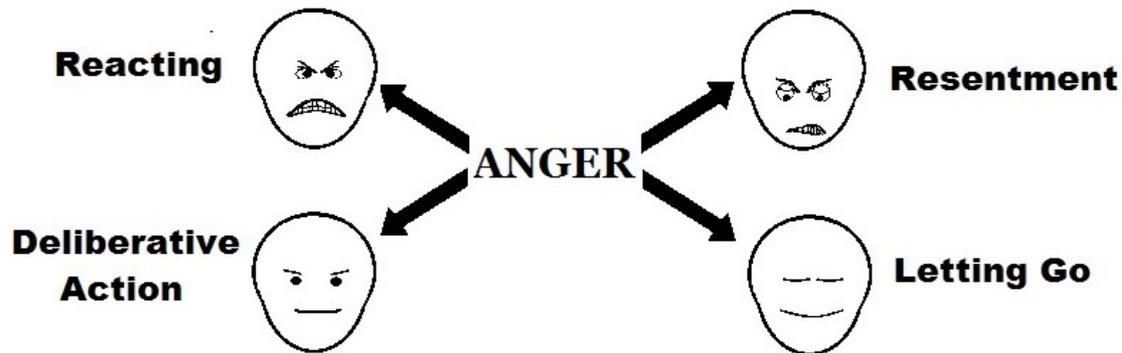


Innovations in Anger Management Treatment

The 2x2 Anger Response Model



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Learning Objectives

- The 2x2 model and flow chart,
- Anger management techniques,
- Changing habitual action scripts by priming new scripts through covert rehearsal,
- The development of emotional awareness with a focus on determination, shame and forgiveness.

7 Common Reasons People Have Trouble Managing Their Anger

- **Unresolved Anger.**
- **Emotional Regulation and Self Soothing.**
- **Values and Beliefs.**
- **Habit.**
- **Toxic Shame.**
- **History of Trauma.**
- **Organic.**

Anger Regulation Requirements and Skills

- Decide what kind of person do you want to be.
- Be willing to give up the instant gratification of expressing anger.
- Be willing to give up the victim role, and take responsibility for improving your life.
- Be willing to make the commitment to doing the hard work to change.
- Develop mindfulness and learn to catch yourself ever earlier in the anger escalation process so you can think clearly as early as possible.
- Learn how to effectively use anger reduction techniques
- Find the courage to change the things you can, the patience to accept the things you can't, and the wisdom to know the difference.
- Learn effective communication strategies to accomplish your goals.

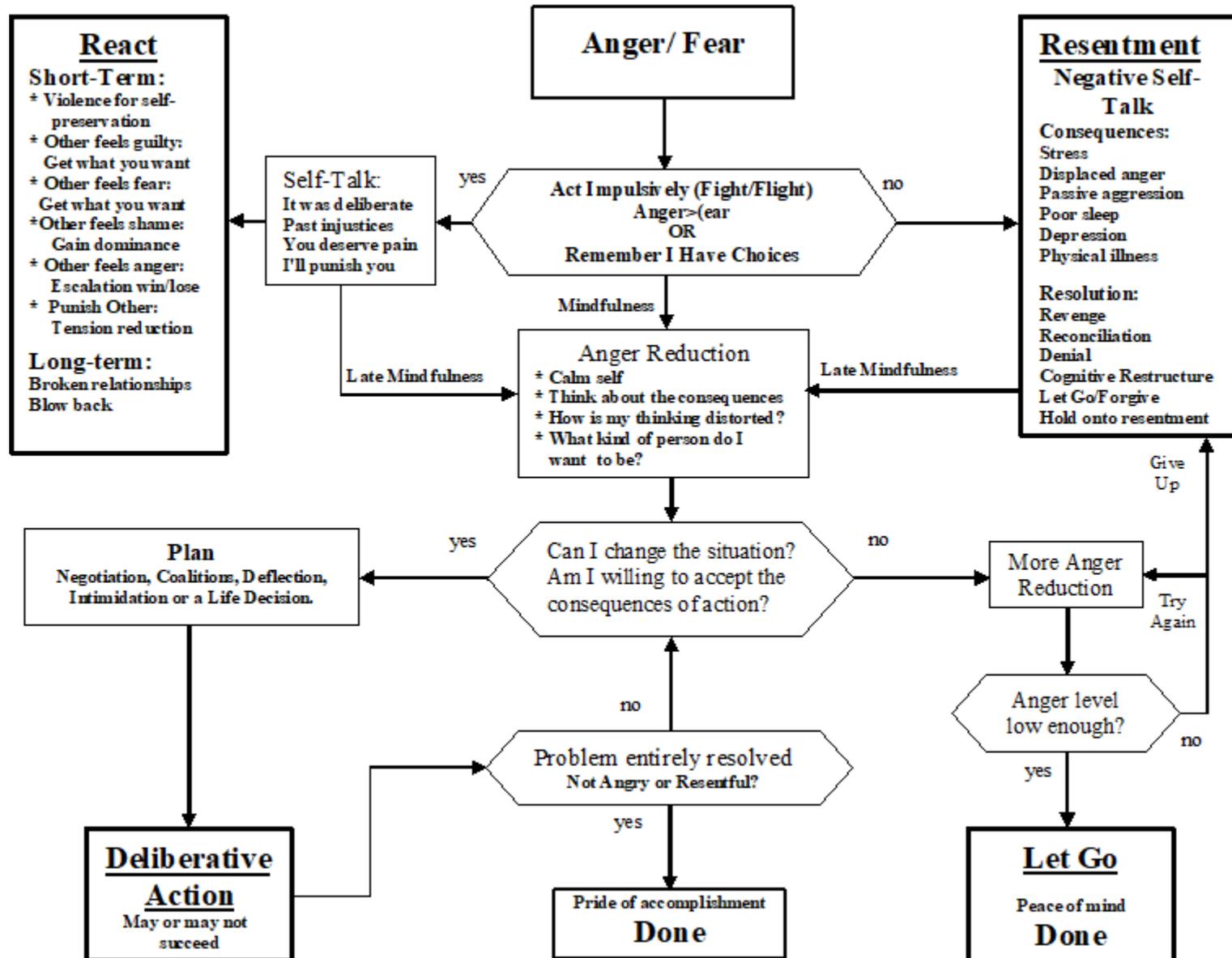
The 2x2 Anger Response Model

	Action	Inaction
Impulsive	 Reacting	Resentment 
Intentional	 Deliberative Action	Letting Go 

Tailpipe Owes Gonzo a Jar of Coffee: Gonzo's Possible Reactions

<p>React Attack Tailpipe verbally or physically</p> 	<p>Resentment Stew & think evil thoughts about Tailpipe</p> 
<p>Deliberative Action Work out a plan with Tailpipe to get his coffee</p> 	<p>Let Go Write off the coffee as the cost of learning Tailpipe's character</p> 

2x2 Anger Response Flowchart (Basic)



Anger Reduction Techniques

- **Calm self**
- **Think about the consequences**
- **What kind of person do I want to be?**
- **How is my thinking distorted?**

Anger Reduction Techniques

Calm Self

- Relaxation techniques
- Withdraw and cool down
- Meditation
- Prayer

Think About the Consequences

- What are the long-term consequences of my acting on my impulses?
- How important is this really?
- Am I overreacting to the situation?
- Is this triggering past resentments?
- Is it worth getting worked up over?
- It's done; will anything good come of holding onto my anger?

What kind of person do I want to be?

- How have I contributed to the problem?
- What is the right thing to do?
- Do I have the strength to tolerate these feelings?
- Anger is a tool; will I let my anger determine my actions?
- Do I feel I need to win or be right?

What kind of person do I want to be?

- Will I let my pride or ego attachment determine my actions?
- Step back, am I being fair and honest?
- He's filled with negativity: Will I let him infect me?
- Do I really understand where this person is coming from?

What kind of person do I want to be?

- Have I ever acted in a similar, unreasonable way?
- Am I playing the victim role?
- Am I willing to accept myself with all my flaws as a worthwhile human being?
- All my actions send ripples into the future. Do I choose to add more suffering into the world or more kindness?

How is my thinking distorted?

Fairness Expectation: Instead of accepting the world as it is and deciding how you are going to deal with it, getting upset because it isn't the way you think it should be.

- *Labeling: When you call someone a name you reduce them to an object in your mind, which discounts their humanity and makes it easier for you to do violence to them*
- *Blaming: Putting all the blame on the other person instead of solving the problem.*

How is my thinking distorted?

- Short-Term Thinking: *Getting caught up in the moment and failing to look at the big picture.*
- Mind Reading: *Assuming you know what the other person is thinking.*
- Fortune Telling: *Jumping to conclusions about how things will play out.*

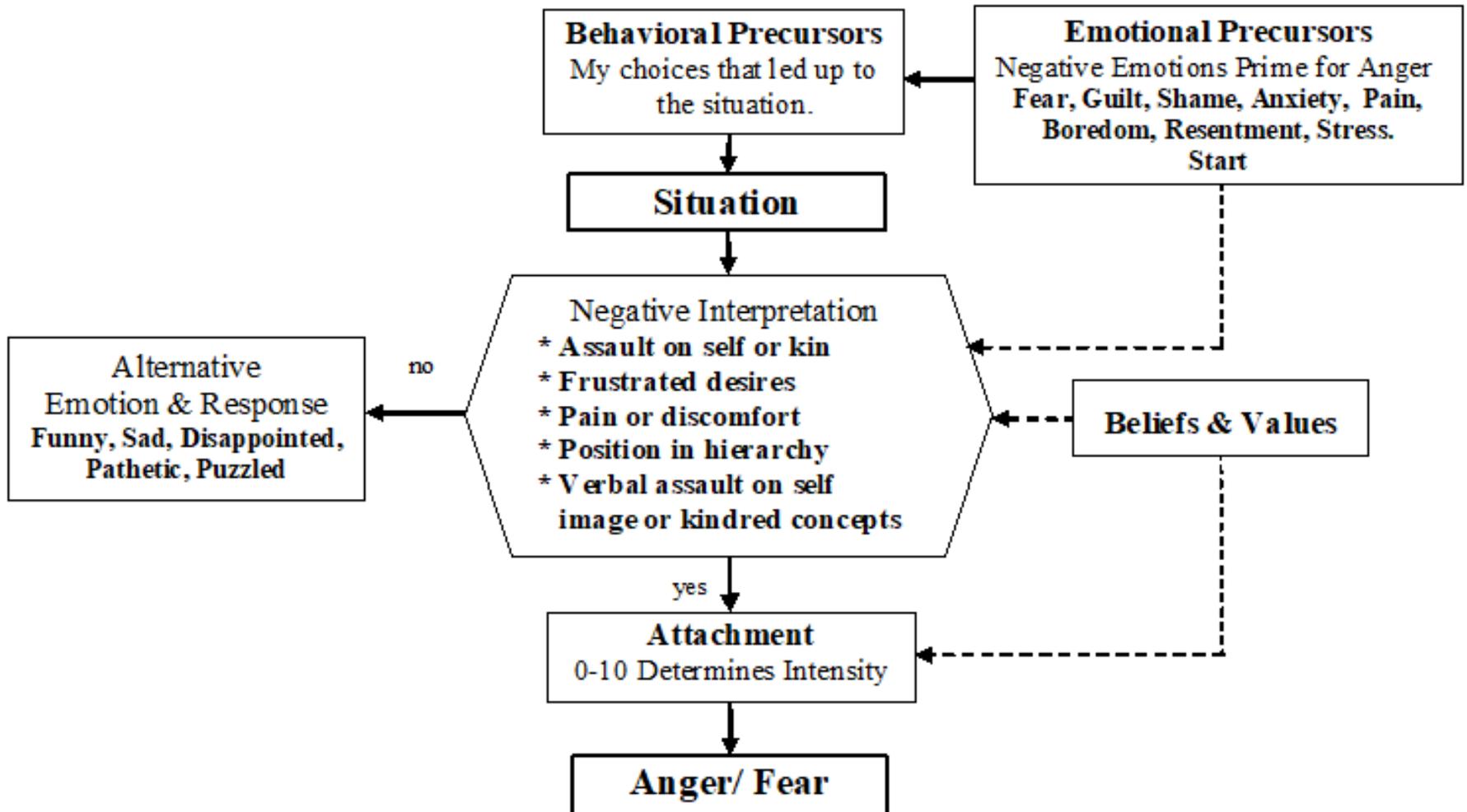
How is my thinking distorted?

- Magnification and Minimization: *Blowing the negative out of proportion or discounting the positive.*
- Overgeneralization: *Thinking "This always happens." or "He always does this."*
- *Dysfunctional Beliefs: Does this belief serve me well in the long run?*

Anger Reduction Techniques

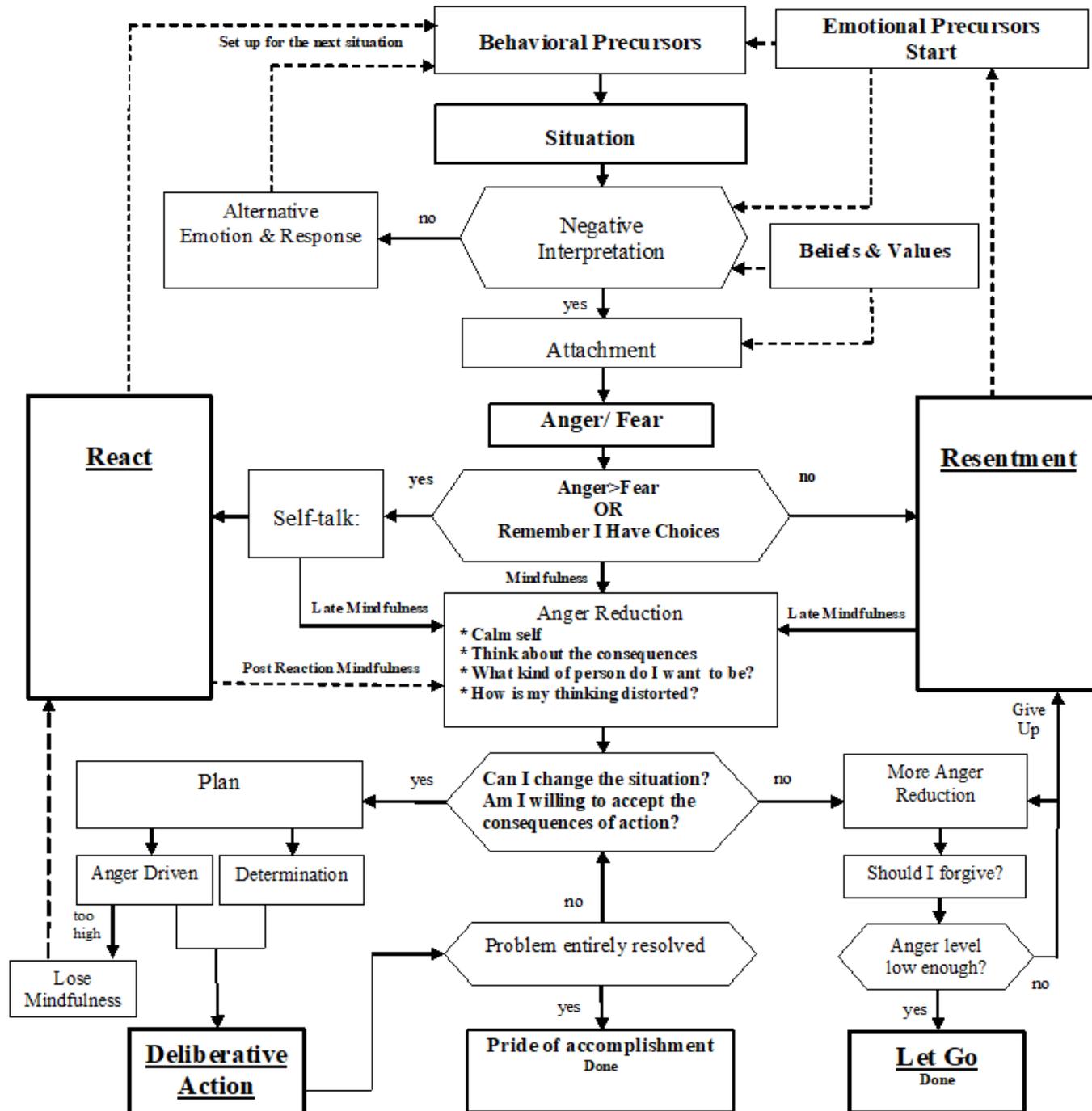
- **Find the humor in the situation.**
- **Find the truth in what they say.**
- **Don't take it as personal.**
- **Distraction/Redirection.**
- **Journal or talk to someone I trust.**
- **Decide to minimize future contact.**
- **Behavioral rehearsal**

2x2 Anger Response Flowchart (Precipitating Situation)



Sparky waiting in the canteen line
for ice cream.





Prison is like the movie Ground Hog Day
Your anger situations are going to repeat.



Behavioral Rehearsal

I have a choice of repeating the same old script
or
I can look at the situation and write a new script.

- What did I do right?
- What could I do better?
- Where were the choice points?
- Which Anger Management Techniques can I apply?

If you practice the new script in your imagination with the intention of using it the next time a similar situation comes up, you increase the chances of remembering to try the new script.

Behavioral Rehearsal

You shouldn't expect to do it perfectly the first time and you may need to refine your script, but This is how you change your habitual responses.

Anger Awareness



Anger Awareness

- Emotions motivate us to take action.
- Most of our decisions are made at an unconscious level based on emotional activation.
- Our conscious-awareness is like a flashlight in a dark room. We can only be aware of one thing at a time. We stitch together a sense of continuous reality by rapidly shifting focus.
- We rarely deliberate about our decisions unless we are facing a unique challenge. Most of the time we are on autopilot with the unconscious playing out habitual scripts.

Anger Awareness

To gain anger awareness one needs to develop the habit of briefly turning the flashlight of consciousness towards one's emotions:

- Body feelings: How amped up am I? Muscle tension? Center of energy? What is my facial expression? Quality of my voice? Am I losing the ability to talk?
- Thoughts: What is going on with my self-talk?
- External environment: Have I been in situations like this before? What can I conclude based on the facial expression of the other person? Is someone telling me I look angry, embarrassed, or happy?

Choice & Freedom



Choice & Freedom

- No one has unlimited choices and no one has no choices.
- An absolute dictator does not have unlimited choices.
- Even if you are being executed you have the choice of how to face your death.

Choice & Freedom

- There are usually many more choices available than you are aware of.
- Anger management is ultimately about using skillful means to most effectively achieve your goals.

Choice & Freedom

- Freedom is about choice, and taking responsibility for your choices.
- Your choices always have consequences.
- If you make wise choices your options tend to improve, you have more and better choices.
- If you make poor choices, your options tend to decrease.

Choice & Freedom

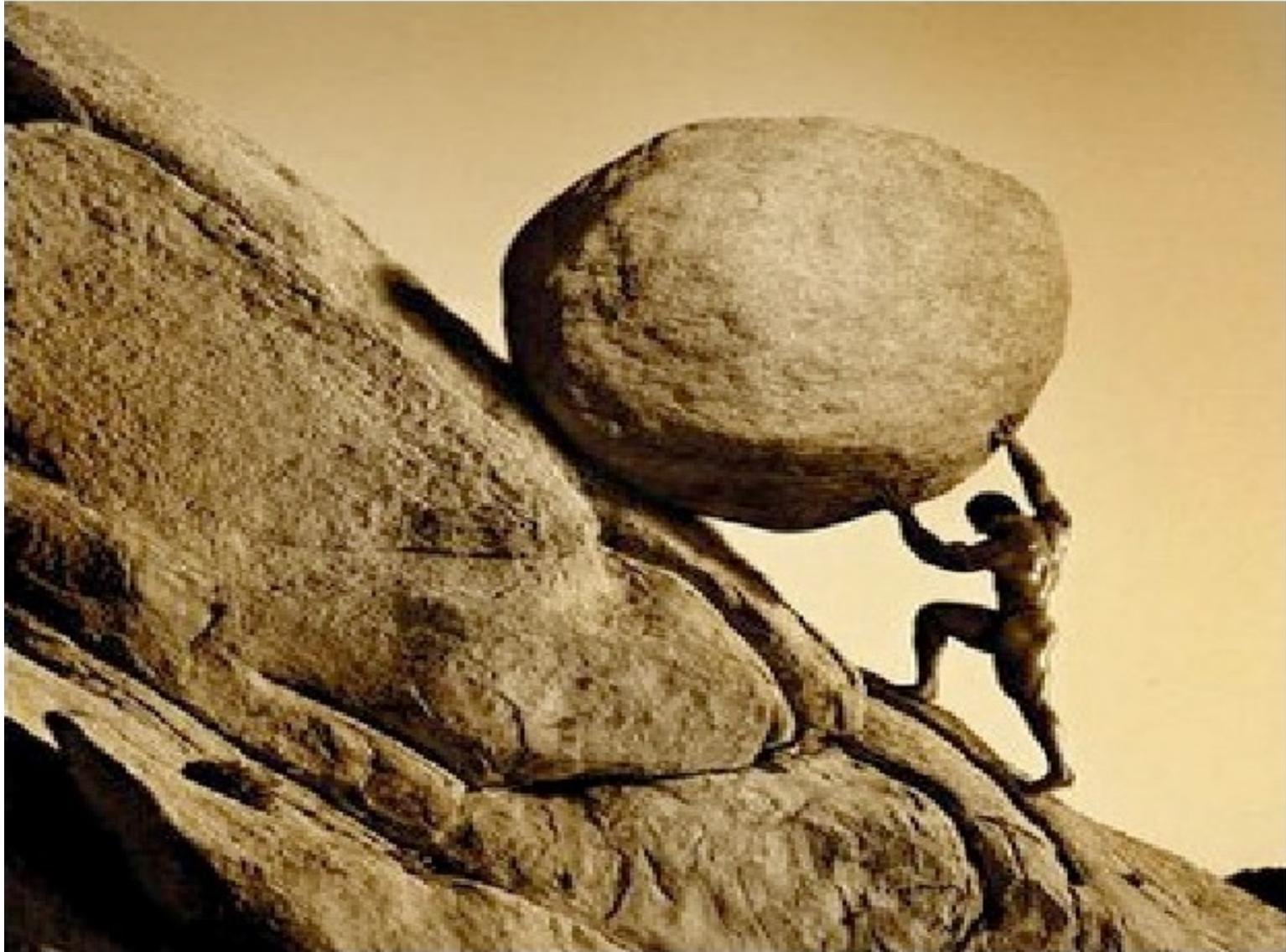
- Life isn't fair.
- Random events, or the choices of others, may reduce our choices.
- These developments may require us to rechannel our goals.
- All any of us have are the choices we face in the here and now, at this point in time.

Choice & Freedom

We have internal barriers that keep choices out of our awareness:

- Our habitual way of doing things.
- Our beliefs about what is possible
- Our distortions of reality.
- Our values of what we are willing to do.
- Our fear of violating cultural norms.
- Fear of going outside our comfort zones.
- The limits of our imaginations.

Determination: Reaching Goals



Determination: Reaching Goals

- Determination is a positive emotion that involves the unstoppable push towards a difficult goal in spite of obstacles.
- It starts with a wish, or desire growing out of a powerful emotional experience.
- Followed by a choice to assert your will to overcome obstacles to make the wish a reality.
- It is the gut feeling, "This is important to me and I'm going to do it."

Determination: Reaching Goals

- Determination starts as desire; you want something because the present is unacceptable or you see the goal as highly desirable and attainable.
- The desire becomes determination when you make a commitment.
- A commitment is a wager with yourself. If you win and accomplish your goal, you will feel pride. If you fail, you will feel shame.

Determination: Reaching Goals

- Determination can override negative emotional motivations if the determination is more powerful.
- The strongest emotion wins.
- Determination will only work if you remember your commitment when the problem situation arises.
- We retrigger determination with self-talk.

Determination: Reaching Goals

Four elements are used to challenge the negative emotional motivator:

- A recollection of your commitment.
- A sense of self with the will and power to make choices that affect the world.
- Positive self-talk; we argue with ourselves and remind ourselves of what is really important.
- An alternative plan or script to handle the situation.

Determination: Reaching Goals

- The function of rational arguments is to elicit new insights that will change the emotional balance. Our behavior is ultimately driven by habit and competing emotions, including the reward system. Change is brought about by changing habits, and that will only happen if you have an emotionally compelling reason to use your conscious resources to lay down new habits through the use of determination.

Anger and Determination

- We get angry when we encounter an unexpected obstacle we feel we are being treated unfairly and our focus narrows to attacking the obstacle.
- With determination we anticipate the obstacle and we interpret it as a challenge to overcome.
- Our focus will be wider and we may look at ways to get over, under or around the obstacle rather than simply attacking it.

Shame



Shame

For many men:

- “Shame is failure.”
- “Shame is being wrong.”
- “Shame is when people think you’re soft or weak.”
- “Shame is being criticized or ridiculed.”
- “Showing fear is shameful.” (Brown, Hernandez, & Villarreal 2011)

The Function of Shame

- Shame serves an evolutionary purpose.
- We experience shame when we fail and pride when we succeed.
- This is the primary motivator for human action.

Toxic Shame

- A deep sense of the self as defective and unlovable.
- Necessitates a false self or mask.
- One pretend to be without the flaws one hate the most.
- When the mask slips or is threatened, the experience is devastating.
- This is the source of much of the anger in prisons and why respect is so important.

Shame Avoidance

There are four ways people try to shield themselves from shame:

1. Attack Other - The use of anger.
2. Denial - "I didn't commit the crime."
3. Withdrawal - Separating from others to reduce the social shame to private shame.
4. Attack Self - "If I put myself down, maybe others won't feel a need to put me down."

Overcoming Shame

- Self acceptance as a flawed human being.
- To be human is to be flawed.
- To be human is to have unlimited potential for growth.
- Toxic shame is rooted in labeling yourself and letting the label define your identity rather than identifying problem behaviors.

Overcoming Shame

- A paradox of change is that we can not change that which we can not accept within ourselves.
- Within all of us is the capacity to be saints and monsters.
- With radical self acceptance we can make better choices about who we are becoming.

Should I Forgive?



There are 2 Types of Forgiveness

- When you want to forgive someone you are close to and maintain the relationship, it is a Deliberative Action where you negotiate a reconciliation.
- Letting Go form of forgiveness does not involve interaction with the other person.
- It's used to overcome resentment towards people you'd prefer to avoid in the future.

Letting Go: Should I Forgive?

- We hang onto our resentments because of a sense of justice: We need to balance the scales.
- We believe if the person paid for their offense, we could let go of our resentment.
- Chances are they don't even remember the incident.

Letting Go: Should I Forgive?

- Holding on to resentment is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die.
- The time comes when you need to write off a debt you will never collect.
- It's not about making up, it's about renouncing your right to the resentment.
- The degree to which you can understand the other person's experience will make it easier to let go of your resentment.



Forgiveness: Reconciliation



Forgiveness: Reconciliation

- You choose to repair a rift with someone you care about.
- This form of forgiveness is a deliberative action because it involves negotiation and empathy to reach a shared vision of the offense, and how the relationship will return to normal.

Reconciliation: Conditions for Forgiveness

- Them to understand how they hurt you.
- To understand why they hurt you.
- Them to take responsibility for their actions.
- Restitution: It could be an apology or it could be more.
- Some assurances that they will not do it again.

Additional Reading

- David Burns: Ten Days to Self-Esteem
- Antonio Damasio: Self Comes to Mind: Constructing the Conscious Brain
- William Glasser: Choice Theory
- Donald Nathanson: Shame and Pride
- Irvin Yalom: Existential Psychotherapy & The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy

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