

Selections:
Chapter Six, ***Pleasure, Anxiety, Excitement*** and
Chapter Seven, ***Constrictive Emotions***
from

HEALING PERSONAL PSYCHOLOGY
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SIX

PLEASURE, ANXIETY, EXCITEMENT

Consciousness and the carrying out of one's will are a fundamental source of pleasure, according to Otto Rank.

Rank was a favorite of Freud until he disagreed with him over a number of clinical issues. From a psychological perspective, Rank held that pleasure and unpleasure are two facets of will. Will and conscious experience are the means of happiness.¹ Pleasure or its opposite, unpleasure or pain, are intricately involved in health and "mental illness" and psychological problems.

Most people who experience psychological problems or are labeled as "mentally ill" are usually enmeshed in emotional pain, confusion or stress. The troubling presence of auditory or visual hallucinations, false beliefs that were not understood, the throes of depression, or the heights of mania, or excessive psychic energy that seemed to be uncontrollable, commonly evoke emotional pain, confusion, and stress. If the emotional pain was not in immediate awareness, it generally surfaced at some time in the course of difficulties.

We were all raised with different beliefs. These beliefs represent variations on many different themes, created by our parents whose beliefs were formed from interactions with and *introjects* from their own parents, and so on. Most of us have introjected or swallowed whole a good portion of the beliefs and behaviors of those who raised us. For most people, the process is not conscious.

For example, a son is raised with a bitter, seclusive, and depressed father who provided for his family, in spite of his bitterness and depression. The son might grow up to be a fiscally responsible man, but become a father who related with a coldness and lack of emotion, unless angry. During angry episodes the tendency to regress into emotional and physical abuse with his spouse and/or children is a real possibility, if not an actuality. As a result of introjecting the traits of his own father, his range of emotion is constricted.

Therefore, his range of responsiveness in strongly charged emotional reactions are severely limited.

While he fulfilled his duty as a breadwinner and a father, he would appear bored and detached when relating to his children. He may consciously wish for more closeness but is clueless about how to achieve it.

The consequences of introjected beliefs interferes with us becoming differentiated human beings, separate from our parents or the significant others who raised us. In other words, unconscious *introjects* – beliefs or behaviors – function as barriers to becoming the unique human beings that we are.

If we had all become differentiated with our own unique internal sense of pleasure, confidence, direction, and an independent sense and confidence in our natural ability to create a pleasurable existence for ourselves, there would be no need for the professions of clinical psychology or psychiatry.²

What do we mean when we speak of excitement? Most would assume it is sexual excitement. However, in addition to sexual excitement there is the increase of energy, as in unbridled enthusiasm, for both a particular activity or creative interest, and for life itself. That is excitement, perhaps not as intense as sexual excitement, but excitement just the same.

Excitement can be defined as that familiar, pleasurable feeling we have when, after a long period of being cooped up inside during a cold, nasty winter, we take our first walk in the spring time through a wooded area noticing the new buds on the trees, the birds chirping, the warmth of the sun and the breeze touching our skin.

As we are using our senses and not lost in thought, on our first trip out of the apartment since the last of the cold weather, we feel the pleasurable sensations associated with this fine day. Or, it can be the feeling that comes on when we are involved in the creative process and have solved a particular problem that permits us to rapidly move to complete the work of art, music or literature we had been working on for months. On another occasion, we get up before first light because we forgot to put the garbage out for the people who pick it up, the night before. As we open up the garage door we look up to the east and see a crescent moon with a bright star in the center of the curve, the moonstar of the Turkish flag. They are the only objects in the increasing light from the east, as the sun begins its climb. We pause and look, and spontaneously say, “wow,” to ourselves. Isn’t that feeling that prompted the “wow,” excitement?

One of the common goals of our thoughtful species is to maintain a daily existence in which pleasure and excitement is paramount, with emotional pain relegated to a minor, secondary position. This is a distinct possibility.

Recall when we created or recreated pleasurable memories and anchored the memories by squeezing our thumb. We could, if we choose, anchor pleasant memories to specific times of the day. For example we can do *Change Exercise Three* and anchor the pleasant memories to the time we wake up in the morning. To do this, follow the directions for the exercise and stack the pleasant memories as directed; but do so as soon as you awaken. Do this each

morning for the next week. After the seventh day, do not do the exercise. When you awaken, reach over and squeeze your thumb. Pay close attention to the pleasant memories that come into consciousness.

How we rid ourselves of the *introjects* or *should's* and *shouldn't's* that interfere with our experience of pleasure and the full development of our potential as human beings is the subject of our next exercise in change.

As mentioned, *introjects* are messages we have received from parents or others who are significant in our lives. Messages like “You should honor your father and mother” (regardless of how mean, sadistic, cruel, or indifferent they are). What is implicit in such a message is that we shall continue to relate to our parents as if they are deserving of honor and respect, simply because they gave birth to us. They might say that they punished us ‘only’ to control us so that we didn’t end up as a criminal,’ or some such rationalization for their bad or abusive behavior.

Most people who experience serious problems in life or in relationships, problems with shyness, difficulty in approaching others, confronting partners, and so on, had experiences of being abused or neglected, physically and/or emotionally by someone significant in their childhood. Emotional abuse takes many subtle forms. It would take another book or two to adequately describe the different forms and results, not to mention that the term “abuse” is sometimes used to characterize non-abusive situations, usually by people who have learned as children they can do no wrong...the perfect childhood.

Children are frequently and repeatedly told that they should be a certain way in the world e.g., put on a certain mask for those around them, to “get ahead” or “make money” or go to a certain school or series of schools rather than the public schools.³

That *should* e.g., ‘you should go to a (Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Christian, etc.) school as private education is somehow better, is based on no science and has been proven false. That *should* though, is frequently accompanied by parental threats: ‘either you go to school X or we won’t give you any money.’ Even physical threats and emotional abuse if the adult-child were to insist on not going.

Later in life this *should* transfers to most people in authority or to those whom we look towards as sources of emotional nourishment, regardless of how they treat us. It manifests in different ways, often resulting in conflict with couples or a parent creating conflict with the child.

Another such *introject* is “turn the other cheek.” This implies that we should not defend ourselves when attacked. We should just offer our other cheek for the attacker to strike, and swallow the pain and suffering the attack entails.

These different styles of parent child relationships and dictates result in the development of specific character structures. The character structure, in effect, is the biophysical reaction of an individual to varying degrees of non-nurturing, toxic, negativistic, unemotional, cold or distant contact. A child often feels the

parent is only half there or not at all there with them, but focused on something else. This has a clear effect on the child's self esteem.

A teacher or coach may harshly criticize a child who is either younger than his classmates or is slightly developmentally delayed and can't perform the coordinated activities as his or her peers. The parents agree with the teacher or coach that the child is not welcome or capable in the sport, without first determining the circumstances, even when the child tells of his honest appraisal of the incident.

The coach may express anger and embarrass a child in front of his peers, a child whose coordination has yet to be developed. For example, rowing in an eight person shell. A particular kid may have a slight developmental delay of his motor skills and may be unable to consistently feather the oar in synchrony with the other crew members. When the kid's coordination is off, he catches a crab (keeps his oar in the water out of synchrony with the rest of the crew) and the boat jerks. The coach screams at the kid from his motor launch, kicking the kid off the crew, right then and there. He may be delayed by just six months. Six months later he will have that coordination. Six months too late to avoid this incident. The insult from the coaches action will affect the young man's self-esteem, likely for the rest of his life, in varying degrees. Especially in competitive group situations, or in intimate relationships where the young man may feel incapable or inadequate, albeit unconscious.

A third *introject* is "you should never disrespect your elders." This, of course, implies that regardless of how sadistic and cruel someone is to you, just because they happened to be born before you, you should accept their cruelty as they must be trying to teach you something, and should never disrespect them by speaking out against them. A controlling *introject* to say the least.

"You should associate with your own kind; people of other races or ethnicity are inferior to yours or, not to be trusted, " is a common *introject*. That, in a nutshell was the *introject* that Adolf Hitler and his gang forced down the throat of the German people. Is not this the cause of all ethnic strife, racism, and the foundation of the policies that enslaved African's and African-American's in this country, preventing their progress and development as a group of people, even after Federal laws were passed outlawing such discrimination?

Even today, the hidden agenda's behind the debates against Affirmative Action, Immigration Reform or Equal Opportunity are influenced by those having *introjected* this racial superiority - inferiority message. Yet, they are likely not conscious of the reasons for their divisiveness. "Look at the technology that we produced and compare it to the technology they produced and you can see who is superior," is one of the rationalizations used for superiority.

We have short historical memories. Only after the passing of Affirmative Action legislation, did we see African-Americans gain in economic independence and increase their representation in the middle class. Prior to

that American civilization suppressed, enslaved, segregated and prevented African-Americans from educational opportunities. This was an almost universal practice, in some regions, until after most of the 20th Century had passed. These short historical memories and the emergence of the recent debates against continuing Affirmative Action, with no subsequent policy implementation to insure the prevention of racial discrimination, indicate the power of an *introject* (racial superiority) to perpetuate itself from generation to generation.

We have seen assassinations of African-American leaders, FBI intrusions into their lives and other covert activities against them.⁴ We see the lingering effects of unconsciousness in those continuing to question if Barack Obama was born in the U.S., even after a copy of his birth certificate was produced. This is a twisted and disguised form of racism.

A Rabbi was recorded as alluding to eliminating Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, prior to his assassination. The Rabbi's belief was a result of Rabin's position on the removal of Israeli settlers, an ongoing conflict within Israeli society. Although the Rabbi denied it. Unfortunately, at least in this case, one young man, a settler-extremist, took the arguments to heart (*introjected* them) and acted on them by killing Rabin.⁵

A fifth such *introject* is: "be a good girl (or boy) and you'll get (ahead, gifts, mother's and father's love, etc.)." Or, "you should be a good boy (or girl), at all times." This implies a whole realm of conflicting interactions. Being a "good-boy" or "good-girl" entails putting on a certain persona or mask, in every interaction. "Good-girls" and "good-boys" often become successful adults in our society, but with a severe price. "Good-boys" and "good-girls" learn, early on, to only show that part of themselves that they think others will approve of. In so doing, they stunt the growth of their personality, often only consciously recognizing one side of themselves, the "good-boy" or "good-girl" side. They rarely, if ever become aware of their dark side.

Some of these "good-boys" and "good-girls" become self-righteous adults who vehemently oppose anything that is inconsistent with their moral *introjects*, to the point of murdering innocent people to support their beliefs. To wit, the recent murders of the physicians and staff members who worked at abortion clinics, the bombing of the Federal building in Oklahoma, or some government sponsored military actions.

"Good-boys" and "good-girls," in business, are usually found to be doing the proverbial stabbing of others in the back to get ahead or to maintain their persona (mask) of excellence.

Other *introjects* act as positive metaphors assisting us through life. "Look before you leap." "A penny saved is a penny earned." "Honesty is the best policy," are some of the more positive *introjects* that function to assist us as we grow and develop in western society.

These are only some of the many common *introjects* most people have accepted, in total, without examining them. Rather than using what part fits and can benefit or enhance their own individual development while discarding

the parts that feel alien, the message or *introject* is swallowed whole, without self-examination

Most of us, simply by nature of being human, have an innate sense of what is right and good in the world. Recent research with babies has affirmed this. Our collective social nature is the foundation of our consciousness. This foundation is conferred on every human. Carl Jung referred to this as the genetic memory or the collective unconscious as separate from the personal unconscious. The personal unconscious is akin to Freud's use of the term unconscious. The personal unconscious is composed of feelings and beliefs created, as a result of the socialization process, beginning at birth. The collective unconscious, on the other hand, is composed of the genetic memory, as expressed in symbols, of all that has occurred in human development since the first human. As we are social creatures by our collective nature, we have an unconscious, natural proclivity towards standards that protect our human species and hence life. While we have once experienced the contents of the personal unconscious and then repressed them, there is no equivalent experience of the collective unconscious.

The personal unconscious is where *introjects* are to be found.

Introjects are, by analogy, like lumps of undigested food. The digestive process is incapable of assimilating them into our cells. They sit there as foreign bodies. This signals us that something is wrong.

With *introjects* that drive our behavior, sometimes in an unnatural direction, we know that something is wrong because we begin to question why we continue to do certain things or why we have such pain when we repeatedly react in similar ways in certain interactions. Why do others seem to have such a freedom to do or say what they become aware of? We bring on stress from feeling compelled to withhold actions or words in similar situations. Why do we make such critical judgments about certain behaviors and constrict our interactions in such a way that the outcomes, in specific situations, are always predictable? A "*should*" is often the culprit.

A similar process is often at the source of many couple conflicts? In most conflicts, behavior is being driven by an unconscious or semi-conscious *introject*. An *introject*-driven person either doesn't care if the result is always the same, e.g., the distancing and anger of the partner or has no clue and frequently, adamantly refuses to take responsibility for their part. They truly believe they are not responsible.

The irrational belief at the source of the *introject* is what governs our relation to the other. *Introjects* are often related to as "truisms:" For example, 'There can be no other explanation, she is a communist sympathizer because she believes in political activism for the poor.' 'Barack Obama is a socialist/communist sympathizer because he promotes help for the poor and underprivileged,' and so on. This is often the unconscious or semi-conscious foundation for right-wing, radical conservative thinking. Of course, liberals have their own unconscious foundations.

Our first step then, in this change process is to become aware of such introjected messages.

Once they are in awareness we can then examine them, take what is positive for us, and literally throw up and spit out the part that is restricting and/or negative. *Introjects*, like undigested food, must be regurgitated so that we can look at the contents, assimilate what we, as adults, believe is positive for us, and throw the remains away. The next exercise is a guide to this process.

Change Exercise 8

Introjects and Awareness

You are about to engage the process of mindfulness and do some personal work. This exercise or learning experiment requires you to be ruthlessly honest with yourself and examine the minute details of how you are in the world. It is divided into 3 stages.

Stage 1

Make a list of all the relationships that you have had or currently have that cause strife or discomfort, but which you continue to engage in. Include parents, siblings, relatives and friends.

On occasion, you even attempted, but failed to come to terms with the discomfort so that it is resolved. These are relationships where there were periods of conflict or differences that have never seemed to resolve, except from separation, leaving the scene, or ending the relationship.

Make another list of repetitive behaviors that you do in certain situations. The specific way you behave and/or speak or carefully check yourself and withhold from speaking in a certain way with particular people or with people who represent a class of people, e.g., authorities, teachers, professors, parents, relatives, religious figures, your own or other's children, groups defined by sex, race, spiritual beliefs, physical structure, occupational status or other divisive way.

Most sex-based, racial or religious prejudice and/or discrimination clearly originate from a set of *introjects* having to do with “perceived” inferiority of the other group. This is how people in civilization maintain positions of superiority over others. It is solely through their perception of themselves relative to the others. Perceptions do not necessarily reflect reality.

Make a third list of customs or ritual behaviors you continue to follow, regardless of the situation. For example, when you have guests over, even if they are your best friends, you frantically run around and clean the house or specific rooms of the house. Or, you feel bad if you don't have the money to have the refrigerator stocked with good food or drink. Or, when you go into certain rooms of the house, places in the community, or offices in your workplace, you lower your voice and/or speak in a certain repetitive way or make certain repetitive gestures.

If you are a mental health professional, in addition to your personal list, list those ways you speak or behave differently with "patients," or with particular "patients" having certain diagnoses relative to "patients" with other diagnoses.

Make a final list of the specific situations in which you evoked or created bad or guilty feelings in yourself after failing to act or speak up. This will be clear, especially if the other person did react to what you did not say or do. For example, the reaction from the other for not expressing gratitude after being given something of value.

Stage 2

Sit in a comfortable chair with your four lists in front of you. Relax.

Take 10 deep breaths and exhale completely after each breath. Choose any item from one of the lists. Close your eyes. Imagine yourself spiraling back in time to a place and time where it was first insisted that you *should* act or not act in that way. Let your mind create an image including feelings and sounds of that time. If you can't seem to recall a specific time, imagine or create a related image. Be creative. Design your image to reflect some of the elements or relationships of that time.

In the case of hanging onto relationships you may have messages come to mind like: "You should cherish all your friendships, as life is short." Or, "good friends are few and far between." Or, "never say goodbye to someone who is a friend." Or "once in love, always in love," etc. Bring the early message into full consciousness.

Imagine that you have no preconceived notions, *should's* or *shouldn't's*. If it helps, imagine you are from another galaxy where such notions are absent. The society and consciousness exists completely in the present, using logic and direct perception to assess any situation or interaction.

Look at your behavior lists from that perspective, free of preconceived notions. What would you do, given this new situation? For example, if you recalled the message “never say goodbye to someone who is a friend,” imagine what you would do without that directive, if one of your friends are consistently demeaning, critical, or disrespectful. Even after you discussed your intense dislike of the constant critical or demeaning statements. Or, worked with a couples therapist to resolve this issue. Even your spouse.

Many couples suffer, unnecessarily as a result of an *introject* akin to ‘until death do us part.’ One partner is constantly critical and demeaning. Nothing, even consulting with a therapist, seemed to have resolved the problem of criticality and demeaning comments. The other partner grits their teeth and bears it for a lifetime of misery.

Make a list of your possible actions or spontaneous action with what you did do or usually do. The new spontaneous action is what you would do if the ‘*should*’ or *introject* was absent. Do this for each item on your four lists.

Stage 3

After choosing the spontaneous action or reaction for each item on your list, contemplate the contrast between what your spontaneous action is and what you originally did for each action. Consider all possible aspects, your own feelings, before and after, and what the future may look like absent of your usual ‘*should*’ driven behavior for each particular instance.

Analyze each interaction and choose those behaviors that are consistent with your beliefs AND would make you feel good, comfortable, or complete. The behavior must not be the original one, although it may incorporate parts of the original one. For the original one was most probably driven by an *introject*.

The goal we are seeking here is some variation of the original one incorporating what makes you most comfortable or pleasurable, without being controlled by the *introject*.

Set aside about 15 minutes each week, for the next few months, to identify new lists of *introjects* and utilize the three-stage change procedure to work them through so that you have replaced the automatic behavior with your own true preference. Practice the changed responses at every opportunity.

As a caveat, be especially critical of those changed responses that might have the potential to cause emotional pain in others. With those responses, it would help if you were to adopt a positive principle or ethic of gauging the potential effect of your response based on the potential of causing emotional pain in others. If your sense is that the response would cause pain, either do not respond or seek another response that would not create emotional pain, but still accomplishes your intention, without being driven by the original *introject*.

SEVEN

CONSTRUCTIVE EMOTIONS

Constrictive emotions are any feeling state that causes cellular constriction.

---George Dillinger, M.D. ⁶

George Dillinger was a psychiatrist, healer and one time chair of the State of California Department of Rehabilitation Medicine. He undertook an extensive study of Tibetan medical, psychiatric and psychological healing practices, chiropractic, nutritional, and energetic practices. He trained with John Pierrakos who developed the system of *core energetics*, an offshoot of Wilhelm Reich's *orgonomy*. He traveled around with Frederick Perls for a while. Following a period of study in these alternative practices, he resigned as the chair and resigned his membership in the State Psychiatric Association, mainly out of disagreement with their practices, some of which he considered to be very harmful. He then devoted his career to a private healing practice and teaching. I had the opportunity to study with him in weekly individual sessions and a weekly training group, for a few years. He was a member of my doctoral committee.

Understanding constrictive emotions is essential in changing. Cellular constriction is a phenomenon initially recognized in the 1940's during microscopic examination of the quality of blood cells in cancer patients. Cancer, according to Dr. Dillinger, is the most severe form of cellular constriction. Healthy blood cells appear as having taut and rounded margins. When the organism is unhealthy or engaged in chronic stress or anxiety, cellular constriction can be identified by examination of the blood cells. They appear with slightly wrinkled margins, observable using 1500x or higher power microscopes.⁷

Constrictive emotions are those feeling states that, when expressed, make our organisms constrict or contract (tense up). We experience the constriction and contraction through feelings of tightness, tenseness or displeasure. The

constriction or contraction may manifest as emotional pain, physical pain, pain in a particular muscle group or particular part of the body. Sometimes, like an arthritic pain in a joint or limb. The functional equivalent is a constriction in nourishment to the cells.

Some may feel tightness in the chest and imagine that they have cardiac problems, when they do not.⁸

The proverbial pain in the neck is often manifested as a reaction to another or something evoking persistent negative thoughts or emotions in the environment. This can be conscious or outside of awareness. Our bodies often react before we are conscious of the cognitive reason. On most occasions, there is no physical pain, just the psychological/characterological manifestation creating emotional pain. Simply put, when caught up in constrictive emotions we do not feel very good.

During time spent in constrictive emotions, breathing is constricted by the tightened musculature of the chest and diaphragm. Hence our oxygen intake is diminished.

While cancer and the process of “schizophrenia” are the most severe forms of cellular constriction, relationship problems, anger, mild depression, depression over something that happened in the environment, non-severe physical illnesses, self-esteem issues, and cognitive problems manifest lesser degrees of constriction.

In contrast, pleasurable emotions are ones that make our organisms expand, feel relaxed, and pleurably excited. During times of feeling pleasurable emotions, our breathing is full and expansive. The feeling of pleasure is the feeling of expansion.

The psychobiological substrate of expansion and contraction or constriction is found in the *sympathetic* and *parasympathetic* nervous system. When the *sympathetic* nervous system is active as in anxiety, fear and anger, we are contracting. When the *parasympathetic* nervous system is active, as in sexual pleasure, joy, happiness and relaxation, we are expanding.⁹ Constrictive emotions include anxiety, anger, fear, panic, jealousy, contempt, spite, unsupported mistrust, unsupported suspiciousness, unexpressed grief, and unfinished sadness. Just about any feeling that makes us tense, tight, feel miserable, and immerses us in unpleasure, emotional pain, or depression is a constrictive emotion.

Emotions have been theoretically and arbitrarily divided into primary and secondary emotions. A primary emotion is the raw, unadulterated, base feeling with nothing behind it. The feelings of pleasure, rage, anxiety, fear, and sadness are examples of primary emotions.

With secondary emotions there is always another emotion lying beneath the surface. The primary emotion stimulated the expression of a secondary emotion. The secondary emotion serves to cover or disguise awareness of the primary feeling, from others and from ourselves. Some of the secondary emotions may include guilt, anger, resentment, embarrassment, frustration, longing, shame, shyness, etc.

Unfortunately, our popular psychology and many professionals teach us to understand that secondary emotions are real and at the base, when they are not. As an example we might feel strong anger towards someone in reaction to what they said or did with us. The anger may belie embarrassment, emotional pain, or hurt feelings evoked from the other's words or actions towards us. Often, what is behind or beneath such anger is a feeling of being personally violated, shame at being exposed, shame at having our true motives discovered, feelings of emotional pain; feelings of being diminished, demeaned, or embarrassed.

Yet, we say our anger is about what they said, not the effect it had on us. In other words, we claim responsibility for our anger, but not the hurt or sense of violation underlying the anger. Since birth, when we feel emotional pain from interactions, we are most often trained or taught by modeling in families and/or cultural traditions to control or suppress expressions of the pain by giving vent to anger, in a split-second. The hurt or violation behind the anger is often outside of conscious awareness. Recognizing this, we can usually get in touch with the emotional expression covered by anger.

A functional understanding of emotions is a prerequisite in developing strategies to change. Mainstream psychology and psychiatry presents us with many confounding, mechanical descriptions that are continually being revised. These mechanical descriptions increase confusion, as they include arcane, intellectualized concepts, far removed from what an emotion or feeling actually is. The functional understanding that follows will hopefully clear up some of the confusion by showing how emotions are intimately associated with our physical natures, not just our brains or thoughts.

Emotions

Pleasure

Pleasure is a primary emotion. When with a loved one we generally feel pleasure as in tenderness or a warm melting sensation. Many forms of pleasure evoke similar feelings, sexual pleasure being only one. There is pleasure in accomplishment, say for example learning to master a difficult piece of music, a difficult craft or task. Seeing a dear friend after a long absence is another.

The feeling of pleasure is the feeling of excitement and expansion. Pleasurable streamings are often misinterpreted as anxiety.

Pleasure, felt as expansion, is experienced as physical streamings or excitement. Energy flows to the skin surface and is expressed towards the environment. Do the following relaxing visualization when you feel good. It will assist in becoming accustomed to the physical feelings of pleasure.

Visualize physical energy beams of pleasure streaming throughout your body, from head to toe, travelling from the crown of your head through the soles of your feet into the center of the planet. Then reverse the flow, drawing energy from the planet up through your crown. Reverse the flow a final time,

sending the energy down through your crown into the center of the earth. Doing this simple exercise can result in a pleasurable relaxed feeling.

Other primary emotions are rage, hatred, and anxiety.¹⁰

Rage

Rage results when energy flows into the muscles. This can be seen in a small infant. When giving vent to rage, the infant's whole body and musculature are involved. The infant screams and thrashes their arms and legs about in pure rage. As a result of the socialization process, adults rarely experience the true feeling of rage. An exception might be when that experience suddenly emerges during work with a psychotherapist. A psychotherapist's office is generally the safest place to express and work on rage, especially with psychotherapists having a biophysical (orgonomic), bioenergetic, or core energetic orientation.

If you think you will not lose control, you can work on rage expression in the following exercise.

Lie, face up, on a bed or couch and bring to mind something you are consistently angry about.

Start pounding and kicking the bed, a few minutes at a time, until you feel finished. Let the feelings develop into the motion of your arms and legs.

Between each episode of pounding, relax, lie still and attempt to associate the rage with something from your past.

Don't over exert yourself with this. Moderation is the key to success. Notice any feelings or remembrances that surface.

Childhood memories or other memories may come into consciousness, during this exercise. This is positive. Speculate on what might have happened in these incidental memories. What might have been done differently if you had the same level of consciousness then, that you do now.

Fortunately, most of us, in civilization, control our rage and aggression through many means including sublimation in the obsessive watching, studying and betting on sports matches, including extremely violent sports like football, fighting and martial arts. Some people thrive on the adrenalin rush from violence and risky behaviors. We've known for some time that these "adrenalin junkies" have a higher incidence of hardening of the arteries, e.g., atherosclerosis.¹¹ On the other hand, some sublimate their unconscious rage and aggression into positive, productive activities.

Anxiety

Anxiety is the opposite of pleasure. Anxiety causes repression. When an unwanted or undesirable feeling surfaces, we contract in an attempt to withhold awareness and expression. If all humans freely expressed all emotions, there would be no anxiety. When we contract, we feel anxiety. Or, when we feel anxiety, we contract. Either way.

When anxious, are we not inhibited in expression and movement? Our organism tenses or contracts. Awareness is generally diminished. Panic is a longer lasting expression of anxiety that does not seem to subside.

The experience of anxiety has multiple health implications. Healing of anxiety related problems involves the teaching of biophysical exercises to increase expansion when sensing contraction.

In bioenergetics and so-called “Reichian” therapy, the work involves assisting an individual, through bioenergetic work on the couch, to sustain a higher level of anxiety and still remain in contact with a clear awareness.

The “Reichian” therapist usually works from the head down, leading the “patient” to do eye exercises, breathing exercises, and the biophysical kicking and striking of the couch to loosen character armor and give expression to lost feelings. This is often accompanied by the application of pressure, tickling on various parts of the body, and muscle groups to loosen them (When an area is sensitive to tickling, it is a sign of armor).

In his doctoral dissertation, published in 1949 as *The Meaning of Anxiety*, the existential psychoanalyst, Rollo May referred to the psychiatrist, Harry Stack Sullivan’s formulations of anxiety indicating that anxiety inhibits personality growth and awareness.¹²

The Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), easily learned, has demonstrated excellent results in eliminating problems of anxiety, phobias, fears, and post traumatic stress reactions.¹³ An abbreviated version of EFT is presented in *Chapter Eleven*.

Sadness, Longing, Grief

Sadness, longing and grief are important emotions. Sadness is a feeling of reaction to a loss, just about any loss in very sensitive people. The organism contracts until full expression of the sadness occurs.

Longing is a reaching out for something desired but not there.

Grief, similar to sadness, is a reaction to a loss that could not be replaced. With lingering, unexpressed grief, and unexpressed sadness, it can help to work with a therapist to achieve closure.

Grief is a particularly difficult emotion. If we avoid or suppress grief, it can lead to significant depression. If, after a significant loss we either do not have any feelings, or we are grieving over a loss and either discover or are told we have a tendency to avoid experiencing any strong feelings that arise, it may be helpful to engage the assistance of a psychologist who is trained to facilitate the grieving process. The process of grieving over the loss of a significant person in one’s life, whether resulting from a divorce or separation that was unwanted, or

death, can take a few years. This is normal and expected. Embedded in the process of most major religions are rituals designed to facilitate the grief process.

Unfinished or unexpressed sadness can also lead to depression. It is important when we feel sadness, to biophysically release it through tears and sobbing as opposed to 'gritting our teeth and bearing it.'

Depression

Depression can occur when we turn our own hatred, anger, or rage against ourselves; when grief and sadness are not completely expressed, and from other problems discussed, in detail, in *Chapter Nine*. Depression involves many aspects of human functioning. Depression always involves cellular constriction. Research has demonstrated that routine aerobics, yoga and other biophysical exercises can facilitate the healing of depression.^{14,15}

Jealousy, Suspicion, Mistrust

Jealousy, unsupported suspicion and unsupported mistrust are related. Jealousy is intertwined with beliefs that can have delusional proportions, as in beliefs that, simply by being engaged in a relationship, we either possess the other person or can direct them, at our will, and they *should* comply.

With individuals who are insecure, have a poor self-concept, or other characterological restrictions in expressing personal power, the consuming feeling of jealousy can arise whenever an intimate or associate turns their attention away from them and towards another, even another family friend, a business associate, a casual friend, or stranger whom they momentarily encounter.

Whatever the object of the jealousy, it can often be traced to the insecurity or lack of confidence of the person who feels it. Or, it can be an expression of an disguised and unconscious wish to be unfaithful to the partner whom the jealousy is directed. In the latter case, the wish or desire to be unfaithful is unconsciously projected onto the partner. In other words, rather than be aware of our own wish to be unfaithful, as such a wish is not consistent with the image we have of ourselves, we suspect our partners of being unfaithful.

Unsupported suspicion and mistrust can often be traced to a person's early development. Consider the scenario of being raised in an emotionally charged and intense environment where lack of trust is in the foreground of most of the family relations or interactions. For example, many of a child's innocent actions and intentions are mistrusted and suspected; the child is frequently interrogated or accused of and punished for things they never did. A favored brother or sister may accuse the child of an action they did, themselves, to avoid the parents wrath. The innocent, accused child, as a result of the parental, pre-conceived prejudice or judgmental inclinations towards them, becomes the brunt of many punishments for situations they were innocent of. When the child reports they are innocent of the action, they are not believed. That child, growing up in an atmosphere of mistrust, becomes an adult who is

ambivalent about decisions; not trusting themselves. They exhibit patterns of behavior similar to their own parents. Often, such children fail to establish their own successful family relations as adults.

Intergenerational transmission of behaviors is common. A chain of behaviors and interactions can often be traced to the deficient parenting skills of grand parents or great grandparents.

As a result of their own *introjects*, parents frequently deceive a child as a means to control them, rationalized as “knowing what’s best.” It matters little if aggressive and/or abusive techniques are used. The parents believe, or are told these are needed to change the child’s (natural) behavior. The idea is that this little being must comply with the demands of those who truly believe they know better, when they, in fact, have no clue of what constitutes proper parenting. While there may have been a reason for this in more primitive and personally dangerous times at the beginnings of society, the reason is no longer valid in current culture where advances in positive psychological approaches in child rearing have been established in the literature and popular culture.

A connection can often be made with how the parents were related to by their own parents. If the majority of the parent-child relationship is based on deception to manipulate or control, given their “knows best” attitude-ingrained belief, the result is often an adult with considerable anxieties, fears, relationship difficulties, and insecurities, regardless of intellectual ability or accomplishments. These anxieties will find their way in relationships with their own children.

Spite, Contempt, and Arrogance

Spite represents a last-ditch attempt to get even with someone who is perceived as more powerful, or acts as if they have power over others. For example, if you act as if you have power over me and I believe you do, I may do something to undermine you, in some way, to get back at you for controlling me. Contempt or being contemptuous is closely related to arrogance. Contempt manifests when one treats another with little account, relates to them as vile, of little worth or, is dismissive. With arrogant and pompous people, contempt is usually lurking in the background of their consciousness. The function of arrogance is to keep others at a distance and prevent closeness. Being spiteful and contemptuous certainly accomplishes this.

Anger

Anger, contrary to popular belief, is a secondary emotion. There is often some other feeling or reaction, either preceding or beneath the surface of a person expressing anger.

We often feel pain and hurt in reaction to a demeaning comment, unjustified criticism, or other unhealthy expression from others.

Anger can cover a deep seated emotion so that the real feeling remains unconscious. Anger can be utilized as a strategy to control another; can serve as a mask for emotional pain, hurt, or fear; or, can serve to disguise any true

feeling so that it is not revealed. Anger can become destructive; cause relationships to dissolve; cause a rise in blood pressure and other physical symptoms.

To effectively deal with anger it is important to understand that the primary task is to know that anger is not the first or true feeling. Anger was a reaction to the true feeling. Some common signs that anger is surfacing can be physical feelings of heat, blushing or redness in our face, fleeting destructive thoughts, feelings of tightness, clenching hands or fists, and a host of unique personal feelings. The task here is to become a good self-observer.

The next exercise is designed to assist you in gaining control of your anger rather than having it control you.

Change Exercise 9

Ending Anger

When you first feel the sign that anger is rising within you immediately do the following:

- 1. STOP whatever you are doing. If you are yelling, arguing, etc., STOP. Consciously relax your stomach muscles. Then tell yourself to feel the anger. With your stomach muscles relaxed, you either can't experience the feeling, or it will be so diminished you can easily deal with it.¹⁶**
- 2. LOOK within and go over an inventory of related feelings: Do you feel hurt; in pain; embarrassed; shamed; out of control of the situation; self-righteous e.g., you are morally right and the other is wrong or your position is true and the other person's position is false. Are you, in your benevolence, trying to teach the other a lesson they seem reluctant to learn? Any or all of the above, including whatever else you may realize about yourself may apply. Examine each thought.**
- 3. LISTEN to the true inner feeling beneath the anger. If you are hurt, feel the pain or sadness.**
- 4. EXPRESS your true feeling to the other in a non-threatening and gentle way. Most true feelings associated with belying anger are hurt, embarrassment, shame, emotional sensitivity, or some form of self-righteousness or belief in one's own self-importance or rightness in relation to the other. Share the true feeling or statement that preceded the anger. Even if it embarrasses you or goes against your sense of**

control. If it is a sense of self-importance, share this and turn the interaction into a humorous interchange. ('You know that the universe believes I'm more important than you.') All you need to do is become aware of the feeling or thought behind the anger and express it.

If you have had serious problems with anger you might be surprised how simple this exercise is. It is, but it takes considerable practice to fully realize the benefits.

Practice these exercises, every time you begin to experience the signs that you know, leads to an angry expression.

Remember first to relax your stomach muscles. Practice relaxing your stomach and make it a habit. The next time you become angry focus your attention on your stomach muscles.

You will find that your relationships with others will improve and be more effective. You will feel more in control of yourself. Sounds a bit strange, but it works.

If you have a problem with regular irritability, start a physical exercise/aerobics program to burn off some of your energy.

There are many examples of people getting a handle on irritability. So as not to effect the marital relationship, they do a few similar things to distract from irritability. Whenever feeling irritable or angry at their partner, they leave the house and go for a brisk walk, wearing a portable mp3 player to listen to favorite music, engage in strenuous exercise, or go out in the back yard and chop wood for 15-20 minutes. In hindsight, this diversion can be humorous. It may be the first winter there is sufficient wood to burn in the wood stove without having to go out in the middle of a cold, snowy night to chop some more. A definite benefit.

Fear

Fear is a useful emotion. We feel fear when we stand on the edge of a high place. This natural reaction signals us to be cautious. We feel fear when in fearful situations e.g., in dangerous situations where we could be assaulted or injured. This natural reaction serves to pump up our adrenalin, make us more alert, and more efficient in our actions.

Fear, generated from our thoughts, not in response to a real threat from the world, is the area we want to deal with, here.

The feeling of fear, whether there is a real threat or if it is based on a fantasy of a real threat, is similar. However, with a real threat, once the threat is diminished, the fear generally subsides. From a fantasized fear, the feeling usually persists until the thought changes. People who have panic attacks in reaction to certain situations are good examples of this fantasized fear. The panic feelings don't subside until the thought changes.

Is fear in your brain, in your body, in your “mind,” or created by thoughts? The answer, of course, is all of the above. We feel fear in our bodies; we can evoke the feeling of fear from thinking a thought about an imaginary feared situation; we can evoke fear from talking to ourselves about an imaginary feared situation; or fear is evoked from actually being in a fearful situation in which our life or safety is threatened. We can actually create imagined fear because we see with our eyes or hear something with our ears that recalls a past sequence of events that actually resulted in fear. Refer to the example of our combat veteran cited above. Fear and anxiety are related. An exercise dealing with fear implies it will work with anxiety.

Change Exercise 10

Eliminating Unnecessary Fear

Before you feel the next experience of fear from your thoughts, do the following exercise.

Sit in a chair, relax, close your eyes, and begin to breathe, naturally and fully.

Focus only on your breath and pleasurable thoughts. To help your focus, count your breath on each exhale.

Count 1 for each exhale to 10 breaths; and then begin again at 1. Sigh on each exhale as it will help you to fully exhale.

Do this for five minutes per day, counting 1-10. Continue this practice for five minutes a day, every day for the next year. Listen to the sound of your exhales.

The next instance you begin to feel fear or anxiety in response to a thought, not a real threat, relax, breathe naturally, and count your breaths as you did above, 1-10.

Make a sound or sigh on each exhale. Continue to focus on your breath, noticing the expansion and contraction of your rib cage as you breathe, for five minutes or until the feeling of fear subsides.

If the feeling arises again, focus immediately on your breath and begin counting and sighing in each exhale.

The length of time before complete relief varies with individuals. It takes practice to focus only on your breath when in a fearful state. Integrate this exercise into your daily habits, when you are not in a panic or fear mode.

Fear is a constrictive emotion, especially when it is based on an unreasonable thought, series of thoughts, or expectations.

The time spent in constrictive emotions can enable sickness and the actual physical disease process. There have been numerous correlation studies, since the 1960's, linking the acceleration of different disease processes with constrictive emotions. Suffice it to say here, that there is good reason to spend as little time as is possible in constrictive emotional space.¹⁷

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1. Rank, Otto (1936, 1978) *Truth And Reality*. New York. Originally published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1936. This edition published by Norton Library, 1978, p. 35. Otto Rank was a seminal thinker and psychoanalyst who extended the development of psychoanalytic thought beyond Freudian theory. His name is often mentioned as influencing aspects of modern offshoots of psychoanalysis e.g., Gestalt Therapy. He was one of the first to discuss the therapist recognizing and utilizing the strength of the “patient” as found in the “patient’s” resistance. Rank and Freud parted theoretical paths when Rank developed the key concepts of the use of the will in therapy.
 2. Every human being has an innate and natural ability to create pleasure in life. That ability is present whether we are aware of it or not; whether we deny it or not.
 3. Recent research has established that the public schools, for the most part, function as effectively in accomplishing the job of transmitting learning to young students as do most private schools.
 4. Martin Luther King, Jr. F.B.I. File. [Electronically retrieved May, 2011] from Pickler Memorial Library, Truman State University
http://library.truman.edu/microforms/martin_luther_king.asp
 5. Chief Rabbi meets with Rabbi who urged Rabin Assassination (2007) [Electronically retrieved, May 2011] from
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 8. If you ever do experience these or similar symptoms, first have them checked out by a physician to make certain it is not a cardiac or other physical problem.
 9. Cf. *Character Analysis* pp. 7-8.
 10. Cf. Baker, E. *Man in the trap and*; Reich, W. *Character Analysis*
 11. Williams Jr., R.B., Haney, T.L., Lee, K.L., et al. Type A behavior, hostility, and coronary atherosclerosis. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, Vol 42, Issue 6 539-549.
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 13. Craig, Gary (2010) *Emotional Freedom Technique Manual*. Thriving Now, L.L.C., [Electronically retrieved August 24, 2010] from
<http://www.thrivingnow.com/for/Health/tapping-points-and-instructions>
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<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/>
 15. Weintraub, A. (2004) *Yoga For Depression*. New York: Random House.
 16. Sheng-Yen, (1990) *Chan and Daily Life*. A lecture given at Washington Univ., St. Louis, Mo. [Electronically retrieved, August, 2010] from: <http://www.westernchanfellowship.org/chan-in-daily-life.html>
 17. Vandervoort, D. (1995) Depression, anxiety, hostility and physical health. *Current Psychology*, V. 14(1) 69-82.