me and the world better.

If you circled most of these, you have learned the lesson of this life stage and can comfortably move on to the next one.

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

Read through the list of activities below you can select from to do in your recovery. Put Xs on those you do not need to work on. Of those remaining, pick one or more to work on this week.








	<p>Share how you define yourself sexually</p>	<p>Share how you define yourself vocationally</p>	<p>Name one way you groom and dress to attract mates</p>	
<p>Select 1 to 3 people you know who are comfortable with their sexuality. What one thing can you learn to do from each one?</p>	<p>Watch others, read a book, or take a class on relationships and try out one technique you learned to improve your skills</p>		<p>Share your vocational strengths and deficits. What do you want to improve? How will you do it?</p>	<p>Name your ideal career, steps to attain it, and do one thing to implement that plan</p>
<p>Name one way you can participate in your family, your community, and your world. Do that one thing</p>		<p>What one thing can you encourage your Inner Child to do to improve his/her vocational skills?</p>		<p>Review the health or toxicity of your relationships. Which ones give you energy? Which ones sap your strength? Which ones are reciprocal?</p>
	<p>What is one thing you learned about relationships you will do to meet or improve your interactions with others?</p>	<p>Write down the phone number of one organization in your community you want to volunteer for. Make the call.</p>	<p>Talk to your Inner Child about an outdoor activity, team sport, travel, or vehicle he/she wants to do. Plan to do one thing.</p>	



Completing Life Stages - Intimacy vs. Isolation - Chapter 21

Question: How do we become intimate with others?

Life Stage – Young Adults Age 18 – 40 Years **Lovers, Friends, Co-Workers are Significant**

Symbol		Recovery
	<p>Major Life Stage Issue: Intimacy vs. Isolation Learns about intimacy Learns how to deepen relationships Addresses childhood trust issues</p>	<p>Learn types of intimacy – experiential, emotional, Intellectual, sexual Learn how to move from acquaintances to lovers Explore and resolve trust issues from early childhood: fears of abandonment, rejection, loss of control and independence, repeating past abuse</p>
	<p>Young Adult's Job Make friends Make long term commitments with friends Make long term commitment to mate</p>	<p>Learn how to make friends Practice ways to make and keep friends Learn about and practice ways to maintain long term commitment to mate</p>
	<p>Skills Needed by Young Adults Communication Understand personal space Understand relationship basics Affiliation Make commitments Show love</p>	<p>Learn and practice respectful communication Learn and respect personal space Learn to make friends and maintain relationships Consider aspects of healthy affiliation and affiliate Learn how to make commitments and keep them Learn and practice ways to show respectful love</p>
	<p>Learn to Have Good Relationships Learn how to be in happy, healthy, loving, reciprocal, committed relationships</p>	<p>Learn and practice ways to be happy Learn about healthy relationships Learn ways to love and accept love from others Define and practice reciprocity Learn the process of commitment and practice it</p>
	<p>Learn to Recover from Isolation Identify the false, negative beliefs, challenge them, and adopt positive life rules</p>	<p>Identify the false, negative beliefs Challenge the false, negative beliefs Replace the false, negative beliefs with positive affirmations</p>
	<p>Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Adults Do Arts – draw, paint, sculpt, photography, writing Crafts – see list at back of this workbook Music – sing, play instrument, dance, create Toys – educational, electronic, computer, skill development, and models and kits Games – strategy, intellectual, skill development Activities – deepen relationships, cultivate friends, improve job skills</p>	<p>Helps Inner Child improve and deepen relationships while exploring arts, crafts, music, toys, games, and activities Encourages Inner Child to earn elements of intimacy Guides Inner Child through behavior to deepen relationships Refocuses Inner Child to deal with childhood trust issues</p>
	<p>Mobility & Sports Opportunities Childhood mobility things or adult versions of them Childhood sports or adult versions of childhood games</p>	<p>Drive or ride in or on vehicles (scooters, planes, motorcycles, golf carts, motorboats, trains...) Participate in sports as a spectator or player (indoor and outdoor sports and activities)</p>

Reading



Recovery From Major Life Stage Issue: Intimacy vs. Isolation

Children often isolate themselves to avoid the chaos and uncertainty present in their childhood homes. As adults they sometimes isolate themselves. Not only did they fail to learn about healthy intimacy in their childhood homes, they also missed the modeling of ways to achieve it. In recovery, ACAs learn about types of intimacy, practice deepening their friendships, and explore their unresolved trust issues of early childhood.

Four types of intimacy include experiential, emotional, intellectual, and sexual. Experiential intimacy is bonding by people working toward a common goal. In emotional intimacy, people share their personal thoughts and feelings. Intellectual intimacy is achieved when people share ideas and respect differing viewpoints. With sexual intimacy, both individuals work to learn about the other's needs, wants, and desires to please them sensually.

One method of becoming closer to others is to know how to become more intimate. For example, to move from level one (initiate small talk) to level 2 (discuss factual information...), one might follow a statement about the rain outside with the 40 foot high wave in the Johnstown Flood of 1889. Moving to the third level intimacy in the conversation, one might share an opinion about the responsibility of government for the South Fork Dam failure that killed 2209 people. As one moves to the next level, both parties assess their sense of trusting and being trusted at each level. When the trust is broken, the relationship stops growing or ends. When the trust is reciprocal in a healthy way, people tend to accept one other as friends or lovers.

1. Initiate small talk (pastimes, jobs, local news, weather...).
2. Discuss factual information progressing from general knowledge to interests to personal information.
3. Share opinions. Move from introductory general opinions into more deeply held opinions. Where there are disagreements, agree to disagree, but establish where you have common ground and accept one another's differing opinions.
4. Share your hopes and dreams with one another.
5. Share your true feelings about people, places, and things.
6. Share your shame, shortcomings, failures, faults, and fears.
7. Become respectfully reciprocal in meeting the needs and wants of the other person in the relationship.

To resolve the unresolved trust issues from early childhood (fears of abandonment, rejection, loss of control or independence, or repeating past abuse), one needs to recall examples of the incidents that lead to one of the fears listed below, share them, put them into context from an adult perspective, express the feelings that arise, mourn the loss, and relegate the experiences to vague memories that no longer sap one of energy (let go to God, and let God handle it).



Young Adult's Job

A friend is trustworthy, respectful, reciprocal, understanding, and supportive. A friend wants to know what you are doing, thinking, and feeling. A friend accepts others as they are. A

friend listens without judgment and does not interrupt or change the topic. He/she does not tell another how to think, feel, or be. A friend shares their own beliefs, ideas, hopes, and ambitions.

To find people who might be friends, an ACA is likely to be attracted to people who already share common ground with him or her. Possible friends may be found in classes, at work, in clubs, in churches, or in community activities the ACA participates in (dog parks, parade production, political groups, etc.). Expanding the perimeter of day-to-day life, an ACA might volunteer, sign up for a class, or join a community service or booster club.

Next, the ACA in recovery may screen potential friends. The Inner Child is attracted to individuals who excite the ACA in some healthy (warm and fuzzy) way, rather than sap him/her of energy. The Loving Parent asks the Inner Child about each candidate:

- Can this person be trusted?
- Is this person safe to be around?
- Does the ACA have to be careful of what he or she says and does?
- Is this person supportive and nurturing?
- Can the ACA be him/herself when around this person?
- Is this someone who uses others, saves “victims,” or treats others respectfully?
- Does this person give the ACA energy and good feelings after being with him or her?

To keep the chosen friend, the ACA in recovery shows interest in the new friend by listening carefully, asking appropriate questions about another’s statements, feelings, experiences, opinions, and life. To deepen the intimacy of the friendship, the ACA shares more revealing information about him/herself.

With the extreme focus on social media prevalent today, ACAs, like others, may have become hyper-focused on incoming messages from multiple sources. The addictive quality of the message-response may have taken precedence over spousal interaction and communication, and the ACA in recovery may choose to turn off the phone to devote quality time to the spouse or mate. Other pastimes, interests, and commitments may also interfere with maintaining intimacy, so the ACA and mate may choose to schedule less time on those activities and more time with one another.

Being aware of the emotional needs of a mate and stepping up to provide support encourages intimacy. Participating together in physical, intellectual, cultural, or spiritual activities helps maintain relationships. Each partner in a relationship needs to balance his/her personal focus and time with the that of the partnership. The couple may develop a menu of mutually “fun” activities from which they regularly do. Finally, when discord develops that becomes a pattern in the relationship, the couple needs to find outside help.



Skills Needed by Young Adults

As young adults, ACAs in recovery learn to communicate clearly, compassionately, responsibly, and empathetically. The goal is for both parties to get their needs and wants respected and met. One way to get this result is to listen and observe and respectfully state the words or

behavior without labelling it or interpreting it; for example - I noticed you bought a gift for someone. The next step is to state one's feelings honestly - That hurt my feelings. I am afraid of losing you to someone else. The third phase is to state what is wanted from the other person - I want to feel I am the most important person to you. Finally, one states his request for specific behavior in similar situations in the future - I want you to tell me who and why you are buying gifts for to reassure me I am important to you.

While the need for personal space differs among cultures, social space norms have been established in each culture. Social space in dysfunctional families is often different from the social norms in polite society due to habitual boundary violations. A sexually abused child, for example, may grow up to abstain from sex altogether or have consensual sex within moments of meeting someone.

Personal space norms in mainstream American culture have specific distances which are listed below. As we become more intimate with others, we automatically move in closer to them.

- Intimate Space: extends 1.5 feet (.45 meters) from a person. This is touching and hugging distance usually reserved for family, lifelong friends, and lovers.
- Casual Space: goes from 1.5 feet (.45 meters) to 4 feet (1.2 meters). This is one arm's length away from another person. Perfunctory, somewhat distant, hugs and handshakes take place in this space from acquaintances and neighbors.
- Social Space: extends from 4 feet (1.2 meters) to 12 feet (3.5 meters). This is the space we keep between ourselves and others at large gatherings and public places. This may include co-workers, bosses, and new acquaintances.
- Public Space: goes from 12 feet (3.5 meters) to 25 feet (7.6 meters). This is the distance we keep between ourselves and strangers.

Predators are often drawn to individuals whose personal space boundaries have been repeatedly violated, and victims of childhood abuse are drawn to those who violate personal space boundaries of others because the dysfunctional rules in their childhood families require the abuse.

ACAs in recovery learn about and practice keeping respectful distance from others depending on the relationship established. ACAs in recovery also learn that when their verbal communication moves them closer to another person, their physical proximity moves in closer as well.

Dysfunctional relationships are those in which two addicts come together, two codependents join with one another, or one addict and one codependent find each other. In functional relationships two functional individuals form bonds.

In a dysfunctional relationship with two addicts, both vie for power. This is the explosive dynamic between Kate and Petrucchio in Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew." Unlike that play, two self-oriented people seldom manage to stay together. In a relationship with two codependents, while the noise level and volatility abates, the drama continues. The nature of codependency requires each of the codependents to find and serve the addicts they feel inferior to. The addict may be a parent, child or children, guru, former lover, or sibling that sucks up all the energy for one or the other codependent in the relationship. More often, one addict and one codependent strike up a relationship where the addict absorbs all the energy of everyone around him or her, and the

codependent just keeps giving. These people may remain together, but become isolated from one another.

Functional relationships are those where two healthy people come together, add energy and support to one another, and work to achieve harmony and reciprocity. This is also true for relationships where ACAs have worked hard to rebuilt their lives. Like functional couples, ACAs in recovery have to work hard at keeping their relationships intact. ACAs meet their own needs and wants, support and encourage their partners, share power respectfully, and share equally.

A basic human need is affiliation, the connectedness one feels with others, a sense of belonging to a group. Many ACAs did not feel welcome in their families where the dysfunctional parents did not model or experience connectedness themselves. Further, they shrank from even being seen, preferring the safety of isolation because to be recognized often resulted in being abused.

An ACA in recovery may educate him/herself about the basic human need to affiliate with others. The next phase may be sharing feelings about instances where warm, pleasant, healthy connections were made with someone or some group. Following that, the ACA shares on the expected benefit of being part of a group. The final step is for the ACA to select a group the ACA wants to join, join it, and work at achieving a sense of belonging by sharing about the common attitudes and goals of the group.

Opportunities abound for people to provide assistance to friends, family, group, and community situations. The request for help may be made as a general announcement, a direct request to an individual, or a situation that presents itself that is both important and urgent. An ACA in recovery considers if he or she has the motivation, time, expertise, and/or resources to adequately work on the resolution of the problem or situation. If so, the ACA may then commit in some specifically limited way. If not, then no commitment needs to be made at all.

The Greeks defined love in eight ways. “Eros” was romantic, passionate love. “Philia” was about affection, friendship without physical attraction. “Agape” was the selfless, unconditional love for humanity, nature, or Higher Power. The love between family members, team spirit, or love of country was called “Storge.” Obsessive love, “Mania,” refers to stalking, codependency, jealousy, and violence. “Ludus” referred to playful attractions of young lovers that is sometimes called “puppy love.” “Pragma” is the love of long-term commitment where partners understand one another and make joint decisions, including compromises, for the best interests of both individuals in the relationship. Self-love, called “Philautia,” was the basis of all love, since love for others extends from, and cannot exist without the love of self.

As Loving Parents, ACAs reconnect with their Inner Children to build the self-love foundation that is required for them to love anyone else. In recovery work, ACAs may begin to clarify their ideas of who they love and how they love the main people in their lives. As ACAs become whole human beings by supplying the needs of each life stage, their focus turns to becoming more thoughtful, nurturing, and supportive of all people and less focused on finding and securing “significant others.” In romantic love pursuits, the fairytale notion of love (eros) learned in movies gives way in recovery to developing more intimate relationships with family, friends, and lovers (storge and pragma).



Learn How to Be Intimate with Others

ACAs focus on becoming happier by taking care of themselves, changing how they think, changing how they act, and adopting healthy practices. In recovery, ACAs eat nutritiously, exercise regularly, get enough quality sleep, reduce stress, and stop being reactive to social media by periodically unplugging their devices. They change their thinking by adopting an attitude of gratitude, replacing negatives thoughts with positive affirmations, reviewing their strengths and improve their shortcomings, stop comparing themselves to others, look for the good (silver lining) in all situations, and focusing on being present. They change how they behave by aligning their beliefs with their actions, review their strengths and ameliorate weaknesses, have fun daily, and feel and express their feelings. Finally, ACAs build a support system of positive people, connect with others at work and in the community, and join clubs where people share common interests.

ACAs educate themselves about healthy relationships. They take classes in interpersonal relationships, watch healthy people interact, read about relationships, and/or work with counselors and therapists.

ACAs in recovery show their love by listening, being respectful, telling others they love them, showing others their love in cards, gifts, and actions, and forgiving human errors. They learn to love themselves by being compassionate and self-accepting, rejecting shame, and accepting their human penchant for making mistakes. Learning to accept love from others require ACAs to revisit and grieve the losses of trust in childhood, work at disclosing themselves without fear, letting go of control, accepting support from those who accepts the ACAs as they are, saying no to others, and recognizing and avoiding abusive people.

Reciprocity in relationships is about giving and taking for mutual benefit. The less intimate the relationship, the more immediately the trade-off needs to be completed. A balance of equality and power is achieved over time by both people in the relationship. An equal exchange might entail that one person provides financial stability while the other maintains connections with extended family or the community. The important feature is that both people are contributing to the relationship according to the best of their abilities.

In wedding vows, the participants promise before God, family, and friends that they will do specific things, such as love, take care of, honor, and cherish one another, to keep the couple together for life. Commitment in relationships is the choice both halves of the union make by themselves. Where there is no commitment by either party, there is no honest relationship.

To practice commitment, each party in the relationship expresses aloud and demonstrates their love through romantic gestures, thoughtful gifts, or sexual overtures regularly. They communicate honestly, tell each other the truth, and are trustworthy in the relationship. They tell and show one another their respect and appreciation for each other. They work together for the good of the union, make decisions together, and compromise where necessary. When they cannot find agreement, they keep the harmony by respectfully disagreeing with one another.



Avoid Isolation by Grieving False, Negative Beliefs (“Critical Parent Tapes” or “Stinkin’ Thinkin’”)

This life stage is about connecting to others or isolating from others. The idea planted in a child’s head in a dysfunctional family is often that it is safer to isolate in the effort to survive. A parent may have left the child to his or her own devices, and the child learned to believe that being alone was normal. Possibly the child left alone felt he or she was so awful that no one wanted to be near him or her. Maybe being alone meant he/she would not hear, see, or be the target of abuse. Whatever the actual experience was is immaterial; many children who grew up in dysfunctional homes adopted the belief that it was his/her lot in life to be alone. The problem, of course, is that this person longs for recognition, connection, and acceptance from others.

In recovery, the ACA challenges and rejects that false idea when it arises. If asked to work on an ACA committee or do a meeting chore, the natural, albeit dysfunctional, inclination is to respond quickly with pre-planned excuses not to participate (I’m too fragile, I’m too new in program, I am overwhelmed at work right now, I work better alone...). The answer from someone working a program of recovery, however uncomfortably, is, “Sure. What can I do to help out?” At the same time that person remembers and grieves the childhood experiences of abuse, loss, or abandonment that lead that ACA to prefer the safety of isolation.

When the false, negative life rule arises (“I am better off alone”), the positive affirmation for it might be, “My life is comfortable when I am alone, but it is much fuller and richer with others in it.” This is the mantra to repeat until it becomes comfortable and true.



Recovery by Doing Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Adults Do

Arts, crafts, music, toys, games, and activities of interest to people ages 18 to 40 are likely to cost more money than childhood counterparts and often involve traveling to use them.

Arts may include appreciating the work of others or honing skills to improve the ability to draw, paint, sculpt, shoot pictures, or write.

Crafts for the young adult are limited only by interest and willingness to invest in the tools and supplies to do them (see list in back of workbook).

The young adult may listen to or participate in singing groups (glee club, choir, theater). He or she may play basic (kazoo, tambourine) or more challenging instruments (piano, violin...). Moving to music may be simply tapping feet to follow the beat or choreographed dancing. Creating music may include writing musical scores, lyrics, musical plays, or operas.

Toys might be limited only by their cost. They might include a jet ski, a Stradavarius, or a robot that retrieves beer from a refrigerator.

Games may include paintball wars, playing poker in a casino, or becoming a contestant on a television game show. As adults ACAs have unlimited choices in unlimited venues.

Activities may include taking classes and practicing to achieve intimacy in relationships or cultivate friends in the neighborhood, community, or workplace. Taking classes and participating in training to improve or enhance vocational skills may be helpful in recovery for this life stage. The Loving Parent guides the Inner Child to grieve childhood experiences that resulted in an inability to trust oneself or others.



Recovery By Providing Mobility and Sports Opportunities

Mobility at this life stage may include traveling by motorcycles, planes, trains, ships, trucks, and automobiles. This is the time when young and middle aged adults participate in local sports such as soccer teams or become spectators at professional ballgames.

Exercise 1 – Isolation

Circle all statements below that are true for you.

1. I have no friends I can count on or anyone to talk to.
2. I never disagree with anyone.
3. It is my job to give everyone, except me, what they need and want.
4. It is hard for me to make new friends.
5. I drink or take drugs to have fun.
6. I am “on stage” playing a role most of the time when I am around others.
7. My friends are people I feel sorry for that I can fix them.
8. I make sure I get my sexual needs met; I am not responsible for my lover’s satisfaction.
9. I make sure I satisfy my lover’s sexual needs; I hope my lover will satisfy me.
10. I don’t tell my lover what I like during sex.
11. I avoid getting involved with someone because my body is ugly.
12. I avoid sex because I don’t get or stay aroused like I used to.

If you circled many of these, you have not learned the lesson of this life stage. You need to work on completing this life stage in recovery.

Exercise 2 – Intimacy

Circle all statements below that are true for you.


1. I deserve to love and be loved.
2. Fidelity and honesty are important in relationships.
3. I have lifetime friends.
4. I enjoy dating people to find out who I am compatible and comfortable with.
5. I like to have healthy, reciprocal relationships.
6. I get my needs and wants satisfied in my relationships.
7. I know I can trust me, and I know who I can trust.
8. I feel happy and satisfied most of the time.
9. I enjoy talking to people where I give and get new ideas.
10. I have deep, meaningful conversations with others.
11. I tell my lover verbally, guide him/her, or change my position during sex to let him/her know what I like.
12. I ask my lover what he/she likes, or I explore his/her body during sex to find ways to give him/her maximum pleasure.







If you circled most of these, you have learned the lesson of this life stage and can comfortably move on to the next one.

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week - Intimacy vs. Isolation

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter’s information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

In the last column, please enter the one thing you will do and how you will do it this week to begin recovery on this Life Stage.

		Write Down One Thing You Will Do This Week
<p>Major Life Stage Issue: Intimacy vs. Isolation Learn types of intimacy – experiential, emotional, Intellectual, sexual Learn sequence to go from acquaintances to lovers Explore and resolve trust issues from early childhood: fears of abandonment, rejection, loss of control and independence, repeating past abuse</p>		
<p>Young Adult’s Job Learn about and practice ways to make and keep friends</p>		


Learn about and practice ways to maintain long term commitment to mate		
Skills Needed by Young Adults Learn and practice respectful communication Learn and respect personal space Learn to make friends and maintain relationships Consider aspects of healthy affiliation and affiliate Learn how to make commitments and keep them Learn and practice ways to show respectful love		
Learn to Have Good Relationships Learn and practice ways to be happy Learn about healthy relationships Learn ways to love and accept love from others Define and practice reciprocity Learn the process of commitment and practice it		
Learn to Recover from Isolation Explore the benefits of isolating as a child Plan and execute baby steps to participate in a healthy way in a volunteer or program service setting Stop participating in unhealthy relationships		
Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Children Do Arts – draw, paint, sculpt, photography, writing Crafts – see list at back of this workbook Music – sing, play instrument, dance, create Toys – educational, electronic, computer, skill development, and models and kits Games – strategy, intellectual, skill development Activities – deepen relationships, improve job skills . work on trust issues		
Mobility and Sports Opportunities Drive or ride in or on vehicles (scooters, motorcycles, golf carts, motorboats, planes, trains...) Participate in sports as a spectator or player (indoor and outdoor sports and activities)		






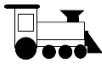


Completing Life Stages - Productivity vs. Stagnation - Chapter 22

Question: What things can you do to nurture and guide others (beyond yourself and your family) to lay the groundwork for a better world in the future?

Life Stage – Middle Aged Adults Age 40 - 60 Years Coworkers & Spouses are Significant People

		Recovery
	Major Life Stage Issue: Productivity vs. Stagnation Determines if productive Decides if life is unchanging	Inventories own productiveness Considers reasons for inaction and resolves them
	Middle Aged Adult's Job Raising own children well Contributing to the community	Learns good parenting skills and practices them Volunteers time, energy, and resources to improve the community

		
	Skills Needed by Middle Aged Adults How to work How to be a good parent to own children	Learns how to work effectively alone and with others Learns and practices good parenting
	Learn to be Productive Reacquaint with spouses Focus on well-being of family and society Work on important projects enthusiastically Volunteer to contribute to well-being of others Feels a sense of belonging Comfortable with own identity and future	Improve relationship with mate Focus efforts on well-being of family and society Focus vocational efforts on projects Volunteer in 12-Step and community programs Achieve a sense of belonging Inventory own positive traits, skills, achievements
	Learn to Recover from Being Stagnant Feel stagnated, that life has no meaning Feels has nothing of value to contribute Feels alienated from others; rejects them Concerned only for own well-being and prosperity Is uninvolved with the world Feels overly extended and overwhelmed	Reviews accomplishments in own life Recalls joys experienced in life Shares lifetime efforts to help others Connect with others and accept them as they are Considers ways to help others Participate in community activities Work to focus on one thing at a time
	Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Adults Do Arts – enjoy work of others, create your own masterpieces Crafts – take classes, explore materials, create or build Music – listen, sing, play instruments, move to music, create music Toys – plays childhood toys or adult versions of them Games – plays childhood games or adult versions of them Activities – experience childhood activities or adult versions	Enjoy toys, games, music, toys, games, & activities of interest Participate in and/or lead activities
	Mobility & Sports Opportunities Childhood mobility things or adult versions of them Travel Childhood sports or adult versions of childhood games	Drive or ride in or on vehicles (trucks, mopeds, canoe, ferries, jets, skateboards...) Travel Participate in sports as a spectator or player (indoor and outdoor sports and activities)

Reading



Recovery from Major Life Stage Issue: Productivity vs. Stagnation

From ages 40 to 60, functional people are at their greatest level of productivity on the job and/or in their lives beyond the work force. Functional adults set goals at home, on the job, and in community work, break down the tasks into small steps, complete them in a timely manner, and reach their goals.

ACAs who are working programs of recovery may be having difficulty making progress or may want to improve their productivity. Immobility is often based in fear, confusion, being overwhelmed, or having a life rule prohibiting them from being productive. In recovery, then,

ACAs have to grieve and resolve their unresolved conflicts of childhood that have kept them catatonic in order to move forward.

Personal productivity can be enhanced. Any project one works on needs to be in keeping with that person's personal values; if it is not, progress will be slow. Energy increases when values are honored and Inner Children are at their creative best. In the overall goal of the person, the employer, the community, or the family, one can prioritize projects or plans that are steps on the path towards that goal. Of all the projects pending, one can determine which one is both urgent and important and work on that. Figuring out what time of day one has a pattern of being most productive, one can schedule the workday according to maximize personal output. Limiting known interruptions (calls, children, noise, traffic, maintenance...) can help increase performance. Taking regular breaks allows new perspectives, more information needed, and ideas to emerge to solve problems. For some, pleasant music may help stimulate energy or calm anxiety. When mired with confusion or indecision, asking for another perspective or help is, well, helpful. Rewarding milestones on the path to the end goal can encourage perseverance on lengthy projects.



Recovery by Doing the Middle Aged Adult's Job

The middle-aged adult has two jobs: continuing to raise the children well and contributing in positive ways to the community. ACAs from dysfunctional families have not had models of excellent parenting. By this time their children are almost adults or completely grown up, and ACAs have already passed on the family dysfunction. In recovery, ACAs learn to be good role models by finding out how good parents behave from books, classes, observation, etc. and applying what they learn. They recognize their own dysfunction, stop themselves when aware of what they are doing, admit their errors, and make amends to themselves and others they hurt.

Voluntary positions abound in 12-Step programs and in the community. Given the ACA's skillset and Inner Child's excitement, the Loving Parent finds positions that the Inner Child will know how to do and have fun doing it.



Recovery by Learning Skills Needed by Middle Aged Adults

Functional middle aged adults have generally figured out how to work alone, work as part of a team, and be a good parent to their adult or nearly adult offspring. ACAs in recovery need to break down these operations into component parts, determine which skills are strong and weak, and remediate their weaker skills.

The inventory list for working alone may include: communicating, self-discipline, organizing, multitasking, flexibility, compromising, and outright rejection of a project by a boss or client. To work with others requires buying in to the project and good skills in respectful focusing, listening, asking pertinent questions, communicating thoughts, logic, and ideas clearly, using logic, assisting, and sharing responsibility for the project.

Grown or almost grown children have learned what they have been taught in their dysfunctional homes by their parents who, most often, were not working a program of ACA recovery during the children's formative years. The children, therefore, are dysfunctional, too. Part of the ACA recovery process is to accept the reality of "what is" and respond differently than we have in the past to dysfunctional people. Further, with grown children, the role of a parent transitions from protecting, teaching, nurturing, and inspiring to responding to their offspring as they would to any other adult.

Functional middle aged parents automatically relate well to their grown children. ACAs in recovery may need to learn and practice new behaviors. They may need to extricate themselves from family enmeshment or isolationism. They may have to learn to recognize and respect the unique attributes and skills of their grown or almost grown children. ACAs may have to learn to share their experience, strength, and hope as respectfully with their children as they do with other ACAs. Sharing ideas or problem solving as an equal rather than a boss is another skill to master. Setting limits, enforcing boundaries, and respecting those of the adult children is paramount in dealing with grown children, too. ACAs, as parents of adults, learn to listen without comment unless asked. Where the grown children have mates, children, and pets, ACAs in recovery work on accepting if not embracing them. Scheduling, planning, and participating in family conversations, fun activities, and celebrations are skills to work on in recovery.



Recovery by Learning to be Productive

Functional adults between ages 40 and 60 are rising in their workplace or have risen to the tops of their professions. Their children are graduating from high school, in college, or are working and paying rent or mortgages. Empty-nesters are finally alone with their spouses and are free to rekindle their relationships. They turn their attention to ensuring the well-being of their families and improve their community. In the workplace, the projects they participate in are personally fulfilling. They volunteer in 12-Step programs and in their communities. They spend some time thinking about how they have impacted others, found a sense of belonging, and appreciate their who they are, what they do, and what they have accomplished.

In recovery, ACAs take stock of where they are in completing this life stage. They take steps to reacquaint themselves with their spouses and improve those relationships. They assess the well-being of family members and do what they can to provide comfort, support, and resources. They decide what to do to improve their 12-Step programs and communities by volunteering for that effort. They ruminate on the ways they have already positively affected the lives of others and what more they can do. They figure out where they feel they belong, how that came to be, and begin to replicate those steps in other parts of their lives. They recount to others who they are, what they do well, and what they have achieved to date.



Recovery by Avoiding Stagnation by Grieving False, Negative Beliefs ("Critical Parent Tapes" or "Stinkin' Thinkin'")

Dysfunctional parents model, teach, and reinforce negative thoughts that their children adopt as life rules. The recurring thoughts that recur to dysfunctional adults in this life stage include variations of:

Life has no meaning; I have no purpose.

I'm useless; I add nothing to anyone's life.

I don't need anyone in my life.

I am the only person who matters; I will take what I want or need.

Whatever is going on in the world is a waste of my time.

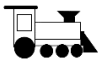
Everyone keeps demanding too much from me; just leave me alone.

In recovery, ACAs review their achievements and recall the great joys they have lived. They share the efforts they have made throughout their lives that have benefitted others. Their Loving Parents encourage them to interact with people who interest them and learn to accept them as they are. Loving Parents guide them to find ways to help others and actually help. Loving Parents convince their Inner Children to get involved in community activities, taking baby steps within their comfort zone. Inner Children, when overwhelmed with the idea that "everyone wants a piece of me," are guided by their Loving Parents to focus on doing one thing, do it, and then tackle one more item.



Recovery by Doing Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Adults Do

At this life stage, middle aged adults are improving their productivity on the job, working to improve relationships with their spouses and children, and reaching out to make the community in which they live better. In addition to these pursuits, ACAs in recovery are exploring the fun things they may have missed in childhood. As adults with access to financial resources and control over time allocation, ACAs in recovery explore arts, crafts, music toys, games, and activities of interest alone or with loved ones. In the effort to make their community a better place to live, they become involved in participating in and leading. Their efforts may be in as volunteers in community organizations or as member volunteers in ACA service committees, boards, projects, events, and activities.



Recovery By Providing Mobility and Sports Opportunities

At this life stage, ACAs often have the resources to drive a variety of vehicles or ride on a multitude of conveyances. They also are able to travel to places far and near. In recovery some ACAs are deciding what vehicles are both desirable and useful, what they can afford, and then buying or leasing those vehicles. Other ACAs, are choosing to use public transportation and focus on their level of cost, comfort, or prestige as in a passenger on a subway train or bus, taxicab, or limousine. They are deciding where they want to travel to and how they want to travel.

The choices are equally vast for ACAs who have the money, time, and energy to choose how they want to participate in sports. They may attend their grandchildren's high school football

game, go to the homecoming game at their university, or get tickets to World Cup Soccer. With recovery, the number of choices increase, and Loving Parents often have to rein in the new found freedom of Inner Children who are finally free to be.

Exercise 1 - Stagnation

Circle all statements below that are true for you.

1. I have no children; I am estranged from my children; or I cannot let go of my adult children.
2. I am an empty nester who cannot reconnect with my spouse since our children left home.
3. I am unable to engage in new, productive activities.
4. I am unable or unwilling to accept my healthy grandparenting role.
5. I am unwilling to be a mentor for others.
6. I do participate in activities that benefit others.
7. I am plodding along at work with no enthusiasm, and I don't care about the outcome.
8. I do not participate in my community or organizations.
9. I live a reclusive existence with no or little outside contact.
10. I do not care about anyone or anything; I am generally depressed.
11. I do not communicate with or have little contact with members of my extended family.
12. I have strained, acrimonious, or no relationships with my siblings or my parents.

If you circled most of these, you have not yet learned the lessons of this life stage. Your own Loving Parent will help guide you to achieve the lessons of this life stage.

Exercise 2 - Productivity



Circle all statements below that are true for you.


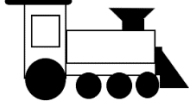


1. My children, if I have any, are contributing in some way to making the world better.
2. I am mentoring others.
3. I am doing things that are changing the world in a positive way that will benefit others.
4. In my job or life, I am being productive.
5. I am involved in community activities.
6. I am involved in community organizations.
7. I am doing things that are useful to others.
8. My life has purpose.
9. I am accomplishing things.
10. I care about myself.
11. I care about others, not just my family.
12. I care about the well-being of the world.

If you circled most of these, you have learned the lessons of this life stage and can comfortably move on to the next life stage (if you are old enough!)

Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week - Productivity vs. Stagnation

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

	<p>Considers reasons for own inaction and resolves them</p>	<p>Learns good parenting skills and practices them</p>	
<p>Learns how to work effectively alone and with others</p>	<p>Improves the relationship with the mate</p>	<p>Focuses efforts on well-being of family</p>	<p>Focus vocational efforts on exciting, fulfilling projects</p>
<p>Volunteers in 12-Step programs</p>	<p>Lists who and how he/she influences others</p>	<p>Shares ways he/she experiences a sense of belonging</p>	<p>Lists own good traits, skills, and accomplishments</p>



Shares joys experienced in life			Introduces self and talks to 3 new people this week
Helps one other person this week and shares about it	Volunteers in the community	Shares lifetime efforts to help others	Name one toy you wanted to have, didn't get, and get it now
Name one game you always wanted to play, didn't, and play it	Inventories own productiveness	Focuses on doing one thing at a time	As a participant or spectator select one sport and schedule the activity
	Name one activity you wanted to do, didn't do, and do it	Name one way you always wanted to travel, didn't, and do it	








Completing Life Stages - Integrity vs. Despair - Chapter 23

Question: How can we develop more integrity (honesty, truthfulness, honor, reliability)

Life Stage – Senior Age 65 Years – Death Children, Grandchildren, Friends are Significant People

		Recovery
	Major Life Stage Issue: Integrity vs. Despair Determines if acts with integrity Assesses if feels depressed Decides if despair is how one feels	Practice honesty and reliability Change practice of seeing the bad with seeing the good Replace despair with positive affirmations
	Senior's Job Reflect on the state of society Reflect on life accomplishments Reflect on the life led	Assess the state of the world and improve it Review own accomplishments Share about one's lifetime failures and lessons learned Share about one's lifetime successes
	Skills Needed by Seniors Compassion for self and others Honest reflection	Practice compassion for self and others Analyze life's failures and successes Dedicate oneself to keep improving own performance

	Enthusiasm to continue improving	(ACA Serenity Prayer – change the one I can)
	Learn to Have Integrity Be truthful Be reliable Stand up for own beliefs	State one's beliefs and thoughts respectfully Uphold commitments made Share beliefs and thoughts regardless of consequences
	Learn to Avoid Depression & Despair Dissatisfied with life Regrets things done and not done Harbors bitterness about people, places, and things Fears death Fears afterlife of misery and torment Imagines worst outcomes Distains others	Recounts life's successes Makes amends for transgressions against others; does things wanted to do but never did Works with ACA Sponsor to grieve unresolved hurts Discusses death using own spiritual perspective Discusses afterlife possibilities Defines best case outcomes Explores feelings about others and impact of childhood on those feelings
	Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Adults Do Arts – appreciate artforms; produce own art Crafts – dabble in crafts of use and interest Music – listen to, sing, play instruments, dance, and write music Toys – plays with childhood toys of interest or adult versions Games – plays childhood games or adult versions of them Activities – take part in childhood activities of interest or adult versions	Enjoy arts, games, music, toys, games, and activities of interest Allow Inner Child to like and dislike these pursuits Encourage Inner Child to own good performances and be accepting at own imperfect attempts
	Mobility & Sports Opportunities Mobility options include types of transportation (auto, motorcycle, bus, train, plane...) or types of travel, trips, or excursions Sports may be for spectators or participants	Mobility – Decide on one mobility option to experience (drive a sportscar, ride a donkey to the floor of the Grand Canyon, book a cruise, tour a country...) and schedule it Sports – As either a participant or spectator, name one sport wanted to experience and do it

Reading



Major Life Stage Issue: Integrity vs. Despair

Seniors, from ages 65 to death, have either developed a sense of integrity or feel complete despair. Honesty, truth, honor, and reliability are the qualities of functional seniors. Dysfunctional seniors feel hopeless, miserable, and given up trying. ACAs in recovery work a program of being honest, telling the truth, keeping their promises, and being dependable. When they feel depressed and hopeless, they replace negative thoughts and feelings with positive affirmations.



Senior's Job

People aged sixty-five and over are often retired and may have all day, everyday, to think about what is happening in the work, review what they have accomplished in the workplace, and examine the lives they have led. ACAs in recovery may choose to consider the world condition with an eye to participate in doing one small thing to improve it locally or on a global level. In looking at what they have accomplished to date, the focus may then turn to deciding what they can accomplish next. Assessing past failures, they can emphasize what they learned from the experience and how that helped them on later endeavors. Where ACAs succeeded, they can share the thrill of victory and the help they received that led to the successes.



Skills Needed by Seniors

Seniors need to have compassion for themselves and others. They need to be able to honestly review and assess their own lives and what is happening around them. They also need to have positive, hopeful mindsets to keep improving themselves. In recovery, ACAs need to practice being kind, caring, and considerate of themselves and others. They can make lists of where they failed and where they succeeded and consider the reasons for both. They can fully embrace the ACA Serenity Prayer - to change the one I can.



Learn to Have Integrity

ACAs in recovery practice being truthful, reliable, and responsible for defending their own core beliefs. They embody the program mantra: suit up, show up (reliable), listen, participate (truthful and responsible for own beliefs), and let go of the results.



Avoid Depression and Despair by Grieving False, Negative Beliefs (“Critical Parent Tapes” or “Stinkin’ Thinkin’”)

Dysfunctional seniors are dissatisfied with their lives. They regret what they have done and what they have not done. They harbor resentments. They are afraid of dying, afraid of being cast into a hellish afterlife. They are cynical, distrustful people who always expect the worst outcomes. They have contempt and hatred for everyone.

In recovery, ACAs grieve the experiences of childhood that resulted in the false, negative beliefs. They share the successes of their lives at meetings. They make amends to themselves and others for the harm they have done. They make amends to themselves for things they did not do that they wanted to do, which may include actually doing those things. Considering their own mortality, they discuss their death and afterlife beliefs with their sponsors to sort out what they actually believe. When they automatically conclude the worst outcome for a situation, they learn to recognize their negativity and consider best case outcome possibilities instead. When they

default to contemptuous feelings about others, they learn to stop and analyze where in their childhood experiences that fear and hatred began and grieve their unresolved childhood pain.



Recovery by Doing Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games, & Activities Adults Do

Play is as important for seniors as it is for everyone else. Functional adults regularly enjoy art, crafts, music, toys, games, and activities. ACAs in recovery may have to encourage their Inner Children to engage in these pursuits as a spectator or player. Recovering ACAs may want to dabble in drawing, painting, sculpting, or photography arts. There may be crafts to explore. Music may be listened to or inspire singing, playing instruments, dancing, and creating music. Playing with childhood toys or their adult counterparts (playing with plastic dinosaurs vs. visiting natural history museums) is a way to grow up emotionally. In the game world, checkers may become chess or morph into video games of strategy. Activities may be any that the senior adult has the interest in, purse to finance, and physical ability to do. The Loving Parent allows the Inner Child to decide if he/she enjoys or dislikes these things. The Loving Parent reinforces the Inner Child's stellar performances as well as accept the imperfect attempts.



Recovery By Providing Mobility and Sports Opportunities

Mobility and sports involvement continue to be as important if not more important for seniors as they are for others. The ability to get around gives people a sense of control. As some seniors become physically more limited, mobility becomes a priority. ACA seniors in recovery, as Loving Parents may want to encourage their Inner children to explore methods of mobility (plane, train, mule, skateboard...) and/or travel destinations. They may become spectators or players in sports. Loving Parents guide their senior Inner Children to choose sports they enjoy, decide to be a spectator or player given their abilities, and then participate.

Exercise 1 – Despair

Circle all statements below that are true for you.

1. I have wasted my life; I never accomplishedhing important.
2. I have so many regrets.
3. I deserved a better life than the one I had.
4. My life was horrible; I can't wait to die.
5. I am afraid of dying because I am going to hell.
6. I should have been able to be more, do more, and get more by this time of life.
7. I would be somebody today if it weren't for someone or something ruining my life.
8. I feel sick that I did not become who I wanted to become, go where I wanted to go, or do what I wanted to do.
9. It does not matter what I do, how I act, or what I say anymore; no one cares.
10. I just hate to have to depend on anyone for anything; can't they just leave me to die in peace?
11. I have nothing to look forward to, nothing to live for.
12. I am always bored. Nothing changes. I have no reason to take care of myself or my affairs.

If you circled most of these, you have not yet learned the lessons of this life stage. Your own Loving Parent will help guide you to achieve the lessons of this life stage.

Exercise 2 – Depression

Circle all statements below that are true for you.

1. I don't go out, answer the door, or respond to phone calls, e-mail, or texts.
2. I cry a lot, sleep a lot, or cannot sleep at all.
3. I get agitated and defensive and start yelling at people.
4. I stop eating altogether or I overeat to stuff my feelings.
5. I don't understand or care about what others are talking about, so I walk away.
6. I keep busy, but I don't finish anything or accomplish anything.
7. I stop brushing my teeth, washing my hair, and taking showers or baths for days.
8. I don't clean up after myself, take out the garbage, and wear dirty clothes...
9. I obsess on my problems, work, or clean my home to control part of my life.
10. I renege on commitments, miss appointments, blow deadlines, and stop working on goals.
11. I am overly sensitive to light, sound, touch, taste, and odor.
12. I spend money on things that I don't want or need once I have them. thi

If you circled most of these, you have not yet learned the lessons of this life stage. Your own Loving Parent will help guide you to achieve the lessons of this life stage.

Exercise 3 – Integrity

Circle all statements below that are true for you.



1. I am satisfied with what I have accomplished
2. I know who I am today.
3. I have few or no regrets about my life.
4. While I grew up in an alcoholic and/or dysfunctional family, I got the help I needed and turned my life around.
5. I am honest with myself and others; I tell the truth, hear the truth, and see the truth.
6. I respect myself and others.
7. I am honorable in my thoughts, words, and actions.
8. When I make commitments, I follow through on them.
9. I suit up, show up, participate, and let go of the results.
10. I have led a rich and full life.
11. I am humbled when I realize that just showing up at meetings makes the world a better place.
12. I know how to live, so I know how to die; I accept death as a spiritual transition.




If you circled most of these, you have learned the lessons of this life stage. You have successfully climbed the ACA 12 Steps. You have learned to entrust your will, your life, and your spirit to your Higher Power.


Things You Can Do in Your Recovery This Week - Integrity vs. Despair

Share your insights and feelings about this chapter's information and exercises as well as the activities below with your sponsor, a program friend, and/or participants at a meeting. Ideally, over time, you will work through all the unresolved issues addressed in this chapter.

Finish the sentences by filling in the last column for each item and share your answers.

		Major Life Stage Issue: Integrity vs. Despair	My Sentence Endings
	1	One thing I need to be more honest about is	
	2	One thing I need to be more reliable about is	
	3	When I feel bad I tell my Inner Child	
		My Job as a Senior	
	4	One thing I can do to make the world better is	

	5	One time I failed but learned	
	6	One of my greatest accomplishments was	
	7	One thing I want to tell the next generation is	
		Skills Needed by Seniors	
	8	I show myself compassion by	
	9	I show compassion to others by	
	10	I will improve myself now by	
		Learn to Have Integrity	
	11	I believe that my Higher Power is	
	12	When I die my soul	
	13	When I make a promise I	
	14	When people disagree with me I tell them	
		Learn to Avoid Despair	
	15	When I feel bad, I make myself feel better by doing	
	16	One thing I am proud to have done is	
	17	I made amends for hurting someone by	
	18	One thing I will do now, that I wanted to do but didn't is	
	19	One thing I am still angry, hurt, or fearful of from childhood is	
	20	I will express my feelings to grieve that unresolved experience (referenced above) by	
	21	When I die, I expect my soul will	
	22	My idea of the afterlife or heaven is	

	Arts, Crafts, Music, Toys, Games & Activities Healthy Adults Do	My Sentence Endings
23	One artform I will try to do (draw, paint, sculpt, photograph) is	
24	One craft I will try is	
25	One type of musical pursuit I will do (listen, sing, play an instrument, write music) is	
26	One toy (or the adult versions of it) I want to play with is	
27	One game I will now play (or an adult version of it) that I wanted to play as a child but didn't play or play enough was	
28	One activity I will now do (or the adult versions of it) that I wanted to do but never did or never enough was	



Mobility & Sports for Functional Adults

- 26 The vehicle I most want to drive or ride in/on is
- 27 I want to travel by (vehicle) to (destination)
- 28 I will schedule a time to do this particular sport
- 29 I will schedule a time to watch this sport



Into the Finishline

Florence Griffith Joyner (“Flo-Jo”) was an American track and field athlete. In 1988, she set world records in both the 100 meter and 200 meter races. In video footage of the races she ran, when the starting gun was fired, the runners burst forth quickly attaining their top speeds. Within sight of the finishline tape, every runner was physically exhausted and slowed their pace. Only Flo-Jo was still accelerating as she crossed the finishline.

What are YOU doing (or plan to do) to accelerate into your finishline?



Peace and Quiet



It had been a hard week, and on Saturday Mark just wanted to relax, drink his morning coffee, and read his magazine. His 7-year-old son, however, kept running around and asking him questions. In desperation, Mark tore a page out of the magazine of a world map. He ripped that map page into many pieces, handed the pile and some scotch tape to his rambunctious son, and told him, "I want you to tape this back together, and then you can come talk to me."

Having bought himself an hour of peace and quiet, Mark went back to reading the magazine. In fifteen minutes, however, his son came bursting through the door waving the map. Mark, in total disbelief, looked over the map, found it was put together accurately, and asked his boy, "How did you do that so fast?"

His son replied, "There was a picture of a man on the other side, Daddy, so when I put the man together, the world came with it."

Paraphrased, recollected story from the Detroit Free Press circa 1950s or 1960s

*That is what we do in ACA; we put ourselves together
and our functional, happy, worthwhile world comes with it.*

MEETING FORMAT USING THIS WORKBOOK

OPENING (30 minutes)

Hi! My name is _____. Welcome to the Own Loving Parent meeting of Adult Children of Alcoholics.

1. In this meeting we read "The Problem" or the "Laundry List." You belong here even if your parents were not alcoholic if you identify with these common characteristics of adult children.
2. We meet here to share the experiences we had as children growing up in alcoholic or dysfunctional homes, how it infected us then, and the affect it has on our lives today. By practicing the 12 Steps, by focusing on "The Solution," and by accepting a Higher Power of our own understanding, we find freedom from the effects of our childhood environment of alcoholism and family dysfunction. We identify with "The Problem" and learn to live in "The Solution," one day at a time.
3. Please, let us have a moment of silence for all ACAs who have not yet found recovery, after which we will recite the ACA Serenity Prayer:

**God, grant me the serenity to accept the people I cannot change;
the courage to change the one I can; and the wisdom to know that one is me.**

4. Will someone please read:
 - The Problem or The Laundry List
 - The Solution
 - The 12 Steps
 - The 12 Traditions
5. Let's go around the room and introduce ourselves by first name only, please.
6. We do not break for refreshments at this meeting, but you may help yourself quietly during the meeting to whatever refreshments are available. This meeting ends at _____.

Read only if Service Dogs that have not been here before are present:

- We are getting more people bringing legitimately certified service dogs to meetings that are allowed by law to be here, and we welcome you and your service animal. We have the responsibility to this facility that allows us to meet here to safeguard their premises.
- We also need to be able to share our experience, strength, and hope without distraction or intrusion. We need to remember that many ACAs have severe medical conditions, hair-trigger allergies, and PTSD reactions to unwanted, unexpected touch from animals such as contact sniffing, licking, nuzzling, and lunging.
- We ask you to walk your dog and dispose of waste before the meeting. Please keep your dog calm and quiet. Sit near an exit to remove your dog if (s)he becomes audibly or physically restless. Keep your dog on a short leash next to you during the meeting, and take your dog with you if you exit the room.

7. If this is the first ACA meeting for you, please raise your hand and tell us your name. We ask you to do this because we want to get to know you. (*Give newcomers literature & Welcome chip.*)

Read only if Newcomer is present:

- This program is not easy, but if you keep coming back to these meetings, you will start to come out of denial. This will give you freedom from the past. You and your life will change.
- Many of us could not recognize or accept that some of our current attitudes or behaviors result from our childhood experiences related to alcoholism or family dysfunction. Having not yet solved the mystery of our own selves, we often behave as adult children without realizing it.
- By attending 6 meetings in a row at the beginning, and attending regularly thereafter, we come to know our real selves and learn to behave responsibly. We do this by identifying with the listing of characteristics that we read in "The Problem" and "The Laundry List."
- In ACA: We learn to live in The Solution and choose to become our own loving parents. We come out of denial and share the pain of our childhood memories. We experience love and acceptance from members of our ACA group. We become aware that feelings of the past and present form a pattern; and we learn that the pattern can change. Newcomers get Recovery and Service Sponsors to assist them on a faster track of recovery.
- So, please, keep coming back. Listen, learn, and, most of all, share your feelings.

8. **7th Tradition / Announcements**

- It is now time for our 7th Tradition, which states, “Every ACA group should be self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”
- Does the meeting Secretary have any ACA announcements (*Intergroup meeting/business meeting*)? Does anyone else have ACA-related announcements?

WORKBOOK (30 minutes)

1. This is what our Inner Children want from us - repeat after me:
Love me; protect me; hear me; hug me; heal me
2. This meeting is focusing on becoming our Own Loving Parents to our Inner Children. When using the Reparenting workbook, we share on the question of the chapter, read the passages given in the workbook, do the exercises, and read the “homework” section. Turn to page ____.

REPARMENTING I DID THIS WEEK

Now it is the time we each share for about one minute on what we have done in the past week as Loving Parents to our Inner Children.

OPEN SHARING (30 minutes)

We are about to open the meeting for sharing on the topics of our choice. We need to remind ourselves about the cross talk rules and, if newcomers are here, explain the progression of sharing we do in ACA.

- **Cross Talk** - Everyone is encouraged to share. So that as many people as possible can share, please limit your sharing to 3 to 5 minutes, and, as a courtesy, we ask that everyone be given a turn during each part of our meeting. If you do not want to share, please say, “Pass”, so we don’t keep waiting for you to speak. Please, do not cross talk, distract from the speaker, or otherwise interrupt.

- **Sharing In ACA** *read only if newcomers are present*

In ACA, if we do not share, we cannot heal.

It is important for newcomers to share no matter how haltingly, incoherently, or disorganized. Telling our stories out loud allows us to hear our problem, recognize it, and validate that truth.

What we share about depends on where we are in our recovery process. As time goes along, our sharing evolves. The first topic is generally what brought us to an ACA meeting. Following that our sharing takes on various functions.

1. In the beginning, we often wail, complain, cry, rant, rave, blame, and whine; this is a necessary stage that brings us out of denial. When we speak our thoughts aloud, we actually see we have a problem and what it is. Until we make our discomfort real by voicing it, we cannot recognize our problem so we cannot solve it.
2. When we start sharing our problems, feelings start to rise within us, and we begin to learn how to express them.
3. We describe how we overreacted to a situation and our feelings about it.
4. We describe our current problem and our feelings about it.

5. We trace our feelings about a current situation back to a similar problem we experienced as children, recognizing that neither have been resolved.
6. We talk about possible solutions to resolve the childhood problem and the current problem.
7. We commit ourselves to a plan of action to solve the past and present problems.
8. We share our healing as we progress.
9. Finally, we share on topics introduced by others; we describe our own problem, how it was rooted in the past, and how we resolved the past and present problems. In this way we affirm our own recovery and display for our fellows that recovery happens in ACA.

- This meeting is now open for sharing.

CLOSING

1. Will someone please read “The Promises?”
2. We sometimes go to a local coffee shop or meet at a park for fellowship directly after this meeting (or the business meeting if we have one today). You are invited.
3. This is a fellowship of recovering adults intended to complement, not replace, other 12-Step programs. You are encouraged to attend your other 12-Step recovery support groups during the week to support your recovery journey.
4. Please respect the confidentiality and anonymity of each person here. We have trust and confidence that what we share with you at this meeting will remain here at this meeting. Who you see here, what is said here, when you leave here, let it stay here.
5. Will all, who care to, join me in the ACA Serenity Prayer?

Chapter 3, page 12

1. Words do not match
2. Behavior is misaligned
3. Thought does not match
4. Words do not match
5. Words do not match
6. Belief is not aligned

Chapter 12, page 39

1. Inner Child or Loving Parent
2. Inner Child
3. Loving Parent
4. Loving Parent

5. Keep his job
6. Recognize Inner Child's feelings; validate Inner Child
7. Ask Robert to give official recognition
8. Loving Parent is recognizing Inner Child; Loving Parent has promised to stand up for Inner Child; there is an alternative plan to get recognition
9. Both win

Fun Things to Consider Doing

ACA	Video Game Design	Galas		Soapmaking
Attend Fellowship	Writing	Gardening	CRAFTS	Soap Carving
Attend Social Events		Genealogy	Basket Weaving	Stained Glass
Attend Workshops		Hang Gliding	Batik	String Art
Be a Timer		Hunting	Baking	Tapestry
Call Other ACAs		Jigsaw Puzzles	Beadwork	Tatting
Chair Committees		Jogging	Cake Decorating	Tie-Dye
Greet at Events		Juggling	Calligraphy	Tole
Greet at Meetings		Jumping Rope	Candle Making	Toy Making
Plan Social Events		Metal Detecting	Card Making	Weaving
Plan Workshops	ACTIVITIES	Model Trains	Carpentry	Wood Burning
Provide Literature	Amateur Radio	Museums	Cobblerly	Wood Carving
Provide Treats	Amusement Parks	Openings	Collage	
Put on Special Events	Animal Raising	Parades	Cooking	
Put on Townhalls	Animal Rescue	Parks	Decoupage	

Put on Workshops	Animal Training	Picnics	Design	
Represent Groups	Arboretums	Premieres	Doll Making	
Serve on Boards	Art Shows	Previews	Dollhouse Building	
Serve on Committees	Bazaars	Races	Drafting	
Serve as Officers	Biking	Rafting	Egg Decorating	
Speak at Events	Billiards	Reading	Embossing	DANCE
Sponsor Other ACAs	Birdwatching	Running	Etching	Ballroom
	Book Clubs	Sky Diving	Flower Arranging	Belly Dancing
	Bungee Jumping	Snorkeling	Glass Etching	Bunny Hop Ballet
	Calligraphy	Star Gazing	Glassblowing	Cha Cha
	Camping	Swap Meets	Jewelry Design	Circle Dance
	Carnivals	Swimming	Lapidary	Conga Line
	Clam Digging	Tours	Leatherworking	Corridos
	Climbing	Trade Shows	Macrame	Cumbia
	Collect Baseball Cards	Travel	Metalworking	Folk Dance
ART	Collect Books	Tree Climbing	Model Building	Foxtrot
Architecture	Collect Coins	Trekking	Mosaics	Hip Hop
Ceramics	Collect Comics	Thrift Stores	Needle Arts	Hokey Pokey
Coloring	Collect Stamps	Waterskiing	Origami	Hula
Comedy	Doing Magic	Windsurfing	Paper-Mache	Improvisation
Design	Driving	Ziplining	Pressing Flowers	Irish Dances
Drama	Exercise		Puppet Making	Jazz
Drawing	Expos		Quilting	Limbo
Illustration	Fairs		Stamping	Macarena
Mime	Fireworks Shows		Scrapbooking	Mambo
Painting	Fishing		Sewing	May Pole Dance
Photography	Flying		Silk Screening	Rhumba
Sculpting	Flying Kites		Silversmithing	Rock and Roll
Salsa	Hide and Seek	MOBILITY		
Samba	Hop Scotch	Backpacking		
Square Dance	Jacks	Ballooning		
Stick Dance	Keep Away	Biking		
Swing	King of the Mountain	Boating		
Tango	Mahjong	Canoeing		
Tap Dance	Marbles	Climbing	SPORTS	
Twist	Monopoly	Ferrying	Archery	
Two Step	Old Maid	Flying	Auto Racing	TOYS
Waltz	Operation	Gliding	Badminton	Balls
	Paintball	Hiking	Baseball	Blocks
	Pictionary	Horse Riding	Basketball	Bouncers
	Ping Pong	Ice Skating	Bowling	Dolls
	Poker	Kayaking	Curling	Drones
	Red Rover	Motorcycle Riding	Cycling	Grab Toys
	Risk	Off-Roading	Fencing	Jigsaw Puzzles
	Rook	Pedal Boats & Cars	Figure Skating	Legos

	Rummy	Planes	Fishing	Models
GAMES	Scrabble	Public Transportation	Football	Muyblyty-Peg
Backgammon	Shuffleboard	Rappelling	Golf	Pull Toys
Clue	Simon Says	Roller Skating	Gymnastics	Push Toys
Crazy 8s	Slap Jack	Running	Hockey	Robots
Cribbage	Solitaire	Scoters	Ice Skating	Slinkies
Crosswords	Sorry	Skateboarding	Lacrosse	Sports Toys
Darts	Spades	Skiing	Marksmanship	Stuffed Animals
Dodgeball	Stratego	Sledding	Martial Arts	Tops
Dominoes	Sudoku	Swimming	Pickleball	Toy Cars & Trucks
Duck, Duck, Goose	Tag	Train Riding	Polo	Toy Soldiers
Follow the Leader	Tetherball	Walking	Pool	Toy Weapons
Foosball	Trivial Pursuit		Racquetball	Yoyos
Battleship	Twister		Rowing / Sculling	
Boggle	Uno		Rugby	
Bridge	Video Games		Running	
Canasta	War		Scuba Diving	
Candyland	Yahtze		Skiing	
Charades			Sledding	
Checkers			Snowboarding	
Chess		MUSIC	Soccer	
Chinese Checkers		Composing	Surfing	
Chutes & Ladders		Dancing	Swimming	
Four Square		Listening	Tennis	
Game of Life		Playing Instruments	Track & Field	
Go Fish		Singing	Volleyball	
Handball			Weight Lifting	
Hearts			Wrestling	