

# My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

Use The Roadmap Out of Addiction™  
To Influence Your Friend And  
To Take Back Your Life

Kathy E. Williamson

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# CONTENTS

Introduction	1
The Roadmap Out of Addiction	7
1. Yes, Addictions Can Be Beaten!	9
2. Explore The Roadmap out of Addiction	27
3. Shift Your Beliefs To Change Your Future	41
4. Engage in Passionate Living for Fast Results	61
5. Resolve Underlying Issues to Achieve a Breakthrough	79
6. Plan Ahead to Avoid Relapse	95
7. Practice Powerful Habits for Personal Growth	117
8. Implement 5 Habits To Turn Dreams into Reality	139
9. Loving an Addicted Spouse	161
10. Guidance for Parents of Addicted Teens	177
11. Freedom for Veterans and their Families	195
12. Organize the Roadmap for Your Situation	205
Appendix A – Conversation Starters	215
Appendix B – Resources	221
Appendix C – Renegade Influencers	223
About the Author	225



# Introduction

If you ask 100 friends of addicts, "How can you help an addict?" a lot of the answers will be "I don't know" or "You can't help them until they want help," or "Tell the addict to *go to a meeting!*" But that leaves you feeling at a loss. Possibly fearing you're going to lose that friendship or relationship.

I am here to share with you a proven method that you can use to influence the addict toward permanent change. Notice I said *influence*. We cannot change other people, but we can influence them to change. You can't change a toddler, but you can influence the child's behavior and plenty of books exist to show you how. Until now however there has not been a book for addicts or their friends and family with a concise method that can be implemented by anyone to influence any addict.

I am a former addict. I was addicted to pain medication for ten years. I have been clean since 1990. I know what's going on inside the addict's thoughts and their struggles. I remember the awkward moments when my friends tried to help me. They stumbled over their words or ignored the topic in uncomfortable silence. Eventually they stopped being around me because they didn't know how to help me or relate to me.

I attended support groups but felt it was the blind leading the blind. What finally got me out of my addiction, with no more relapsing, were two major things that are not taught in the recovery field. First, I identified the underlying issue I was escaping from (my childhood experiences). I resolved them through forgiveness and stop rehashing the events in my mind.

But I was still stuck in my relapse. The second element was identifying the passion in my life, which was being a counselor on crisis hotlines. I brought that into my life on a weekly basis to give me something to pull me through the week. Then in 1984 I turned my passion into a bigger vision of opening my own crisis hotline. Unfortunately, those doors did not open until early 1990 when I finally found someone to teach me how to do that. When I opened my hotline, my whole life turned around within four months. My desire for my addiction went away as a by-product of living in my passion on a daily basis.

Over the years I developed and tweaked this process as a result of my own experience as an addict, plus my 12 years as a non-professional counselor on crisis hotlines. Another element I discovered is Emotional Freedom Technique ( EFT), also known as Tapping. In 1995 Gary Craig introduced EFT in a concise manner that allowed others to use it for themselves. I learned about EFT in 2007 but was hesitant to try it due to my religious beliefs as I thought it was too 'woo-woo.' One day I had a problem I could not resolve. I decided to try EFT for my problem. I was totally astounded that it worked and that the results were permanent. I include Tapping in this book as part of the skills to use to overcome cravings and other anxieties. My ebook *Tapping Away Your Addiction* is provided as a free download as part of the bonuses offered to readers.

Six months after my addiction began I became a Christian. I was fortunate to be taught in a non-denominational, bible-based church and knew the Word quite well. However, no matter how much I repented of my wrongs and prayed that God would take away my addiction, it didn't happen. I had a strong desire to stop my addiction but I simply didn't know how. Since then I have learned it takes more than a decision to stop. The principles I teach are biblical but without the religious terminology. My first book *Radical Breakthroughs to Overcome Addictions* was published in 2005 (currently out-of-print) and was purely from a biblical perspective, including lots of

Scriptures. However, over the years I have decided to write this second book in an effort to help more addicts. It is not about needing a 'higher power.' We all have the willpower to change. What we need is a proper understanding of what we are escaping from, and resolving those issues. We must discover what motivates us, and switch our motivation from *not giving in to our addiction because we don't want to hit bottom again*, to a new focus of *I don't want to do my addiction because I don't want to mess up this awesome future I have planned for my life!* I explain later in this book the benefits of being a Christian, but it is not a prerequisite in order to conquer an addiction. If you want a copy of the printed Scriptures that are designed to help Christians overcome their problems, they are in the bonuses section on my website.

All of these missing elements are integrated into my Roadmap Out of Addiction™ process which I have used to help many addicts get out of their addiction. Now I want to share it with you to equip and empower you to influence your addict friend. You can apply these same principles to your life to take back control and live a peaceful, purpose-filled life.

Whether you are a friend, a relative or a spouse of the addict, you have the capability to strongly influence your friend when you follow this step-by-step process. I will teach you the process I use to coach addicts into permanent change. Throughout this book I provide you with tips on applying this same process to any problems you are going through. I also instruct you on how to look at the addict's life to discover the necessary elements to apply that particular step. In Appendix A I provide conversation starters to ease you into the discussions that will influence the addict.

Before I tell you what is in this book, let me tell you what is not. This process is not from a 12-Step or religious standpoint or from the disease model perspective. I do not believe addiction is a disease. However, I do recognize that alcohol and drugs change the structure of the brain and therefore the addiction

begins to take on a life of its own. Thus, some addicts do need detoxification from alcohol or drugs if they have reached that point. Do not dismiss this important step. If a person needs to detoxify I recommend they do this with professional supervision, as it can have grave consequences.

The Roadmap Out Of Addiction™ process includes the following elements:

- A new perspective on what causes addictions and how to get out of them.
- How changing the beliefs and thoughts dramatically change the ability to avoid relapse.
- Discover a person's passion in life and how to build an awesome future around it.
- Use that passion as an avenue to reach out to love and serve others.
- Identify and resolve underlying issues.
- How to avoid 12 relapse triggers.
- Skills and habits needed to build character to handle life's ups and downs without relapse.

Why do addicts continuously relapse? The underlying issue(s) have not been identified and resolved. I have a list of 18 possible underlying issues with the skills and habits necessary to overcome each one. If a person comes out of rehab and has not identified and dealt with these issues, when they arise it is likely the addict will relapse. Addicts are not being taught how to handle their negative emotions which arise from their underlying unresolved issues or which may arise in their daily lives. They are also not being taught the fact that the picture in their mind always wins over their will power.

Imagine how you will feel once you are equipped with this knowledge and with a step-by-step Roadmap on what to do. You no longer need to avoid your friend because of not knowing what to say. No matter how long the person has been an addict, this

process works.

This is not a quick-fix, although it doesn't need to take a long time either. It depends upon how much interaction you have with the addict and how much her or she trusts you. When I coach an addict on a personal basis in my three-month program they get dramatic results quickly.

I encourage you to buy another copy of this book and give it to your addict friend. Perhaps you can go through it together. Even if the addict doesn't want to—in their darkest moments they may pick up the book, begin reading it and receive hope and direction for a better future. You see, the addict isn't lying to you when they say they want to change and stop. It's that they just don't know *how* to do it. It involves more than a decision and that is why sharing the information in this book with the addict is so important.

If you are the spouse of an addict, this process will help you take back your life. I was married to a paranoid, narcissistic, pathological liar who was a former addict. I woke up one morning and realized I had allowed my life to be sucked out of me. I wanted it back. I had many struggles as I did this. But in the end, even though I lost everything I owned except what I could fit in my car and a few boxes I mailed to a relative, I got my life back. I want to encourage you to believe that it is possible for you to get your life back, even while trying to influence your addict spouse. You will benefit from chapter 9 which addresses loving without enabling, and divorce, especially from a Christian perspective. Whether or not the addict is willing to change, you can gain hope for yourself to get your life back and pursue the dreams within your heart.

I have provided three specialty chapters: Chapter 10 provides hope for parents of addicted teens; Chapter 11 discusses how to obtain freedom for families of Veterans; and Chapter 12 deals with organizing the Roadmap for your circumstances.

To download the additional free bonuses and other materials mentioned herein, go to [www.MyFriendIsAnAddict.com/bonuses](http://www.MyFriendIsAnAddict.com/bonuses). I suggest you read through this book entirely before beginning to apply the process first to your life and then using it to influence your addict friend. The layout of the Roadmap Out of Addiction™ follows this introduction. The chapters are not in sequential order to the map. Many things overlap and the skills and habits apply to numerous aspects of the map. Therefore, I teach the core principles first, followed by the skills and habits, and then the three specialty chapters. I pull it all together in chapter 12.

Once you have the complete overview of the intricacies of this process, then you can confidently begin to influence the addict as well as apply the material to your own life if necessary. If you get stuck, refer to chapter 12 for your Roadmap.

At the end of this book I ask you to join me and others like you to be part of *Renegade Influencers – Creating An Addiction-Free World!* This community of influencers believes:

- we have the power to influence addicts;
- no addict is beyond reach;
- we are not moved by what the professionals say about addictions;
- we cannot be defeated. (See Appendix C for more information).

Are you ready to get started? Let's first learn the truth that addictions can be beaten! An addict does not have to spend the rest of his or her life in recovery support groups. Nor do you need to continue living in avoidance of the addict.

# The Roadmap Out of Addiction™

Before an addict can work on identifying and resolving the underlying issues (Marker #4), certain skills need to be in place. The first two markers should be worked on simultaneously. Being able to switch one's focus to their passion in life and also being able to handle day-to-day negative emotions allows an addict to then go deeper into the process to overcome the addiction.

Below is the order of the Roadmap. Beneath each marker are the knowledge, skills and habits needed to implement that portion of the Roadmap. You will notice that many of these the skills and habits overlap the six markers.

<b>Marker #1</b> <b>Shift Focus To</b> <b>Passionate Living</b>	<b>Marker #2</b> <b>Learn To Handle</b> <b>Your Emotions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discover your passion in life</li><li>• Bring it into your life on a weekly basis</li><li>• Shift to 80/20 focus</li><li>• Serve others</li><li>• Bring love into every situation</li><li>• Control your thoughts and words</li><li>• The 5 Second Rule</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify your stinking thinking</li><li>• Use Tapping to control emotions</li><li>• Establish boundaries</li><li>• Build confidence</li><li>• Be around the right people</li><li>• Bring love into every situation</li><li>• Control your thoughts and words</li><li>• The 5 Second Rule</li></ul>

<p><b>Marker #3</b></p> <p><b>Shift Your Beliefs To Change Your Future</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify your beliefs and replace with truths</li><li>• Choose the right attitude</li><li>• Bring love into every situation</li><li>• Control your thoughts and words</li><li>• The 5 Second Rule</li></ul>	<p><b>Marker #4</b></p> <p><b>Resolve Underlying Issue(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the issue(s)</li><li>• Apply forgiveness</li><li>• Use Tapping to eliminate negative emotions</li><li>• Build confidence</li><li>• Bring love into every situation</li><li>• Control your thoughts and words</li><li>• The 5 Second Rule</li></ul>
<p><b>Marker #5</b></p> <p><b>Plan Ahead To Avoid Relapse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build confidence</li><li>• Serve others</li><li>• Keep focus at 80/20</li><li>• Establish boundaries</li><li>• Be around the right people</li><li>• Bring love into every situation</li><li>• Control your thoughts and words</li><li>• The 5 Second Rule</li></ul>	<p><b>Marker #6</b></p> <p><b>Repeat This Process On Any New Problems</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apply this process to all new problems until you reach your destiny</li><li>• Then take your life to the next level</li></ul>

# 1

## **Yes! Addictions Can Be Beaten!**

*Hope rises when new knowledge is gained  
leading to inspired actions.* Kathy Williamson

Walking the path to fulfill your exciting destiny wipes away the focus on the lesser things in life. You can help your addict friend get out of the hell hole he or she is in and also take your life to a higher purpose while doing so. It's a matter of having the right knowledge, skills and habits. All of which you will learn in this book.

Yes, addictions can be beaten! The path is simpler than expected, but it requires a major shift in beliefs and understanding on how uncovering a strong motivation, not *willpower*, is the key to change.

I won't kid you. This road takes some intense focus on your part to change your beliefs, a willingness to confront the addict, and yourself. I will give you the skills necessary to bring about this radical transformation.

This book goes much deeper and wider than only helping your addict friend. While you can influence your friend once you are aware of this new process, you might ask what do you do if

the addict doesn't want to change? How will you know when you should give up on trying? What does that mean for you if you're the spouse? Are you staying with the addict in an effort to keep the family together for the children?

More importantly, must you sacrifice your life to satisfy the addict? How do you go about getting your life back? How do you maintain your sanity while dealing with the lies and the controlling behavior of the addict? If you've already lost control of your life, this book will show you how to get it back.

If you've never dealt with an addiction yourself, I share with you what goes on inside the addict's stinking thinking. I was addicted to pain pills for ten years. I know the internal struggles to try to break free, to deal with the guilt and shame of continuous relapse, and the hopelessness of ever getting clean. What finally got me out of my addiction is taught in this book. I've been teaching addicts these principles on how to get out of their addiction forever by identifying their passion in life and focusing on building an awesome future. Of course, other issues are addressed in this book as well.

About twelve years after being clean I married an ex-addict who still had the behaviors of an addict, although I didn't recognize it at the time. Three years into the marriage I woke up one morning and realized my life had been sucked out of me and I wanted it back. It was a difficult road, but I did it and so can you. I'll share with you how to deal with some of the issues that arise when you decide to start living a normal life.

### **The Roadmap Out of Addiction™ Process**

This new process is not based upon the typical 12 Steps or on a religious model. Here is a summary of the core basics of this process:

1. **Shift Your Beliefs To Change Your Future.** Evaluate your beliefs, thoughts and self-talk. Henry Ford said “If you believe you can or you can’t, you’re right.” You must believe in yourself, despite your past. Your beliefs create the picture in your mind, and your mind makes that picture come true—no matter how much willpower you have. See Chapter 3.

2. **Engage in Passionate Living For Fast Results.** Identify your passion in life and have it active in your life on a weekly basis. Write a new vision for your life based upon using your passion in life to reach out to love and serve others. Shift your focus to 80/20. Spend 80% of your free time focused on developing your awesome future. Spend 20% of your time on identifying and resolving your underlying issue(s). See Chapter 4.

3. **Resolve Underlying Issues For Breakthrough.** Now that you have something to motivate you in a forward direction, identify your underlying problem(s). Review the charts provided in Chapter 5 and determine what skills and habits you need to learn to assist you in resolving your issues. See Chapter 5.

4. **Plan Ahead To Avoid Relapse.** Once you are aware of these 12 triggers for relapse, you can plan ahead how you will respond differently should they show up in your life. While these triggers relate to the addict’s life, you may find you have the same triggers in your life that keep you stuck in hopelessness, anger and frustration. The combination of the six major markers on the Roadmap provides plenty of fuel to keep you headed in the right direction. But the built-in knee-jerk reactions to these triggers must be dealt with prior to them showing up in your life.

5. **Practice Powerful Skills For Personal Growth.** Change cannot come by remaining the same person you are today. But where do you start? These five skills allow you to handle your emotions, bring freedom through forgiveness, build confidence to do anything you want, establish boundaries, and

bring love into every situation.

**6. Implement Five Habits To Turn Your Dreams Into Reality.** Success requires new habits, especially for addicts and their friends and family members. These habits include:

- Choosing the right attitude,
- Controlling your thoughts and words,
- Serving others,
- Using the 5 Second Rule,
- Being around the right people.

The above roadmap shows the major markers. A lot of lesser details go into being able to successfully navigate this map.

Some of the elements in this approach are not taught in most recovery programs. They include:

- Addiction is a symptom of one or more underlying issues. Identify those issues and resolve them. If they are not resolved, after a person is clean and those triggers come up, relapse is waiting.
- When the addict plans an awesome future focused around his or her passion in life, the addict has a reason not to abuse. It's a switch from willpower to having a strong motivation supported by the proper pictures and emotions in one's thoughts
- Relapse doesn't have to happen. Once new beliefs are instilled, underlying issues are resolved, and a person is taught how to handle unwanted emotions, these skills allow the addict to lead a productive life once again
- A simple five-minute technique for removing the cravings

and dealing with anxieties is explained. Tapping has helped many people who have been stuck for years in painful memories, fears, anxieties, insecurities, and even physical pain. Sample phrasing for issues the addict may face, as well as the spouse, are provided.

- Dealing with the addict's false beliefs and the negative self-talk which lead to self-sabotaging behavior.

When the addict has forgiven those who have hurt him/her, identified what emotional pain he/she is escaping from, even if it's being bored in life, identifies what he/she is passionate about in life and brings that activity into his/her life on a weekly basis, he/she is on the way to the permanent path out of the addiction.

When a person is operating within one's passion in life, it provides a tremendous amount of emotional fuel to keep the person going in the right direction. When a person can discover how to use his or her passion in a life-long vision to reach out to love and serve others, that inward-focus that developed in the recent years is easily overcome.

By using Tapping whenever cravings or anxieties pop up, the addict avoids relapse and stays focused on looking forward to a great future, instead of thinking he or she is stuck because of past behaviors.

### **It's Your Turn**

What is your role in all of this? Your first step is to change your own beliefs about whether an addict can get clean, stay clean, not have to attend a support group the rest of his or her life, and that the addict can in fact live an awesome life. Also believe in yourself that you can *influence* the addict.

As a friend or a spouse you can usually identify what the addict is escaping from. In Appendix A I provide conversation starters to help you share this new process with the addict.

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

Together you can apply this material to your own lives and encourage each other in the process.

But, what about your personal life? First, I'm proud of you for picking up this book. It tells me that you are compassionate and want to help someone else improve their life. You may have also chosen this book because your life is out of control due to the behavior of your addict friend or spouse. If so, you've come to the right place.

I can't guarantee that your addict friend or spouse will be willing to follow this new Roadmap. I can only share my knowledge with you and encourage you to help the addict the best you can. I will also help you learn how to get some sanity back into your life and start living again.

### **Is A Bright Future Possible?**

Many addicts, and their friends and families who are trying to help them, don't have hope for a bright future. Why? Society is telling them that their addiction is a disease that cannot be conquered, only tolerated. In order to remain clean they must attend a support group the rest of their lives. I believe this is nonsense.

Thousands of addicts have quit, stayed clean without attending a support group, and gone on to live happy, fulfilled lives. What's the difference? Their beliefs are different, their underlying issues have been resolved, they now have the skills to handle ugly emotions when they arise, and they have an understanding of what their real goals should be.

My goal for addicts is to get to a point where they don't have to daily think about their struggle *not* to abuse that day. Instead, they have a plan laid out with steps to reach their destiny for their lives.

**There must be a change in focus to keep the right motivation in front of you at all times.**

If the addict attends a support group and perhaps even has a mentor, here is what his focus looks like. The addict's goal is to "stop his addiction" by focusing on *not* doing it. That's like me telling you "don't think about a green frog." What are you thinking about right now? ..... A green frog—right?

Continuing with the analogy of the green frog, the addict attends a weekly support group where he or she focuses on the struggles in the previous week to not think about a green frog. During the week the addict talks to his or her mentor several times about his or her efforts not to think about a green frog. Then, if the addict was successful in not thinking about a green frog, he or she goes out to help others not to think about a green frog.

Where's the motivation or the ability to not think about a green frog? You get the idea.

As long as the addiction is *in your face*, the addict never gets away from it. The focus in this book is to get the addict to totally forget that he or she ever had an addiction problem and move on with life!

Let me show you what happens when you focus on not doing something and how that fear controls what happens in your life.

Karl Wallenda was a famous tightrope walker who performed his acts without a safety net. This was his passion in life. He continued doing this until his death at the age of 73 (obviously this was his passion in life to still be doing this while many his age retired years earlier).

Wallenda fell to his death while walking a tightrope between two ten-story towers in Puerto Rico. His wife

had some interesting observations concerning what happened before that fateful fall. She said, “All Karl thought about for three straight months prior to walking across the tightrope was falling. It was the first time he’d ever thought about that. And it seemed to me that he put all of his energies into not falling, rather than walking the tightrope.” Mrs. Wallenda added that her husband went so far as to personally supervise the installation of the tightrope, making absolutely certain that the guy wires were secure. He had always trusted his crew to do this in the past.

He walked the tightrope with the fear of falling in his mind, and his thinking created his feeling of insecurity. We know what happened: he poured all his energy into not falling, and that’s exactly what happened to him.

This is exactly what is happening to the majority of addicts in recovery. They are instructed to focus on not returning to their addiction. Because that is what they are focused on, that is what ends up happening to them.

However, when the addict changes his or her focus from “not” doing the addiction, to focusing on discovering his or her passion in life and how to use it to reach out to love and serve others, then the addiction (and many other problems) are permanently resolved *as a by-product*. No more relapsing!

Therefore, instead of having the addict attend a support group every day, the addict needs a plan for his or her future, which includes daily goals to focus on. Again, this vision for the addict’s future must be one that totally excites the individual so that they can’t wait to work toward achieving it.

What about you and your future? You can apply these same principles to your life. Do you have an awesome vision for your

future? Do you know what your passion is in life? If so, is it operating within your life at least on a weekly basis?

If you are the spouse of an addict, your life may revolve around trying to fix your spouse. Or you may be trying to maintain some semblance of normalcy in your family if you have children. Can you imagine what your future could be like if your addicted spouse stopped their addictive behavior and had an awesome future to pursue? What about if you discovered your passion in life and developed a big vision for your life? Would that change your daily struggles from barely surviving to thriving?

As you can see, there always is a possibility for a bright future. Yes, it will take work, but anything worth accomplishing in life takes dedication and hard work. It's not any more difficult than what you are doing right now to maintain some type of control over the out-of-control situation of your spouse being an addict.

### **Tough Love Is Tough To Do**

Many people teach that you must show tough love to the addict, but they don't tell you how to handle your own emotions while doing it. How do you handle it when you provide tough love, and the addict comes back and verbally attacks you? Or blames you as the reason he or she is doing the addiction. How do you deal with your internal self-talk of *he's right, I'll never amount to anything*, or *I feel so guilty for not doing what he wants me to do and if he ends up injuring himself or others because of his addiction, I'll be the cause of it*. So you begin to do anything to keep the addict calm. This can suck the life right out of you!

As you try to make the changes described in this book, you need someone who can give you emotional support. However, you must be particular about who you choose to help you. The typical people in Al-Anon or similar groups are coming from the

viewpoint that addictions cannot be beaten and you cannot change the addict. However, you will learn that you can *influence* the addict once you identify some of the underlying issues the addict is escaping from.

In chapter 9 I show you where to find the type of people who will be great encouragers and friends as you go through this process.

### **Divorce—The New Beginning?**

Some spouses who pick up this book may already be standing on the threshold of a divorce. While this is not my first recommendation for you, I am aware of the desperation some may feel after trying to follow the processes taught by others on living with addicts.

As stated earlier, we can only influence the addict, we cannot change him. Only you can determine when you have had enough and want to separate or even file for divorce. A lot of emotional struggle goes into that decision. For some spouses it is even harder given the history of verbal or physical. Later in this book I will share with you how you can plan ahead to make the right decision for you.

In that same chapter I discuss how Christians have been taught only a few biblical grounds exist for a divorce approved by God. I am a Christian and when I was doing my own soul-searching to be sure I wasn't going against God's commands if I divorced, I came across some enlightening viewpoints about how some of the English translations did not adequately translate certain words from the Hebrew language in the Bible. This totally freed me to carry through with my divorce. I will share some of those insights later.

Is there life after divorce and after living with an addict? Yes! Does divorcing the addict spouse mean you don't love your

spouse? No! You can always remarry if the addict finally overcomes their addiction. God didn't create us to be doormats, to be abused either verbally or physically, or to ignore God's vision for our lives while we babysit someone who doesn't want to get better.

## **The Power of Hope**

Can all of this be true? Can an addict be radically changed in as little as three to four months? Can a friend influence the addict to change? Can a spouse help his or her partner and regain their own life at the same time? Yes! What's the underlying fuel to keep a person going through this transformation? It's hope.

Hope is powerful. It is created and maintained by having an accurate vision of what you are trying to achieve, fueled by allowing yourself to experience the emotions of already achieving it.

It's time to stir up some hope in you. You must be specific in describing your dream goals. Here are some things to dream about. What will your life look like when:

- Your friend or spouse is no longer abusing, and is back to the way he or she was before addiction took over their life? Or even better!
- How will you and your friend be interacting on a new level—either through effective communication or enjoying activities together?
- What will you be doing? With whom? Where will you be going? What will you do for fun?
- How will you feel when your friendship or marriage is renewed and perhaps revived at a higher level?
- If you are a spouse of an addict, what will it look like to

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

have your spouse back to being the happy, loving person he or she used to be?

- What activities will you now be doing—either together or separately?
- What things were put on hold in your life while you dealt with your friend's addiction that you can now bring back into your life? These could be things you did by yourself, things you and your spouse did together, or things you did as a family
- Without all your thoughts that were at one time tied up on figuring out how to manage, control or change the situation—what will you be thinking about now?
- What are your dreams for your future? Imagine scenes of you carrying out your vision. The people involved. The conversations. The good feelings you will have as a result of loving and serving others
- How will the lives of your children be different? What are your hopes and dreams for them? By the way, you can use Tapping to help your children overcome their emotional pain and hurts from the effects of the addict. They don't have to live the rest of their life scarred by this season of their lives.

I suggest you revisit these questions as you go through this book. You need to keep fresh in your mind the hope of fulfilling the dreams for your own life—whether or not your addict friend accepts your influence.

### **Where's God In All This?**

The traditional 12-Step program and even Christian support groups emphasize that you need a higher power in order to give you the strength to stop the addiction. My view is that it's not a

matter of willpower, but one of motivation and having the proper pictures in your thoughts. I will get into this later in the book. But for right now let me say that everyone already has enough willpower to change, whether or not they have God in their life. With the skills and habits presented in this book, learning to control one's emotions, uncovering the proper motivation, along with repeated visioning of your dream, are the keys to a full recovery without relapsing. That motivation is fueled by walking toward the passionate dream you have for your life.

However, I believe that having a relationship with God provides advantages, no matter where you are in life or what you're going through. But that is not what this book is based upon. These principles will work whether or not you or your addict friend is a Christian.

I am a Christian myself. I found the following benefits of being a Christian quite advantageous in my life. I became a Christian six months into my ten-year addiction. I knew the Bible well, yet I still struggled for years. When I became a Christian I clung to the verse that says God will never leave me. After feeling rejected by my parents while growing up, this was extremely important to me.

Some Christians focus only on the fact that being addicted is a sin, and if you confess this sin, God will forgive you and things will all be okay. While I agree that being addicted is a sin, unless the underlying reasons for doing the addiction are identified and resolved, the desire to escape through an addiction remains. Some addicts have had their desire for their addiction miraculously taken away by God instantly. I don't discount that God can and does do that. However, once again, if the underlying issues are not dealt with, the desire for the addiction can return quite quickly.

Other Christians proclaim that an addiction is an idol and that it should be replaced with loving and obeying God only, rather

than focusing on the addiction. These well-meaning Christians probably have never had an addiction to alcohol or drugs. Those of us who are/were Christian addicts have a desire to love and obey God. However, we don't understand why we can't control our addiction despite our love of God. Our desire to escape is so strong and habitual, yet we don't know how else to handle our negative emotions resulting from unidentified problems and we continue to use the only method we know to deal with them—escape through our addiction. However, once you go through this book you will be able to identify those issues and how to resolve them.

Another advantage of my being a Christian is I receive God's unconditional love, which only He can give. Man's love isn't as pure as God's love, nor is it totally unconditional. It's also reassuring to know that God is with me all the time and therefore I can focus on His love at any moment.

As a Christian I know that God created each of us for a specific purpose. The Bible outlines general purposes for all Christians. Yet God created each of us to fulfill a unique calling. Having a personal relationship with God, through His one and only Son Jesus Christ, allows me to hear God guiding me to what my destiny is and how to accomplish it. This is exciting to know that I can partner with God to accomplish His will here on earth. He opens doors of opportunity that only He can open!

### **Are You Ready?**

It could be easy to get overwhelmed thinking about how to apply the material in this book. That's why I want to be available to help you. We have a private Facebook Group where you can be supported by others applying this same material. I am also in the group to answer questions and encourage you. Check it out at [www.MyFriendIsAnAddict.com](http://www.MyFriendIsAnAddict.com).

I suggest you read through this book before implementing most of it. In chapter 12 I show how these elements are organized into a roadmap for your situation. Also download from the bonuses page the Journal of Insights pages and print numerous copies.

I encourage you to keep your Journal of Insights near you as you go through this book. Getting things down on paper and out of the confusion of your mind helps to bring clarity.

Throughout this book I will direct you to bonuses on my website where you can download additional materials to help you. Go to [www.MyFriendIsAnAddict.com/bonuses](http://www.MyFriendIsAnAddict.com/bonuses). I suggest you immediately download my ebook *Tapping Away Your Addiction*. Although this ebook is written to help addicts, it explains Tapping and has chapters dealing with various emotional issues. As you go through this book and begin to apply the material, it would be a good idea for you to learn Tapping and apply it to your own emotions or anxieties as they may arise.

Ready for transformation? Let's get going! Let's start out by getting some fresh hope in your life so you can take inspired action.

### **Application Questions**

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These application questions are also in the "Discussion Guide" which you can download from our website, print and use for individual or group purposes. The Discussion Guide provides more space to write your answers and is great for use in group discussions. I suggest you get a 3-ring binder to hold the Discussion Guide and your Journal of Insights pages.

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

The content of these questions will be covered in deeper details throughout this book. For right now, let's get an idea of where you, and the addict, are starting on this Roadmap Out of Addiction process.

1) What made you pick up this book?

2) What is your desired outcome from reading this book and taking action? Both for your life and the addict's life.

3) Do you currently believe it is possible for an addict to get clean and stay clean? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_ No. If not, are you willing to listen to this different approach from someone who has been clean since 1990?

4) Do you currently have a big vision for your life? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No If so, describe it.

5) Does your addict friend currently have a big vision for his or her life? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No If so, describe it.

6) Do you have friends (outside of Al-Anon) you can talk to as you go through this book? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No Our private Facebook Group can provide encouragement by others going through this book, as well as the author answers your questions. Check out our website for details. Describe the friend whom you can confide in. Is he or she supporting, encouraging, or instead agrees with your viewpoint of hopelessness in helping the addict?

7) To stir up some hope in you, look at the list of questions earlier. What are the top 2 that give you the most hope? List them here. Briefly describe the anticipated outcome.

8) Are you a Christian? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No Although this book is not written specifically for Christians, I know faith and trust in God improves our lives. How do you bring God into your dealings with your addict friend? Explain.



## 2

# **Explore The Roadmap Out of Addiction™**

*I believe we are at the dawn of a new era in addiction recovery and restoring relationships.* Kathy Williamson

Contrary to what addicts are being taught today, an addict can recover from addiction and start living an awesome life, in a relatively short period of time. You are about to learn this proven Roadmap Out of Addiction™. This chapter describes that process. The concepts and beliefs that need to be changed in order to apply this new process are discussed in the chapters that follow.

While addicts get into abusing drugs or alcohol based upon one or two underlying issues, once they are an addict, their problems multiply and become out of control.

### **Some Missing Elements**

I am not here to put down AA, the 12-Step support groups, or Al-Anon. I know lots of people are helped by them every day. However, I do not believe they address the underlying issues, nor do they show the addict the way out.

With thousands of addicts getting clean, staying clean, not attending support groups in order to stay clean, and they are

living awesome lives—then it is possible for *any* addict to do the same. However, most addicts have not been taught the process to overcome their addiction.

The concepts taught in this book must be fully believed in order to make the transition. If you as the addict's friend or spouse do not believe the new concepts in this book, you will not be able to influence your addict friend.

You might be frustrated because you can see the underlying issues that caused the addict to begin to abuse drugs or alcohol. Yet, how can you approach the addict with this information since they may believe that it is a disease and that they had nothing to do with how they became addicted?

I suggest you read this entire book before beginning to influence your addict friend with this new road out of recovery and into living his or her dreams. In fact, you may want to apply the same concepts to your life first. This will be explained in further detail as we go through the book.

Before I set forth the overview of this process, I want to tell you I am proud of you for picking up this book—looking for *the* solution to not only the addict's addiction, but your struggles and frustrations in trying to help your addict friend. This book is not only about the addict. It is written to help you deal with your response to the addict's behaviors of lying, stealing, blaming you, trying to stay clean, making many promises, and then relapsing again.

I see the frustrations every day on various Facebook groups where addicts and their friends and family members voice their problems, struggles, and also their heart-felt desires to get clean, stay clean, and find some semblance of order in their lives.

I understand the hurt from the spouses who gave the addict another chance, only to be betrayed once again. I understand the controlling behavior of an addict and how it can suck the life out of you. When do you make the decision to change your life? Is it possible to do so? How can you get out of the situation if you've got children? Who can guide you on how to plan for a major change in your life if you decide to go that route? When will you get your life back in order? Is that even possible?

Yes, it is all possible. If you are a spouse, you can get your life back in order and under your control. Will it be easy? No. But it is possible and I want you to remember that as you go through this book.

### **A Different Look at The Roadmap**

To understand the road out of addiction, we must look at the road that leads a person into an addiction. An underlying reason why the person started abusing alcohol or drugs always exists. Even if it is as simple as boredom in life. I've heard many addicts say they don't have any underlying issues, they just enjoy their alcohol or drugs. Yet, if they had an awesome life filled with happy, loving relationships, a career that they were passionate about, more than enough income to provide them with all the things they want in life, perhaps they have a spiritual connection they are pursuing—then they would not want to mess up their life. Why? Because they are already riding a high from the lifestyle they live!

### **No high from alcohol or drugs can beat the high of living a life of Destiny!**

So how did they get into their mess? Life is meant to be lived with love, purpose and passion. Many people try to fill that void with:

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

- Getting Stuff
- Hobbies
- Friends
- Health
- Finances
- Parents/Siblings
- Marriage/Children
- Job/Career
- Having fun!
- Spiritual

Some people get stuck at certain points in their lives:

- Survival mentality
- Victim mentality
- No Goals
- Focused on one's past
- Bored in life

Then problems arise which cause physical and emotional turmoil and they don't have the skills to handle them. So they escape. Here are some of the things addicts escape from:

- Hurt (emotional)
- Low Self-Esteem
- Peer Pressure
- Perfectionism
- Rejection
- Boredom in Life
- Insecurities
- Relationship Problems
- Mental Illness
- Health Problems (Detected/ Undetected)
- Physically or Sexually Abused
- Stress
- PTSD/Flashbacks
- Loneliness/Depression
- Self-pity
- Guilt/Shame
- Codependency
- Self-hatred

This is not a complete list, only some of the major issues. Unless the underlying issue(s) are identified and resolved, relapse awaits the addict and he or she remains blinded as to why he or she can't quit relapsing.

An additional problem develops once the addict is in the maze of recovery for a long time. This is a problem of being totally

inwardly-focused. The addict spends so much time trying to figure out how he or she got into the addiction or how he or she can stop the addiction. The addict has no relief from the daily monster staring them in the face and planting negative thoughts in his or her mind. The addict keeps that monster active by attending meetings, talking to a sponsor, or reading the Big Book on a daily basis.

### **The Beliefs of Addicts vs. Friends/Spouses of Addicts**

Many (approximately 98%) of the friends and spouses of addicts whom I talk to do not believe that addictions are a disease. Yet, that is the only viewpoint most addicts are being taught. Every place the addict goes for help re-enforces the belief that the addiction is a disease, therefore it is further engrained in the mind and heart of the addict. Most addicts will aggressively fight to maintain their belief that it is a disease and they cannot be set free. I share this so that you as the friend or spouse of the addict know what you are up against when you try to influence the addict to change. By the way, I suggest you do not bring up this difference in viewpoint on addictions as it will immediately put up a wall within the addict.

I saw this shift in how society treats addictions begin to take place in the mid-1980s. I saw the changes begin in the mental and medical fields where they started calling alcoholism a disease so that insurance companies would pick up the costs and people could get the help they needed.

However, the professionals noticed that people still weren't coming in for help, so they decided to tell people, "it's not your fault that you're addicted (or whatever your problem is); it's a disease that you have no control over." People began to believe this. Why not? It's easier to believe that it's not our fault than to take personal responsibility for our actions. I know that statement might have hurt you. But if you want to change your life, you have to be willing to learn the truths in this book and

transform your life from the inside out. Hang in there.

The good news is that when we take responsibility for our thoughts and actions, we can then take back control of our life. Instead of allowing the opinions of others (even doctors and professional counselors) to dictate whether we can or cannot overcome a particular problem, we can discover the truth of what causes our problems, and learn the way out so we never have to return to them again. Yes, you and the addict can completely recover and live awesome lives!

Have you ever wondered why some addicts get clean and some stay in the maze of recovery? It boils down to whether their beliefs are helping or hindering them. Like Henry Ford said, “Whether you think you can, or you think you can’t—you’re right.” Scientific evidence exists that thoughts create our reality. With the addict being bombarded every day that his or her addiction is a disease, or the addiction was inherited through his or her genes, the belief that an addict cannot escape this condition is strongly embedded. If the addict was raised in an environment where his or her parents or family members were addicts, then it became a forgone conclusion that he or she was destined to be an addict too.

### **The Overview**

In the last chapter I outlined the “Roadmap Out of Addiction.” Here I would like to pull out of this process some of the elements as they apply to both the addict and you as the friend. Each element has more underlying components than what is listed in this chapter. The first two elements are critical to be in place, and worked on daily, as the addict works on the other elements. As you go through these items, look at how you can apply them to your life also.

### Change Your Beliefs and Stinking Thinking

Before any beliefs can be changed, they have to be identified. You can listen and watch the addict to determine what he or she believes. Besides the addict's belief about his or her ability to overcome the addiction, any stinking thinking also needs to be identified. These are negative thoughts, sabotaging attitudes and behavior that flow from the addict. The addict's beliefs and thoughts need to be identified and dealt with to make a total transformation.

In fact, before you picked up this book you may have believed that addictions could never be completely overcome. If that is true, before you can influence the addict in this area, your beliefs must be changed. Chapter 3 discusses how to identify and change these beliefs, and also how to identify and change the addict's and your stinking thinking.

### Discover Your Destiny In life

To transform from an addict into a productive, thriving person who impacts his or her world, the addict must discover his or her destiny in life. What is your addict friend passionate about? What is it that gets your friend totally motivated? Did he or she give up on a big dream?

What about you? What is your passion? Did you have to lay aside your dream to deal with your friend's addiction? Perhaps life got so busy that your dream got pushed to the back burner. It's time to bring it to the forefront of your life and start working on it. Chapter 4 goes into further depth on how to discover these passions. You will learn how to build an awesome future where you use your passion as an avenue to reach out to love and serve others.

### Stop The Cravings and Anxieties

A simple five minute technique called Tapping sets the addict

free from the cravings (physical or emotional) for drugs or alcohol. It also stops anxieties, anger, self-doubt, self-hatred, feelings of failure, self-sabotage, panic attacks, low self-esteem, etc. It is explained in Chapter 7 as one of the powerful skills needed for personal growth. Hopefully you have already downloaded the ebook and started to learn how to do Tapping.

What emotions do you need help with? Emotional upsets such as anger, anxieties, fears, stress, guilt, bitterness, etc. Living with an addict sometimes produces more emotional turmoil in you than what the addict deals with. Tapping can help you deal with your emotions and bring calm and peace into your life. It is so simple to use that even children can use it. This technique will help your children to release their emotions so they don't have to carry this burden the rest of their lives. By the way, Tapping also works great on physical pain and ailments.

### Identify The Issues

Deep down, most addicts know that they are escaping from dealing with emotions they don't know how to handle. They can look at the list of the 18 major issues that addicts escape from listed earlier in this chapter. Which issue(s) do you see the addict escaping from? Once they are identified, then you can find the steps needed to resolve them.

While you are not escaping from the same issues the addict might have, certain issues have developed over time in your dealing with the addict's behaviors. Take a look at your words, actions and thoughts. Are you enabling? Making excuses for him? Have you become hopeless of the situation ever changing? Have you lost your trust in your addict friend, or even in society as a whole? Are you full of anger and resentment? Depressed? Chapters 7 and 8 explain the skills and habits needed to resolve these issues.

### Forgive Others And Yourself

Freedom comes when the addict forgives those who hurt him or her, as well as forgives himself or herself. The process is explained in Chapter 7. However, forgiveness is such a major element of change that I would like to say a few words about it here.

Forgiveness sometimes can be an hourly or a daily process. Most people are not taught that once you forgive, you need to commit to never bring up that episode again—either verbally or in your thoughts. Without this step, addicts end up rehashing how they were hurt in their past (even if it was this morning) and how they were done wrong (the victim mentality).

When a person decides to stop this stinking thinking, he or she must have something to replace those thoughts. That is where working daily on building one's vision for an awesome future plays a major role. Not only does it provide something positive to think about, but when a person is operating in their passion, it gives so much emotional fuel to keep them headed in the right direction. Pretty soon, he has a reason "not" to mess up his life. The addict's life is changed as a by-product of working on his or her dream.

Are you holding on to anger and hurt from how the addict has impacted your life? You may *feel* that you're not ready to forgive your addict friend. However, you can't let your feelings make decisions for you. This act of forgiveness isn't for the addict, it's for you. If you wait until your feelings tell you it's time to forgive him or her, you will be waiting a long time, as well as wasting a lot of your life that could be lived from a better place of peace and purpose. Chapter 7 explains the forgiveness process in detail.

### Learn To Give/Receive Love

A lot of addicts have a background filled with rejection, disappointment, and a lack of healthy role models. Many never received love, nor do they know how to give love. An interesting dilemma appears when you ask people what love looks like. Did you know five different love languages exist to give/receive love? Author Gary D. Chapman wrote several books on *The 5 Love Languages*. Knowing your love language and being able to identify the love language of those around you dramatically improves relationships. Once you understand these differences, instead of feeling rejected, you can now see that the other person's love language is different from your language. This brings acceptance and a better expression of love to others. Chapter 7 discusses these five love languages.

Life is all about living it from the perspective of love. However, as a friend or spouse of the addict, sometimes you have to learn boundaries to stop enabling and to show tough love. Chapter 9 helps you identify any enabling behaviors and how to replace them with tough love.

### Remove Labels And Excuses

Remember how our thoughts and words create our reality? When an addict continues to say "I'm an alcoholic," or "I'm an addict," this keeps him or her from moving forward. The same is true when the addict thinks and verbalizes excuses.

The words you think and verbalize about the addict affect your ability to influence your friend. The excuses you use for your life also affect your ability to gain back full control of your life. These issues are discussed in Chapter 8.

### Change Friends

In order for the addict to break out of his maze of recovery, it's necessary for him or her to change friends. When the addict

first realized groups of other addicts existed with whom he or she could relate to, the addict was ecstatic. However, by time the excitement wore off, the addict was trapped in the belief system that addictions are a disease, or inherited through your genes, and that he or she will never escape it for the rest of his or her life. Also, how many addicts or group leaders attend the meetings while they're under the influence? Where are the good role models in these meetings? Chapter 8 gives you some ideas on where the addict can find healthy, loving people to become new friends.

What about you? Do you need to change friends too? That depends upon what your friends are telling you about addictions or about how you can't help him. Chapter 9 provides ideas on where to find proper emotional support.

### **Door of Hope Opened**

As you read the above process, I trust you received some hope. Even if the door to hope opened only slightly, it's enough to keep you headed in the right direction.

Pull out your Journal of Insights and take a few minutes to go back and review this chapter. Write down any insights, comments, or words of encouragement for you to reflect upon. Start dreaming right now. What is your hope for your life, your future, and your destiny? Allow yourself to begin to dream again.

I believe this Roadmap Out of Addiction™ is the starting point of a new era in addiction recovery. After you have applied this Roadmap to your life and influenced your addict friend with it, I would love to hear from you. I also encourage you to become a Renegade Influencer, helping to spread this message of hope to the community of addicts and their friends and families. Check out Appendix C for further details.

Now let's get started with changing the foundation of the addict's and your belief systems and stinking thinking.

### **Application Questions**

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This chapter is also a preliminary overview of the Roadmap. Chapters 3-8 go in-depth into each element.

1) Can you identify the underlying issues the addict is escaping from? List them.

2) Is the addict also totally inward focused? Was this also going on before the problem with addiction arose? Explain.

3) Do you believe addictions are a disease? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No. Why or why not? Who influenced you in your decision?

4) Do you know if the addict believes addictions are a disease? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No. Why or why not? Who influenced your friend in this decision? Does your addict friend use it as an excuse?

5) What stinking thinking is going on in your head? Write out your negative thoughts and your beliefs behind them, if you know.

6) What do you think is some of the stinking thinking going on in the addict's head? Write out what you think are some of your friend's beliefs behind the words he or she speaks.

7) In reviewing your answer in chapter 1 to question 4 regarding your big vision, what can you do every day to keep that vision in front of you?

8) Have you downloaded the eBook on Tapping? What emotions can you use it on in your life? Explain.

9) What issues have developed in your life as a result of your interactions with the addict? (Examples: negative words, thoughts or actions. Making excuses for your friend. Become hopeless. Lost trust in him or her. Full of anger and resentment.) Explain.

10) Does forgiveness come easy for you or are you letting your feelings decide this? What have you not forgiven the addict for? When will you forgive your addict friend?

11) What excuses are you using for the way you feel or act? How you respond to a situation is totally in your control. No one can make you feel bad. List areas where you need to learn to respond better.

12) Do you have emotionally-healthy friends? \_\_\_\_Yes  
\_\_\_\_No. If not, brainstorm on where to find some. List below.  
When will you reach out to them?

# 3

## **Shift Your Beliefs To Change Your Future**

*Change can either challenge or threaten us. Your beliefs  
pave your way to success or block you. Marsha Sinetar*

What you think and speak about determines the outcomes in your life. If you want a different outcome, you've got to change your thinking and the words you speak. Once you change your beliefs, then the correct thoughts and words follow.

I'm not talking only about positive thinking. Our thinking stems from our beliefs. Many of our beliefs were learned from our parents, teachers, friends, coworkers, pastors, etc. As children, we believed everything that was told to us, whether good or bad. Now that we are adults we need to look at our self-talk, identify what the false beliefs are, be open to other views, and research what the truths are.

While reading this chapter, although I may talk about the thinking of the addict, I want you to see where in your life the same principles apply to your false beliefs and stinking thinking. I encourage you to write down in your Journal of Insights the *aha* moments as soon as they pop up.

## **New Beliefs**

In previous chapters I talked about the fact that many addicts do get clean and stay clean for the rest of their lives. The belief that this is possible can make it achievable.

The new beliefs and shift in perspective include:

- The cause of an addiction is an underlying issue (not a disease or inherited through our genes).
- Instead of the addict focusing on *not* doing the addiction, he or she needs to focus on building an awesome future and as a by-product, the desire for the addiction goes away.
- Learn skills on how to handle unwanted emotions.
- Replace attending support groups (unless mandated by court) with being around like-minded people who have the same passion as you.
- Most importantly—change your beliefs, thoughts and the words you speak, thereby changing the outward circumstances.

## **It All Starts In The Mind**

It all starts with our beliefs. Our conscious mind (thoughts) deals with our intellect, viewing things from our five senses, making judgments and decisions according to what we see (and not what we believe). Our subconscious mind (our beliefs) controls our behavior. To change our behavior, we need to go through a process that overrides the deeply engrained false beliefs within our subconscious.

This is where most recovery programs lack clarity. To change behavior does not come from willpower, nor intellectually forcing ourselves to stop certain behavior. It comes from working with

our conscious to change and modify what our subconscious does automatically.

How is this done? *Whatever picture is visualized, with the emotion of it already manifesting, is what the subconscious goes to work on to make it happen externally.* It used to bother me that people would say that your mind understands every word except the word 'no.' Then I learned that the picture in your mind always overrides your thoughts or words. That is why when a person says, "I don't want to do my addiction any more," the picture of the addiction is formed. Subsequently, that is what materializes in the outer world.

This is what happens when a person gets close to relapsing. An emotion arises that the addict doesn't know how to handle. The addict wants to feel good and knows he or she felt so good when using alcohol or drugs. So the addict starts to visualize how good it felt in the past, even though he or she has an internal struggle to not do it. The picture in the addict's mind overrides that emotional struggle, or willpower, and wins. Relapse occurs and the addict doesn't understand why he or she wasn't strong enough to turn away. It's the picture in the mind, not one's willpower that determines the result. This is why focusing on one's dream for his or her future is so powerful. The person builds a picture of what he or she wants life to look like, adds emotion to it, and through time and daily actions toward accomplishing that goal, a new belief is implanted over the old belief of being stuck and never amounting to anything.

Our beliefs in our subconscious mind are so intertwined with each other and so vast, where do we begin? The bigger the contrast between what we currently believe and the truth we discover, the longer it takes to process it in our mind and to make the choice to believe what is true. It helps to see how our beliefs and our thinking affect everything we do. The following sets forth the correct order of our thought process:

Beliefs . . . result in  
Thoughts . . . result in  
Emotions . . . result in  
Struggle To Make The Right Decision . . . result in  
Actions . . . result in  
Habits . . . result in  
Character . . . result in  
Destiny!

It is important to understand that some people put circumstances, experiences or emotions in front of our thinking. But our thoughts are based upon what we believe about those circumstances or experiences or our perception of them. Our emotions come as a result of what we think about—the picture we have in our mind. You will discover throughout this book that you can learn how to control all your emotions.

Sometimes we need to backtrack into this process to find out what is going on. If you do something and you're not sure why you're doing it, ask yourself the following questions:

What emotions triggered my actions?

What thoughts triggered my emotions?

What beliefs (or perceptions) triggered my thoughts?

Are those beliefs true or false?

Now you must take those beliefs and do research to see if they are in fact the truth. Are they accurate? If not, then you need to spend time meditating upon the new truth revealed to you. I will show you in a moment how to do that research.

Neither our circumstances nor our environment dictate how we act or react—our thoughts do. Therefore, we have the ability to change what we focus on and thus change our actions and the ultimate outcome in our lives. You may have a lot of false beliefs

that need to be identified.

Let's look at this process from a different view:

<u>Current Method</u>	<u>New Method</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thoughts enter our conscious mind through our five senses – what we see, hear, smell, taste, and touch. Also our perception of our outer circumstances, our fears, inhibitions, etc.</li><li>• Without questioning that input, we add emotions to those thoughts, which take those thoughts and put that picture into our subconscious.</li><li>• Our subconscious makes that picture come true.</li><li>• Our outer circumstances conform to that picture and become our reality.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thoughts enter our conscious mind through what we visualize we want to happen.</li><li>• We add emotion to that vision, feeling as if it has already manifested.</li><li>• The subconscious receives that new picture and over time this new picture/belief replaces the negative picture/belief about that situation.</li><li>• We refuse to think about what our five senses are telling us (and what our self-talk is telling us).</li><li>• Our outer circumstances conform to that new picture and become our reality.</li></ul>

We need to identify our negative self-talk. When we realize we are allowing our negative thoughts to run wild, we can immediately stop them and replace them with the truth spoken in positive statements. Remember, we have a choice upon what we think about. Today you have the opportunity to change your thinking, and change your destiny.

## **The Thought Life Of An Addict**

Addicts eventually become totally consumed with their addiction, their struggle to discover how to get set free, how they're treated wrongly by others, how their upbringing caused them to be the way they are, why others would never love them or help them, and they have way too many pity parties. They also get stuck thinking that only one way exists to deal with their addictions—through the typical 12-Step recovery program.

If the addict is not open to looking at a better way to handle his or her problems, then he or she will stay stuck in the problems. However, as a friend or relative of the addict you can learn how to influence the addict with the knowledge you are learning in this book.

This first step is to recognize the lies the addict believes (and you possibly believe too) and replace them with the truth. This is essential for permanent change to happen.

What are some of the big lies the addict needs to recognize?

- That some problems are a disease and the addict will never be set free; he or she can only learn how to manage them.
- The addict will keep relapsing, like he or she has so many times in the past.
- The addict is in such a deep pit that nobody can help him or her get his or her life straightened out.
- That it takes many years to overcome addiction problems.
- The addict will never be able to develop the loving relationships he or she desires.

- The addict will never find love, peace, joy and purpose in life.
- An addict will never amount to anything.
- The addict has done too many bad things; others will never forgive or help him or her.
- With the addict's past, no one will ever hire the addict or want to have a relationship with him or her.
- The addict doesn't have anything to offer another person in a relationship.
- The addict has to clean up his or her act first before he or she can reach out to love and serve others.
- He is who he is, he cannot change.

Once the addict discovers the truths to counter these lies, it is a daily decision to choose what to believe and to focus on the resulting new thoughts. In order for these new truths to take root in the addict's subconscious, the current lies must be identified and replaced.

The addict must have self-discipline to maintain this new priority of learning what the truths are for every aspect of his or her life. In the beginning, the addict tends to go through periods where he or she learns so much new truth that it's hard to discover these truths fast enough. But many times this period is followed by times of getting sidetracked or the addict thinks he or she knows enough to keep out of trouble that it is okay to slack off on staying focused on implementing these new truths in his or her life. Remember, if we're not moving forward, we're moving backward. We cannot allow ourselves time of slack because it gives our old thought patterns an opportunity to come right back into our lives and confuse our thinking again.

## Evaluate Your Beliefs/Thoughts

The first thing to do is to determine whether your thoughts are true. You must do research, both internally and externally, to analyze whether what you believe is the only belief available. Let's look at how beliefs are created. We will look at (1) the content of the belief, (2) the strength of the belief (proof, either by society or through one's experiences), and (3) the resulting thoughts/behaviors. I will initially use the belief that addictions are a disease, and then give a contrasting belief.

Content of the belief: Addiction is a disease that the addict will never overcome, the addict can only learn how to manage it.

Strength of the belief: Here are some of the thoughts that enhance the strength of the belief:

- *Psychologists, counselors, and medical doctors promote it is a disease.*
- *Everywhere I go this belief is reinforced.*
- *Support groups (even Christian ones) base their program on this philosophy, so it must be true.*
- *I cannot stop relapsing, so it must be true.*
- *I cannot stop thinking about my desire to do my addiction, so it must be true.*
- *I've watched my friend addicts struggle and they can't overcome their addiction either, so it must be true.*
- *Those who do overcome their addiction are in denial, because I certainly can't quit. Or maybe they weren't as addicted as I am/was.*
- *Because I've been in numerous rehab centers and various programs and nothing has worked, then it must*

*be true that it is a disease and I cannot get over it.*

- *Once an addict, always an addict.*
- *I hear leaders in support groups who have been clean for 20 years, yet they stand up and say "I am an alcoholic." So it must be something that you can never get away from.*
- *When I hear others tell me that there is a way out of an addiction and into living an awesome life, I get mad at them because they don't know how hard I've tried to quit and get on with my life, but I can't do it!*

The Resulting Thoughts/Behavior: Because of the strength of the above "proof," ...

- *I believe I am stuck in my addiction for the rest of my life. I will not believe others who say it is possible to get out of my addiction.*
- *I have to attend support groups for the rest of my life. The more I attend, the better it will help me.*
- *I can never escape the chains that this addiction has on my life. I keep verbalizing that I am an addict.*
- *I can only learn how to manage my disease. I seek out how to manage my disease.*
- *The only people who understand me are other addicts. So I will continue to hang out with them.*
- *I am hopeless of ever living a normal life, let alone going after my dreams for my life. I have put my dreams away, never to be looked at again because it is too frustrating to know that I can never obtain them.*
- *If this is the lifestyle I am now stuck in for the rest of my*

*life, this sucks! I felt better while I was using, than trying to live through this lifestyle of hopelessness. So I will go back to using.*

Let's now take a look at a contrasting belief.

Content of the belief: Addictions are a symptom of underlying issue(s), not the main issue. When those issues are identified and resolved, the desire for the addiction goes away. The person does not have his or her identity wrapped up as being an addict; therefore, they can live an awesome life like anyone else!

Strength of the belief: Here are some of the thoughts that enhance the strength of this belief in an addict's life:

- *Yes, I hear that addictions are a disease, but I choose not to believe it.*
- *I'm not in denial, but if I start believing that it is a disease and I'll never be set free from it, what kind of life is that?*
- *I know there's more than one way to solve a problem, so I will search for the way out of my problem with alcohol or drugs.*
- *I've heard about many addicts who stopped and never went back to their addiction, so there must be a way out.*
- *Deep down inside, I kind of know why I abuse drugs. But I don't know how to resolve that issue.*
- *I know I feel better when I use, so it must be an emotional issue that I don't know how to handle that keeps me stuck in my addiction.*
- *If it was a disease, I wouldn't have any control over how or when I use. But I do have control, so how can it be a*

*disease?*

- *I've read about some addicts who struggled for years, but when they discovered their underlying issues that they were escaping from, they resolved those issues, and they never went back to their addiction.*
- *When I look at the 12 steps, I don't see a way "out," I see people stuck and gathering together to discuss how stuck they are.*

The Resulting Behavior/Thoughts:

- *I am determined to find my way out of my addiction, no matter how long I have to look for the answer nor how many things I have to try.*
- *I keep my focus on the fact that other addicts have overcome their addiction, so it is possible.*
- *I will not get sucked into attending support groups, especially since they do not show me the way out.*

Your Beliefs and Thoughts

As you went through the above lists, did you identify some of your own beliefs? Here are some additional ones from your perspective as a friend or family member of the addict that might apply. Some are beliefs about the addict and some are beliefs about your own life.

- *If he would do \_\_\_\_\_, then he would be better.*
- *If he wouldn't hang out with so-and-so, he wouldn't keep using.*
- *I cannot change him, he is what he is. (But you can influence him, as you will learn in this book.)*

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

- *I must totally ignore him and take care of myself.*
- *Since he now has a disease that he can never overcome, our relationship is doomed.*
- *I can't go on if he stays in his addiction.*
- *I am so stressed out because of his addiction.*
- *I knew when I started our relationship that he was addicted, but secretly I knew I could help him get over it. It didn't work and now I'm stuck in a bad relationship!*
- *Living my own life and pursuing my dreams must be put on hold as I deal with his addiction and the chaos it has caused in our relationship.*
- *I can't handle his anger (whether it occurs while off the alcohol/drugs or while abusing them).*
- *I'm a basket case myself and don't have any energy left over to try to help him.*
- *He has sucked the life out of me and I don't think I'll ever get it back!*

The purpose of this book is to give you tools to influence the addict, and also help you get your life back in balance. The items I lay out for the addict to do, you also need to do consider for your own life. It all starts with beliefs, thoughts, and the words you speak.

The above example on contrasting beliefs is a major one to be resolved. If you have other negative beliefs that you feel no way out exists, I suggest you Google the topic of that belief and see how various people handled the situation with a positive outcome. You can gain hope by seeing positive outcomes of people who chose a different way to believe about a situation, and also the steps they took to change their lives. You can also

check out that topic on Amazon for further books to help you.

### **Uncovering Unconscious Beliefs/Thoughts**

Have you ever found yourself doing something that you have no idea why you keep doing it? You're not sure what is behind your actions or words. How can you uncover these unconscious beliefs? Perhaps as you try to change your beliefs, you can't get started. You may have a feeling that keeps you from moving forward, but can't identify what is causing that feeling. You may not be able to identify the feeling with words.

To uncover limiting beliefs, add the word "because" at the end of your current belief and then fill in the blank. For example:

*I can't help him because ...*

*I can't change the way I act or the words I say because ...*

*This process of change will never work for him because ...*

*This process of change in me will never work because ...*

*I can't approach him because ...*

*I can't expect my addict friend to change because ....*

*I can't change my reactions to the addict because ...*

*I can't confront the addict because ...*

*I can't fulfill my dreams for my life because ...*

*I can't get well because ...*

*I will never have a great relationship with a man/woman because ...*

*I can't do \_\_\_\_\_ where I currently live because ...*

*I can't forgive him right now because ...*

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

*I can't leave him right now because ...*

*I'll never get ahead financially because ...*

*I can't make the kind of money I want to because ...*

*I'll never be able to lose this weight because ...*

You can add your own to this list. In your Journal of Insights write out your own sentences followed by "because." Now say your *because* statements out loud. Write down whatever comes into your head to finish the sentence as fast as you can and without judgments. Repeat this process until you run out of sentences, either because you have the feeling that no more answers exist, or you begin to repeat yourself.

Go back to each completed sentence and say it out loud. Rate it on a scale of 0-10 (0 is false and 10 is true) of how true it *feels*, not how true it is logically. We are aiming to get to the highly emotionally-charged truths. In Chapter 7 you will learn the Tapping technique to help you neutralize your out-of-control emotions.

I'm sure you've tried to change your thinking, but at times you end up back at square one. To make permanent change in your thinking and on what you focus your thoughts upon, you need to replace the negative statements with positive ones. Write out next to each statement a new positive statement you can switch to. Preferably it is tied to your awesome future you will be creating as you go through this book.

## Thoughts For Addicts To Avoid

As the addict and you begin to make this shift in thoughts and beliefs, certain old patterns of thinking pop up. One is repeating the "What if . . ." thought process. This can lead to feelings of hopelessness. For example:

- *What if I get this great job, but end up relapsing?*
- *What if I promise, once again, to do something and I fail again?*
- *What if I never get free from this addiction?*
- *What if I never get the love I seek?*
- *What if I never get married?*
- *What if I get clean, get my kids back and then fail once again?*
- *What if risk loving again and I get rejected?*
- *What if I never get to live out the dream that's inside my heart?*

These “What if” worries rarely come to pass, but they can create anxiety. The end result of this type of thinking is one of self-pity and despair. The addict succumbs to the thinking, *I am what I am, I cannot change.*

This type of thinking must be identified so the addict can stop it. Since we can only think one thought at a time, we should replace all negative thinking with thoughts about our awesome future. Dreaming and making plans to carry out the addict’s vision for his or her life overrides this negative thinking. Once again, it is a choice to make.

A second area addicts seem to get stuck in is rehashing their past hurts. This is done both in their thought life and in the words they speak. In chapter 7 I explain the process of forgiveness and indicate that an important part of forgiveness is to stop rehashing the hurts repeatedly in your mind and in your conversations. I mention it here because it is a major part of our thinking that should be identified so we can begin to deal with it at this point.

I remember when I had to forgive my parents for things from my past. Afterwards, each time one of them would do something to remind me of my past hurt, I began to rehash in my mind those hurtful feelings. I finally had to literally say out loud to myself “stop rehashing it!” But you can’t “not” think about something. So I would choose to think about the dreams I had for my life. Those dreams also fueled my good emotions and kept me from slipping back into my depression.

I had lived with hurt and emotional pain for so many years that I thought there was no way to ever get rid of the pain. Little did I know that once I stopped rehashing the emotional pain, the pain began to lessen until I could no longer stir up emotional pain from my past. The memories do not go away, but the pain does!

An unspoken outcome of talking about our past hurts is that we may get sympathy from others for what we went through. This becomes a way of life for some of us. We don’t know how to get healthy strokes from people. As we don’t know how to love others in a healthy way—we don’t know how to receive love either. In chapter 7 you will learn the five love languages which will help you to properly give and receive love.

### **Write a New Vision**

You *can* transform your life and influence your addict friend or family member to transform their life too. It all starts with small steps, which build momentum, until full transformation takes place. To get your momentum started, let’s start by writing a new vision for your life.

I want you to take a few minutes and write in your Journal of Insights what your life will look like when it is transformed, and also what the addict’s life will look like once it is transformed. Dream big. Why not? Everything is possible if you believe.

Here are some things to consider for your life:

- Renewed love in your relationship with the addict.
- No more out-of-control emotions. You react calmly to everything going on in your life.
- You have a purpose in your life. Your destiny! You've taken your dreams off the shelf and are actively pursuing them every day. Your emotions are on a high because you are living out your passion every day.
- You have confidence that you can handle any emotional struggle that may present itself in the future. (You will, after you learn Tapping.)
- If you have children living at home who have been affected by the addict's behavior, they can avoid or overcome any internal emotional issues that can develop because of the dysfunctional behavior of the addict, which resulted in the family unit being dysfunctional. Children can be taught Tapping as a way to cope with their emotional issues. They can also be guided on how to discover their passion in life and how to pursue it and dream big dreams for their lives.
- You are unstuck from the cycle of the addict relapsing, getting clean, and relapsing once again.

In your Journal of Insights, review this chapter and start to identify beliefs in your life that need changing. Complete the "I can't \_\_\_\_\_ because ..." and the "What if ..." statements.

Learning new truths leads to transformation of your thought life and opens the door wider to having hope in your life. It takes continuous repetition of discussing and thinking about these new beliefs to engrain them over the emotionally-embedded false beliefs. Therefore, do not get discouraged if you find yourself

reverting to automatic behavior which occurs from your previously held false beliefs.

Are you ready to upscale your life? Discovering your passion in life is the next process.

### **Application Questions**

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1) Go back over the different thoughts and beliefs presented in this chapter and next to the ones that apply to you, put a “me” next to them.

2) Go back over the different thoughts and beliefs presented in this chapter and next to the ones that apply to your addict friend, put a “Friend” next to them.

3) What are the top 3 thoughts or beliefs for you that if they were changed would provide the most turnaround in your life? List them here, along with the new thoughts or beliefs next to them.

4) What are the top 3 thoughts or beliefs for your addict friend that if they were changed would provide the most turnaround in your friend's life? List them here, along with the new thoughts or beliefs next to them.

5) Looking at your top 3 thoughts or beliefs that need changing, what would the new resulting behavior or feeling be? Example: Since neither my circumstances nor my environment dictate how I act or feel, I now choose to not let the addict's behavior dictate how I feel. I choose to feel peaceful and calm in spite of my friend's behavior or accusations.

6) Looking at your addict friend's top 3 thoughts or beliefs that need changing, what would the new resulting behavior or feeling be? Example: Since my addiction is not a disease, it is possible for me to take full responsibility for learning new ways to stop my addiction and relapses. I now choose to stop blaming others for my actions or how bad I feel. I choose to feel hopeful and stop making excuses for my behaviors.

7) To uncover your possible unconscious beliefs/thoughts that hold you back from identifying why you believe certain things, choose the top 3 "I can't ... because ..." statements (or add your own) and finish those sentences below. Review whether those statements are true or false. If true, how can the situation be changed for the better?

8) To uncover your addict friend's possible beliefs and thoughts that need changing, choose the top 3 "What if ..." statements (or add your own) and answer those sentences below according to what you think the addict's answers would be. Review whether those statements are true or false. If true, how can the situation be changed for the better?

9) Write out a vision for your life if your emotions were changed, under control, and you had a brighter future to focus on. See the examples under the "Write a New Vision" section.

10) Write out a vision for your addict friend's life if his emotions were changed, under control, and he had a brighter future to focus on. See the examples under the "Write a New Vision" section. Brainstorm a few ideas that you can later share with your friend.

## 4

# Engage in Passionate Living For Fast Results

*Passionate living is the lever to bring life and excitement into boring and meaningless lives.* Kathy Williamson

The words of Martin Luther King, Jr. "I have a dream ..." changed the course of history forever. These four simple words can inspire change in ourselves, in others, a nation and the world. But until each of us can stand and proclaim "I have a dream ...," our life remains void of the abundant life we're seeking.

To overcome the vice grip that addictions and recovery have on the addict, a stronger motivation must be found. The motivation of *not wanting to relapse because he doesn't want to return to the hell hole he recently got out of* isn't a strong enough motivation. Sadly, deep in his subconscious is the understanding that given he or she survived *bottom* before, he can do it again. Thus, the continuous cycle of relapse occurs without him understanding why.

However, an additional problem has developed while in relapse. While the addict was in the midst of his or her addiction

and now in recovery, their mindset has become saturated with nothing but *me, myself and I*. This inward focus is extremely strong and difficult to overcome. Most aren't aware they have this problem.

To engage in passionate living means to use your passion in life as an avenue to reach out to love and serve others. This results in resolving many problems:

- The inward focus of *me, myself, and I*.
- Provides a strong motivation to keep headed in the right direction.
- Gives the addict something to switch his thoughts and words toward when he is tempted to relapse.
- Provides hope for an awesome future!

Have you ever had the experience of helping someone and by time you left that person or the situation you felt like you were more blessed than the person you helped? That is the motivation that keeps a person on track with their new lifestyle. When you add the element of actively engaging in one's passion in life, the motivation goes to an all-time high level and it pulls the addict into his future.

I am not talking about the Twelfth Step of the 12 Steps which teaches the addict to carry a message of recovery to other people stuck in their problems. If that is not the addict's passion, it won't last long. The addict has to operate within his or her passion as he reaches out to love and serve others. For example, a man might have a passion to fix cars. His way of reaching out would be to provide his services for free or at a reduced rate for single moms, single women, and the elderly. He can also find organizations who assist the poor where he could volunteer his services to the people they serve.

It is time for the addict and you to take your dreams off the shelf and start living them. First, let's look at what *passionate living* is. I use the terms *passion*, *purpose*, and *vision* interchangeably.

### **Passionate Living**

Passion is our heart's desire to make a difference somewhere, using our gifts and talents. Each of us has a unique passion. Most people have never identified their passion or even know if they have one. Passion can be classified into three general categories, although some overlap exists.

1. A passion about people. You long to make a difference in certain people's lives.
2. Operating in certain roles or functions. You receive enormous enjoyment by your functioning in a certain role.
3. You have a passion for a cause, whether it is addressing the needs of world hunger, fighting against human trafficking, supporting politics, reaching the spiritually lost, etc.

While your passion may be to do a certain thing, look to the whole picture of what the ultimate outcome will be. An example of a person who has a passion to operate in a certain role or function might be someone who likes to help in whatever way they can; it can be as a visionary or a leader, or it can be as a member of a team that accomplishes the overall dream.

### **Identifying Your Passion**

If you can't identify your passion right now, don't worry. The following exercise will assist you in the process. Get your pen and paper ready as you look through these six indicators to help you identify your passion. Make two separate lists—one for you and one for your addict friend as you think about his or her life.

1. *It impacts your daily routine.* When you talk about your passion, you speak a little faster, your body language changes in that you lean forward and your voice goes up a little. Your thoughts create emotions about your passion and drive you to stay up late at night or bounce out of bed early in the morning. What topic makes you react in this manner?

2. *You dream about it.* In your daydreaming you allow your heart's desire to take over and dream of things that don't currently exist, obstacles are removed, and your potential is unlimited. Your feelings get heightened and you know an emotional chord has been struck. What do you daydream about?

3. *Past achievements indicate themes.* Looking at your past achievements will indicate what you enjoy doing. This pattern helps you identify specific topics or ways of relating, whether you're a leader, a follower, a planner, cause-oriented, task-oriented or people-oriented. Remember, prior careers may not be your passion. What are the patterns of achievements which you enjoyed doing?

4. *Time passes quickly.* You're involved in a project or talking to people about a topic and suddenly you realize time has slipped away. What areas are you involved in where this happens?

5. *You have an inner confidence you are headed in the right direction.* When you are headed in the direction of your passion, no matter what obstacles you encounter, you are confident you are doing what you were born to do. What area are you involved in where you have confidence that you are headed in the right direction?

6. *Your passion energizes you.* Ever notice how much more physical and emotional energy you have when you're doing something you thoroughly enjoy? This is one way of identifying what your passion is. What things do you do where you

recognize an increase in energy?

After reviewing your responses to these six factors, can you state in one or two sentences what your passion is? If you cannot identify your passion, ask a close friend to review these questions with you and provide insight. What about your addict friend? Can you identify what his passion might be?

You may find you enjoy doing many things and have a variety of gifts and natural talent. I challenge you to narrow the description of your passion into one area. The things that make your passion unique are the life experiences to date, your personality traits, and the natural talents you have. Now, what specific thing do you feel your passion in life is?

### **Capturing Your Vision.**

You must dream big dreams; dreams so big that they require the help of others to make them happen. Once you know what your big dream is, you must break it down into manageable chunks. You must first recognize your dream, plan for it, and finally take action to implement it.

Have you spent time dreaming about how your passion to do certain activities can be put into a life-long vision? The complete picture may not be revealed all at once. Usually you only have the initial revelation of the vision for your life. The specifics come as you take each step when it's revealed.

Perhaps the idea of having a vision which guides and energizes you for the rest of your life is new to you. But that is exactly how God created you. If you've never thought along these lines, take time to consider what you would do with the rest of your life if you had no financial limitations or other restrictions. To help initiate dreaming, this exercise may help.

1. Write out everything you ever dreamed of doing. Things that are specific to you, not you and a spouse. If you are single,

avoid "If I had a spouse, I would ...". Also avoid, "My only desire is to be married and raise a family, etc." The desire for a spouse is not something you can fulfill. But the dreams within you *can* be brought to realization.

2. Specifically identify the mental pictures your dreams produce.

3. Identify and feel the emotions you envision encountering as you carry out each step and eventually see your goals accomplished.

We were designed to do things as a team. Many of us need to change our dreams from "my" dream to "our" dream. All successful people have a team working with them. Remember, you can't do everything yourself—you weren't designed to do it all.

### **Characteristics of a Vision**

Once you determine what your passion is and understand how to use it in a life-long vision, you need to know what to expect when you start to work toward accomplishing your dream. Let's look at eighteen lessons you will learn about your vision.

1. *It requires change.* You can't keep doing the same things and expect a different outcome. It requires a change in your priorities, your thinking, your attitudes, the people you hang around with, and the use of your time.

2. *It redefines success.* Success is not achieving the final goal or vision—it is daily obedience to the journey. Success is what happens along the road to fulfilling your dream. Therefore, you must enjoy every day and grab hold of every opportunity before you. You can no longer say, "I'll be happy *when* ..." Your happiness is a choice you make every day.

3. *It demands perseverance.* Make a commitment to your vision. What else in life is there worth pursuing? There will be hard times when you will want to quit—but you can't! Nothing in life gives you the deep satisfaction you seek as when you are following your dreams.

4. *It requires hard work.* This is hard work that you don't mind doing because you are so on-fire about working toward this vision that nothing compares to the high you get from doing this. While it requires hard work and extra time, you must also maintain balance in your life; otherwise, burnout is right around the corner.

5. *It is consistent with your surroundings.* Your vision is one that can utilize the elements around you to help fit together the pieces of the vision. Looking at your environment will help you analyze how to implement your vision. For example, you can locate people or organizations that can help you either clarify your vision or implement your vision. Your surroundings also include contact with people, groups, and programs over the Internet.

6. *It is not comfortable.* The vision you have is bigger than you could imagine carrying it out by yourself. It makes you get out of your comfort zone in many areas. The vision is also not comfortable for others. Be prepared for resistance—all great leaders have to deal with it. It is also controversial and it makes others get out of their comfort zone. Your big vision is never one that will bring you a life of leisure and ease.

7. *It is not easily embraced by others.* Your vision many times appears foolish to others because the vision counters the mentality of society. Therefore, it requires you to retell the vision many times, in a variety of ways, until people grab hold of it and come alongside you to encourage you in carrying it out and also to become part of your team.

8. *It unfolds progressively.* This is a lesson some of us may have a hard time learning. We want to know steps A to Z before we'll do step A. But it doesn't work that way. We are usually shown one step at a time and when we carry out that step, we see the next one. This requires us to place our faith and trust in obeying our calling in life. Sometimes we think we know the method to use, but sometimes others can show us a better way of doing things. This is the importance of having a team. They can show you where your blind spots are and also help you brainstorm the process to unfold your dream.

9. *It is entrusted to an individual.* Each person has his or her own vision. Now, it can take several people—to several million people—working together to accomplish your overall vision. You may think that others have the same vision as you. However, what makes it unique for you is your gifts, talents, life experiences, and your individual slant on how to carry it out.

10. *It is as much a journey as it is a destination.* In the Western world we focus on short-term goals, instant gratification, and celebrating when we have reached our goal. But your big vision is a life-long journey, with shorter goals within that vision. Therefore, you must realize that every day is your vision.

11. *It outlives you.* Big visions encompass more than one generation. To have it continue as a legacy you must put into place products and systems to accomplish your vision so that others can take your vision and continue to fulfill it.

12. *It reflects God's objectives.* If you are a Christian, you will recognize God's influence in your vision. Man's objectives for success include wealth, prestige, innovations, records, posterity or human desires. God's objectives are for our holiness and obedience. God's objectives may conflict with our assumptions, preferences or prayers. But when we obey, then God blesses us beyond our wildest dreams.

13. *It frightens people.* Once people see your zeal for your vision and your commitment to it, people may brand you as being crazy. Look at people who gave their lives to totally carry out their vision in their lives and see how others responded. Be prepared that people won't respond to you like you want them to—even if it means that their life will become better!

14. *It motivates the masses.* Although I told you that people will be frightened by your vision, others will catch on to the vision because what you are doing speaks to their inner yearning to also lead lives of significance. They can see in you what they want for themselves. You don't need extraordinary charisma, abilities or experiences to make this happen. With your heart of commitment, you can accomplish great and mighty things.

15. *It breaks your heart.* Do you have a soft spot in your heart to accomplish a particular thing? This is the area that will keep your dream alive. Having this strong desire breaks your heart and you don't want to do anything except carry out this vision.

16. *It redefines your personal ambition.* Once your heart is broken and you realize you have been given a BIG vision to carry out, your personal objectives no longer appeal to you. Your only aim is to obey the call to fulfill that vision at whatever it costs to carry it out.

17. *It instills humility.* Who are we to carry out such a big vision? We don't feel worthy nor capable of handling the task before us. Yet, people in the world who society has given up on are used to accomplish big goals.

18. *It drives us to God.* With a broken heart, our personal desires laid aside and our humble attitude, we are driven to stay close to God. We must constantly take time to be in God's presence and hear from Him. When God's instructions are combined with our obedience, nothing is impossible with God!

I know the above lessons can't be learned overnight. However, knowing what to expect will take away the surprise and sting they could otherwise inflict. For more insight on the above, read George Barna's book, *Turning Vision Into Action* from which these principles were taken and modified.

### **Keep Your Dream Fueled**

How will you keep your dream fueled? You can't stay on an emotional high experience forever. When you encounter some of the confrontations outlined above, or your own flesh wants to rebel, what will you do to keep yourself committed to your dream and staying on the right path?

*Keep your life in balance.* Once we start working on our vision, we are so on-fire that we run off and start doing things 24/7. Because we receive such an immense high from this, we tend to continue working when we should be resting. We must maintain balance in our life to avoid burnout. When we receive opposition to our dreams, we must have people in our lives with whom we can talk to about what's happening, people who continue to encourage us to live up to the potential inside us.

*Keep your thoughts right.* Our thoughts are borne from our beliefs. We must stand on our belief that we were given this unique vision to carry. Once we stay committed to our vision, we must do something to propel us forward. In the last chapter we learned we can't go on the outside where we haven't gone on the inside. Therefore, we must spend time thinking about the vision, determining how to accomplish it, what the end results will look like, and what our emotions will be at each phase of the project. The more time spent meditating upon your dream and adding emotions to your mental picture and thinking, the more you will be motivated to stay on track. Sometimes it helps to write your thoughts on paper to quickly grab and meditate over them when things get rough. I encourage you to review your written vision every morning and evening.

*Be accountable.* Find someone whom you can share your dream with and also meet with on a weekly basis. You will probably have to ask someone to be your accountability partner. I have found that when I ask someone to be my accountability partner, they feel honored to do this. Choose a person whom you trust and know that they have your best interest in their heart. Give your partner permission to ask you the hard questions and you must be honest when you share your triumphs and struggles.

*Cultivate faithfulness through obedience.* This is a daily journey and we must recognize that we are only required to take the step before us. If we are not obedient, then we get stalled in our progress of carrying out our dream. If we're not going forward, we're going backward. We cannot stay in neutral! On days when we don't *feel* like taking action, that is when we must take action. Then our feelings come afterwards.

*Stay focused.* We are so easily sidetracked. Have you had times where you seemed to get a lot done in a short period of time, even though you had that same opportunity day after day? You got a lot done because you were intensely focused. You didn't let anything interrupt what you were doing until you got that job done. The same holds true for staying on track with your dream. You must purposely determine to stay focused. You may need to inform others around you not to interrupt you for a period of time because you want to get a particular thing done.

### **Work or Volunteer?**

What do you do if your vision has nothing to do with your current job? The ideal situation is to be able to work at doing what you are passionate about. Since this may not happen immediately, finding a place to volunteer where you can use your passion is a starting place.

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

Through volunteering you gain the experience of putting together the pieces of the puzzle that comprise your dream. It allows you to determine what skills you need to develop or what education you need. It allows you the time to improve yourself so that when the doors open for you to get paid doing this full time, you are ready.

One thing that helped me a lot while struggling not to fall prey to my addiction or depression was to volunteer during the times I found myself most vulnerable. For me as a single person at that time it was Saturday nights and Sunday afternoons. Since I volunteered at Christian-based crisis hotlines, I could choose almost any five-hour shift I wanted. When are your most vulnerable times? Can you recognize your addict friend's most vulnerable times?

You'll be amazed at how many volunteer opportunities exist in your community. Look on the Internet, ask at your church, or call the United Way or other volunteer organizations in your county and find a place where you can volunteer once a week. Any lesser amount of time will not keep you focused and involved. Even if you don't think you have the skills or education, call and find out in what capacity you can volunteer. Being around others in the field that interests you will motivate you. If you are the spouse of an addict, this time away from the chaos in your home will greatly benefit you. Being around emotionally-healthy people will breathe fresh air into your life.

If you don't know what your passion is, don't wait until you have all the answers. Volunteering gives you the opportunity to try many different avenues to help you determine what you are passionate about. When you find that area, start meditating to see how to create the big vision for you.

Don't ignore what you are learning at your day job. Many principles you need to learn can be learned while working at your job. While your vision may eventually become your career,

your current job is your pre-occupation until doors are opened for you to make that move.

### **Shift Your Focus to 80/20**

Addicts tend to spend all their time and emotions thinking about “not” giving in to their addiction. You may spend a lot of time rehashing your hurt, how frustrated you are because of his or her repeated promises that are broken almost immediately, and wondering if circumstances will ever change for the better. Remember that whatever picture is inside your mind, is what will materialize in your outer circumstances.

Now that the addict and you have discovered your passions in life, you have something to shift your focus to. The goal is to spend 80% of your thought life and actions focusing on building your awesome future, and spend 20% of your time working on resolving the underlying issues. The addict’s possible issues are discussed in chapter 5. Your issues may resolve around changing your beliefs, and focusing on how you can influence the addict as well as take your own life to a higher level from what you learn in this book.

I would suggest the first step is for you, and the addict, to separately add up the number of hours each of you spend each week (1) texting, (2) watching TV, (3) surfing the Internet or reviewing emails, (4) spending time in support groups, (5) hanging out with [addicted] friends, (6) reading newspapers, magazines or novels, or (7) any other activity that could be replaced with focusing on building your awesome future. However, family time should not be included in this record of activity.

Make a list of the areas of your life (and a separate list of what you see for your addict friend) that can be replaced with working on building your awesome future. Take time now to write out how you plan to go from where you are today to the

point of achieving your vision. Then break it down to monthly, weekly and daily goals. Having these in writing will provide you with guidance of what to do when you get emotionally overwhelmed in trying to deal with the addict.

You will notice I have omitted any time for the addict to spend attending support groups or AA meetings. That's right. The goal is to get him away from that atmosphere which keeps him stuck in his problems. Unless he is required by court to attend the groups, he should immediately find groups of people focused around his passion in life. If you are attending an Al-Anon or similar group, I encourage you to slowly reduce your attendance as you begin to implement changes from this book. You can go to [www.MeetUp.com](http://www.MeetUp.com) to locate local groups focused around numerous topics.

Right now this suggestion that the addict spend 80% of his free time focusing on his passion, 20% on resolving his underlying issues, and no focus on attending support groups may seem outrageous. You might wonder how he or she could ever make this drastic change and stick to it. He or she will find that after the first day of doing this, they will have such a peace and calm inside him, that they will be drawn back to repeat this in every spare moment they have. Why? Because when a person is operating within their passion, they get so excited, that they can't wait to come back and do it again. Fulfillment and significance begin to permeate their soul. Something drugs could never do. When I started operating within my passion, I discovered that the "high" I got from living in this realm was better than any high from drugs, and it lasted longer! That's why I was able to turn my life around in three to four months and never go back to my addiction.

If the addict does not know what his passion is at this moment, he needs to discover something that he thoroughly enjoys doing and begin to do that. He must find something to

switch his focus to that will enable him to start rebuilding his life.

As time goes on if the addict finds himself getting upset or bored, he should take a look at his schedule and he might notice that he's gotten off of this 80/20 schedule.

### **Your Progress**

I hope you have been taking notes as you have read this book up to this point. Your Journal of Insights is going to help you begin to connect all the dots and see the big picture of what to do. Adding passionate living to your life will make you feel more alive and bring excitement into your life.

In the next chapter we will look at the possible underlying issues the addict is escaping from. We will also look at some problems that may have developed in your life because of your relationship with your addict friend.

### **Application Questions**

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1) After reviewing the questions to help you identify your passion in life, what is your passion?

2) After reviewing the questions to help you identify your passion in life, what do you think is your addict friend's passion?

3) Looking at the 18 Characteristics of a Vision, which ones excite you? Why? Which ones give you fear? Why?

4) Looking at the 18 Characteristics of a Vision, which ones do you think your addict friend would get excited about? Why? Which ones give your friend fear? Why?

5) Even if you are the beginning stages of identifying your passion and starting to dream about what's possible in your life, how can you keep your dream fueled? I list five possible ways to do so. What would those look like if they were carried out in your life?

6) Even if your addict friend is in the beginning stages of identifying his or her passion and starting to dream about what's possible in his or her life, how can your friend keep the dream fueled? I list five possible ways to do so. What would those look like if they were carried out in your friend's life?

7) Now that you have the beginning of a vision started for your life, where can you begin to shift some of your free time to focus on it? What activities would need to be eliminated or the amount of time allocated to them reduced? Begin this shift of

focus for at least one-half an hour a day. When will you start?  
Can you commit to do it daily?

8) Now that your addict friend has the beginning of a vision started for his or her life, where can your friend begin to shift some of his or her free time to focus on it? What activities would need to be eliminated or the amount of time allocated to them reduced? Begin this shift of focus for at least one-half an hour a day. Once you have discussed the elements of this book with your addict friend, determine when he or she will start this shift in focus? Can your friend commit to do it daily?

9) Are there common passions and/or desires that you and your addict friend can participate in together? Describe them. Begin now to suggest these activities to your friend.



## 5

# **Resolve Underlying Issues For Breakthrough**

*Once underlying issues are identified and resolved, even  
an addict who has relapsed 21 times can finally stop!*

Kathy Williamson

Addictions are a symptom of underlying issues—not the main problem. Once the underlying issues are identified and resolved, the addict no longer needs to relapse. The addict will know his or her tendency toward various types of issues that arise and after learning the Roadmap Out of Addiction process, the addict has the knowledge, skills and attitudes to keep him or her headed in the right direction.

The problems in your life, as the friend or family member of the addict, can also be identified and resolved by going through this same process. The same goes for any children within the family; if they are old enough to comprehend problems, they can be taught various processes used to resolve them.

We will initially look at the eighteen main problems that addicts could be escaping from. These problems lead not only to addictions but can lead to depression, uncontrolled anxieties,

fears that immobilizes, and other issues on the list. As you go through these items, keep your Journal of Insights handy. Write out what you see going on inside your addict friend and also what's going on inside of you.

### Identify The Underlying Issues

Through my years of observations of what works to free addicts and my personally helping many I have discovered eighteen main issues that bring up emotional pain, fears and anxieties that the addict doesn't know how to deal with. Here are the most prevalent underlying issues:

- Hurt (emotional)
- Low Self-Esteem
- Peer Pressure
- Perfectionism
- Rejection
- Boredom in Life
- Insecurities
- Relationship Problems
- Mental Illness
- Health Problems (Detected/ Undetected)
- Physically or Sexually Abused
- Stress
- PTSD/Flashbacks
- Loneliness/Depression
- Self-pity
- Guilt/Shame
- Codependency
- Self-hatred

Let's look first at how this applies to the addict. How can you start getting clues about what his issues are? Look at these attributes in the addict's life:

- What does the addict continually talk about from his or her past?
- Who or what is the addict blaming for his or her addictive behavior?
- How is the addict's self-esteem? Does he or she always belittle themselves or play the victim role?

- Who are the people the addict talks about that always get him or her upset? Why? Was there an event in the past that the addict never got over?
- Listen to the words the addict speaks. Are there a lot of excuses to avoid being around certain people or relatives? Do you know why?
- What does your addict friend say when he or she has a pity-party? Does it resonate with having low self-esteem? Has the addict been in victim mentality his or her whole life?
- Looking back to the time your friend began drinking or abusing drugs, what was going on in his or her life? What event had recently taken place?
- Is the addict a perfectionist? Because he or she can't do things perfectly (none of us can), does your friend get upset easily and uses?
- Was there a death in the family the addict never got over—never grieved over that person?
- In your friend's childhood memories, what stands out as being abnormal?
- Many health problems are legitimate; but the over-use of prescription medications comes from enjoying the feelings the drugs produce. Have you seen this happen to your friend? Perhaps you think he or she is taking too many pain pills for the physical condition—that is a clue that something else is going on.
- Does your friend easily succumb to peer pressure? Especially from his or her drinking or drugging buddies?

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

- Does your addict friend indicate he or she doesn't have any problems, that he or she enjoys drinking or doing drugs? If you can't find any underlying problems from the above clues, this could be true. But—the addict does have a problem with being bored in life. Don't overlook this. This is a major factor in a lot of the addicts today. Without an awesome future to pull them forward, they don't have any reason to not mess up their life!

Look at your list and see if certain words or behaviors might indicate your addict friend has one or more of the eighteen underlying issues listed previously. Write out what you think the issues are, and next to them the answers to the above questions that support your conclusion. Also look at what was going on in the addict's life, either external conditions or his or her internal thoughts, each time there was a relapse. Do you see a pattern develop? Write that down.

What about you and your life? Even if you are a friend and the addict hasn't impacted your way of living, I encourage you to look at any issues you may be avoiding. If you are a spouse or family member of the addict, go back over the questions and see which ones resonate with your personal life. Don't forget to include how the addict has hurt you in various ways. Make a separate list of the issues for yourself. List the *issues*, not the specific events.

Once you have your two lists, one regarding the addict and one for yourself, take a quick review of chapter 3 regarding negative self-talk and how to change it. Go back over your lists and try to identify the beliefs behind each of the issues you wrote down. Can you backtrack into the thinking process to come to the core belief? It might be kind of hard to do this since you cannot get inside the addict's mind. But do your best to see if you can catch how your friend's thought process might have gone. Identifying these core beliefs will help in the process of

influencing the addict to overcome his or her problems. Write down next to each issue what the core belief might be, as well as what the internal thoughts and self-talk might be.

Now that you have an idea of the kinds of issues the addict and/or yourself may be going through, how do you resolve them? What tools can be implemented to overcome or grow out of these problems?

### **Resolving These Issues**

Chapters 7 and 8 discuss in detail the various skills and habits to use to overcome these obstacles. I want to give you a sneak preview of what those are so you will have a better understanding of the chart below. Remember I mentioned in the beginning it is best if you read through this book entirely and then come back and begin to apply the material. Here are the skills and habits that will be discussed in the upcoming two chapters:

- Handle any emotion with *Tapping*
- Forgiveness brings freedom
- Build confidence to do anything you want
- Establish boundaries
- Bring love into every situation
- Choose the right attitude
- Control your thoughts and words
- Serve others
- The 5 Second Rule
- Be around the right people

This book is not meant to cover every underlying issue in great detail. These obstacles can be placed into similar categories which require the same skills and habits to overcome them. When you improve in one area, it dramatically impacts all areas of your growth.

<b><u>Similar Obstacles Grouped Together</u></b>	<b><u>Skills and Habits Needed To Overcome</u></b>
Hurt (emotional) Rejection Relationship Problems Physically or Sexually Abused	Handle Emotions With <i>Tapping</i> The 5 Second Rule Forgiveness Brings Freedom Bring Love Into Every Situation Serve Others
Low Self-Esteem Peer Pressure Perfectionism Insecurities Self-Pity Guilt/Shame Codependency Self-hatred	Handle Emotions With <i>Tapping</i> The 5 Second Rule Engage in Passionate Living Shift focus to 80/20 Serve Others Build Confidence To Do Any- thing You Want Establish Boundaries Bring Love Into Every Situation
Boredom in Life Loneliness/Depression	Handle Emotions With <i>Tapping</i> The 5 Second Rule Shift Your Beliefs To Change Your Future Engage in Passionate Living Shift focus to 80/20 Serve Others Be Around The Right People
PTSD/Flashbacks Mental Illness Health Problems (Detected/Undetected) Stress	Handle Emotions With <i>Tapping</i> The 5 Second Rule Shift Your Beliefs To Change Your Future

Go back to your lists where you identified possible problems for the addict and yourself. Rearrange those items into the above groupings as I have above. You will begin to see that the problems and the ways to resolve them may not be as overwhelming as they seem.

### **The Big Picture Of The Future**

When a person begins to work on resolving their underlying issues, he or she can lose balance of their outlook on life. Therefore, I want to share in general terms the big picture of the future. Keeping this big picture in the forefront of one's mind makes it easier to go through the effort to resolve underlying issues, learn new skills and habits, and step into living the life they were born to carry out.

We were all created for a specific purpose in life. Our quest is to discover our individual purpose and find where we fit in society. We were not meant to go through life being blown from here to there without any say about it. Yet that is how the majority of people live today.

The essence of what I teach is we all have a yearning inside us to live bigger and fuller lives—to fulfill the purpose we were created for. But we have buried that drive by the mundane trappings of every day life. When we stay still long enough to look around, we sometimes don't like what we see. Nor do we know how to allow that drive to fully surface and be in control of more of our daily living. So it is pushed down until it forces itself to the surface again to see if we're ready to let it flourish.

I used to think, like so many still do, that I had to resolve my big problem (my addiction) before I could pursue my passion in life. Boy, was I wrong! It turned out that pursuing my passion is what turned my life around and, as a by-product, my desire for my addiction went away. It never came back. This is why I want people to make the shift to focus 80% of their time on letting

that drive come to the surface and become a major part of their lives. This shift provides the energy and momentum to stay on course long-term.

A lot of addicts are extremely creative but have no outlet for that creativity. Many have blind spots as to what they can do or how to make it a large part of their lives. It is unlikely they will seek assistance in the midst of their addiction. Their mindset is stuck on all the negatives and *me, myself, and I*. This is where a friend can influence the addict.

When you begin to implement the strategies in this book, either to influence the addict or to maintain (or regain) your sanity, keep in mind this broader view of the picture.

### **A Few Miscellaneous Points**

While it is true you cannot change a person, you *can* influence people. Also remember that what an addict believes about addictions is different than what you believe. Best not to bring up this difference as it will immediately put the addict on the defensive because today most addicts are only taught the disease model. For many it is the only perspective they have on their situation. Despite the fact thousands of addicts have stopped their addiction, quit relapsing and gone on to lead normal lives, these facts are not being offered as a viable option, because most leaders in recovery don't know how to get a person to that point!

To the addict, the disease model makes sense. They have tried for years to get clean and stay clean and were not able to. They tried everything they knew to stop relapse, but without long-term success. Their thinking is, *if it isn't a disease that has a hold on me, then I would be able to stop and never go back*. But since they can't stop relapsing, it must be a disease that has taken over their bodies. However, the principles taught in this book can, and have, set addicts free from their addiction and

they now live happy lives.

### **Begin To Influence The Addict**

Knowing this new information, the obstacle is how to begin to implement it. Where do you start? After you have finished reading this book, come back and reread this chapter. First, it starts with your mindset. *You* need to believe that an addict (your friend or spouse) can overcome the addiction and get back to leading a normal life. This belief is based upon facts that other addicts have done so, not based upon your friend's past behavior.

Second, the sooner you can get the addict to shift his or her focus to planning an awesome future based on his or her passion in life, the better. Perhaps you can identify what your friend's passion is in life, or remember the dreams discussed in the past of what he or she would like to do with his or her life. Begin a conversation with your addict friend today about that dream. If the addict doesn't have a dream or passion (remember, most people haven't identified their passion or their dreams), begin to ask questions to elicit his or her input.

It may help to share with your friend what your dream or passion is. Or how you were able to discover it and now you have a whole new outlook on life. You can indicate that he or she might benefit from doing the same in his or her life. Review chapter 4 for suggested questions to help identify one's passion. Once the addict identifies his or her passion or dream, begin discussing ways to start working on it *daily*. You are guiding your friend to make the slow shift from focusing on *not* doing his or her addiction, to focus on something he or she loves to do and is exciting.

Sometimes the addict raises objections, such as not feeling adequate to pursue the dream. Or that his or her past will keep him from being able to fully fulfill his dream. For addicts who

have a felony on their record, this may be somewhat true. For example, an addict who was a nurse cannot resume a nursing career. But the addict can take a close look at what he or she enjoyed about that career and find another avenue to use those traits. For example, enjoying helping people, being a part of a team, feeling good from being a leader, bringing peace and joy to others, being in a fast-paced environment—these are all traits that can be applied in other fields. Help the addict to brainstorm other avenues where these characteristics can be applied.

Next, you can share with the addict how you have learned that the picture in one's mind *always* trumps one's willpower. Help the addict to see that when he or she begins to think about abusing alcohol or drugs (1) he or she may be doing it to escape an emotion he or she doesn't know how to handle; share with your friend my ebook on using Tapping to stop cravings and unwanted emotions (one of the bonus downloads); and (2) help your friend to come up with a mental picture of him or her operating within this passion. This picture should be clear, along with the emotions the addict would be feeling during that time. Have your friend write down that vision and keep it handy so that when his or her thinking begins to slip into the realm of wanting to abuse alcohol or drugs, that vision paper can be pulled out and read over and over (preferably out loud) until the picture in the mind is switched, thus avoiding relapse.

### **Where Do You Start In Your Life?**

First, do you spend a majority of your time trying to fix your addict friend or spouse? Have you lost yourself in this maze? I belong to several Facebook groups of friends and spouses of addicts or alcoholics. I feel their pain of trying over and over to get the addict or alcoholic to stop. They set boundaries, yet they deal with the emotional pain of wanting the relationship to work out. Many may give up completely. Some support groups tell the friends and families of the addict to stop trying to help the addict

since an addict can't be changed; that the disease will take your friend down and it is hopeless for you to get back the person the addict was before the addiction.

Yes, if the addict is not taught that underlying reasons exist as to why he or she is abusing alcohol or drugs, which is to escape from negative emotions arising from those issues, when those issues are triggered, relapse awaits. This is why I have written this book, to provide the truth and show a way out of addictions.

Getting back to you and your life, if you are a spouse, what eats at you every day about your addicted spouse? How can you get yourself into a better place emotionally, rather than reacting to the addict's behaviors, lies or accusations? You must have a bigger goal for your life than the addict. I understand you may be working full time, raising children, while trying to maintain some kind of normalcy in your home. In chapter 9 I discuss how to show tough love without enabling, how to flourish with support from others (outside of the Al Anon community), and how divorce doesn't mean you don't love your spouse.

At this moment I want you to find a quiet place for about an hour. Write down the answers to the following questions in your Journal of Insights.

1. Where am I at the moment? Am I under complete control of my spouse? Have I given up on all my dreams for my life? What are my dreams?
2. Do I allow myself to *react* negatively to his drinking or drug use, which then gets me completely upset for a long time? How often does this happen?
3. Do I have difficulty getting myself calm after an episode of hurt and anger? If so, how can I apply Tapping to instantly calm myself down?

4. How can I start to respond differently? This is a decision I need to make ahead of time, along with a sentence I can repeat to myself at that moment of conflict. Some possible thoughts to tell myself are, *This is his problem not mine. I do not need to get pulled into his drama. I am in the process of getting my life back and I am proud of my stance and my efforts.*

5. Do I no longer trust him? If so, do I ever think I can trust him again? Am I willing to try?

6. Have I forgiven him for the numerous times he has hurt me? If not, why not? (Forgiveness is for *your* state of mind—not his. See chapter 7 regarding forgiveness.)

7. Is he or she physically abusing me and/or my children? Why haven't I left? How bad does the abuse have to get before I leave? Call the National Domestic Hotline (800) 799-7233 for further assistance immediately, even if you're in a calm atmosphere now.

8. Take some time to sit and relax and dream about your future. What is my passion in life? What do I want to do with my life? What excites me? What gives me tremendous pleasure to be involved in?

9. How can I bring that passion into my life? Even if I think I can't do it right now because I don't have the time or money, I recognize that this is part of my life-saving process! I can't afford not to do it.

10. If you have children: What can I do on a weekly basis where the children and I are in an atmosphere away from the addict? Where is there a place where the children can bond with me, be free to talk about what's going on, and have some normalcy in their lives. When can I spend some time talking with my children about their dreams for their lives? (Depending upon

their age, they may be so involved with the drama of the home that they are not free to be children. Perhaps this could be an outlet for them to begin to be children again.)

Keep reviewing your answers to the above and add to them if necessary. Begin today by responding differently to whatever your spouse does that gets you upset. Come up with your sentences to mentally say to yourself when conflict arises.

I remember waking up one morning about two years into my marriage (to a paranoid, narcissistic, pathological liar, and former addict, although I didn't recognize any of these characteristics before I married him) and realized my life had been sucked out of me. I didn't like who I was and I determined that morning to get my life back. It was difficult because once he saw my change in behavior—I began to stand up for myself, do things that I wanted to do, would not get pulled into his anger outbursts—he turned his paranoia towards me. Now my self-talk became even more important as I fought to maintain myself on the upward path I created for myself. I share my story in detail in chapter 9. At this moment I want to let you know that it is possible for you to change and get your life back. You can live in peace, purpose and passion, even if your addict spouse decides to never change.

One point I want to make at this stage, however, is certain mental conditions might exist where a person cannot (is not willing to) change. Narcissism is one of them. Because the narcissist believes nothing is wrong with him or her, that it is everybody else's fault for what is going on, he or she makes no effort to change. I suggest you research narcissism to understand all its characteristics before determining if your spouse or friend has that condition.

The next chapter covers 12 relapse triggers, which can also apply to your life, and how to plan ahead to avoid reverting to unwanted behavior. Remember, these relapse triggers lose their

impact once underlying issues are identified and resolved.

### **Application Questions**

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1) Can you identify any underlying issues you may be dealing with? List them. How long have you been dealing with each?

2) Can you identify any underlying issues your addict friend may be dealing with? List them. How long do you think your friend has been dealing with each

3) What factors are you using to identify the problems in your addict friend? Review the list of attributes I provided to assist you in answering this question.

4) Review the chart of the underlying issues grouped together, along with the skills and habits needed to overcome those problems. While we have not yet reviewed those skills and habits, list which top two skills and habits you believe will benefit you the most. Also list the ones for your addict friend.

5) Knowing the big picture of your future will pull you through the tough times of personal changes or dealing with the changes your addict friend is trying to make. Describe what your big picture for your future consists of.

6) Did you take the time to find a quiet place and answer the ten questions to discover where you currently are in your relationship with your addict friend? What are the top two you would like to begin working on changing? How can you implement these changes?



## 6

### **Plan Ahead To Avoid Relapse**

*Plans for your future backed by beliefs and determination increase the chance for success. Kathy Williamson*

If you have applied what you learned in resolving the underlying issues, then you are able to put together a plan to avoid obstacles in the future. The obstacles include not only relapse, but falling prey to any of the underlying eighteen issues that may creep back into the addict's life.

Learning is done through repetition. Sometimes when things are said in a different way, it finally clicks and a person understands. The following relapse triggers are pulled out of the process so they can be reviewed periodically to keep the addict and yourself on track.

#### **12 Relapse Triggers Of Addicts**

To avoid relapse requires the addict to actively work on several areas of his or her life at the same time. The little things in life eventually grow into big problems (relapse) if they're not taken care of.

When the addict is stuck in a particular problem for a long time and after that problem is overcome and relapse happens,

the addict thinks he or she has fallen back to the bottom and must start all over. However, since the addict already knows what he did to get himself out of the rut the first time, those same strategies can be immediately applied and the addict will see great progress in a short time. The key during this time is for the addict to keep his or her mind from falling back into the trap of thinking only about *me, myself and I*.

This same process applies to you and the problems you have overcome. As you go through this list of items for the addict, write down in your Journal of Insights the situations you need to work on to keep yourself from sliding backwards in your personal growth.

### **Plan Ahead**

For the addict to keep from relapsing into whatever underlying problem he or she recently got out of, the addict must plan ahead how to respond differently the next time someone pushes his or her hot buttons.

This requires the addict to recognize what triggers him to react certain ways. By knowing what causes him or her to think and act in the wrong way, the addict can then determine in advance how to respond differently next time it happens. Believe me, there will be many opportunities to deal with this trigger.

What type of situations could this include? Someone who always knows how to push the addict's buttons to get him or her upset, perhaps this is a person who hurt the addict in the past, and the addict carried a grudge against that person for years. Although the addict has forgiven the person, he or she still reacts automatically in a negative manner to the buttons that person pushes. The addict ends up rehashing the past and getting upset again.

Another major area is the addict's self-talk, or stinking

thinking. The addict is conditioned to react with thoughts that put him or her in the role of the victim, instead of recognizing other options exist on how to better respond and thus control their emotions.

The best way to plan ahead is for the addict to write down what situations trigger his or her bad reactions (or thoughts). Then write down how to handle the situation differently next time. Write down more than one new way to respond. The addict may want to write down the exact words to say or the new thoughts and actions to take.

### **Stay Connected To Others**

Once we experience freedom from the major problems we have been stuck in for many years we begin making many plans to do things that were set aside due to our problems. In this process we tend to carry out *our* plans without any sure path to follow to reach our vision for our life.

We get on the fast-track to get things accomplished in our life, trying to make up for lost time. We end up spending all our time doing stuff and buying more stuff, soon to the exclusion of our relationships with others.

We start feeling so good about ourselves from this new lifestyle that pride surfaces and we slowly begin to go in whatever direction feels good in our life. We begin to trust in ourselves and believe that if we hang out with our old addict friends who still abuse alcohol or drugs, that we can handle it. Although we don't see this pride creeping into our life, it causes a major shift back to relying on our own wisdom on how to live, which failed us before. We begin the slow slide down the slippery slope to our old lifestyle. Somewhere along the way we hit a bump that opens our eyes to how far we walked away from focusing on walking the path to fulfill our vision.

Along this slippery slope we begin to pull away from our new non-addict friends. Perhaps they noticed a change in us and pointed out to us that we were headed in the wrong direction once again. But we didn't want to hear that, so we tuned them out and began to isolate ourselves from them. Or perhaps they were staying focused on building their awesome future, and since we knew in our heart that we weren't, to avoid the feelings of conviction we stopped associating with them.

To avoid this path to self-destruction we need to take a look back at our weekly schedule. Did the 80/20 focus get out of whack? Do we have a group of emotionally strong people we hang around with? Do we spend relaxed time with our family and/or friends? If our paying job is not utilizing our passion in life, are we volunteering some place every week where we can use our passion?

### **Handle Rejection**

Unless we know how to handle rejection we won't travel far on our new path of freedom before reverting to our old patterns of handling our hurts. To properly respond to rejection from others we must first recognize how we typically respond. Did we revert to our old patterns of stuffing the hurt and letting bitterness grow?

Yes, we may get hurt when others reject us. I'm not denying that. But we don't have to let that hurt linger in our soul and develop into self-pity and bitterness. We must immediately forgive the person who hurt us, stop rehashing the event in our mind, and immediately reach out to show love to that person. Being rejected is a part of life. In order to truly love someone we have to take the risk of being rejected. In order to reach out and love others, the risk of rejection is always there. We must shift our focus from avoiding rejection, to loving and serving others.

Sometimes when we live our life according to our passion and our destiny, others will try to convince us that we don't know what we're doing. Then after they realize that we're not going to change the way we live only to please them, they may reject us.

### **Keep Your Life In Balance**

One of our biggest struggles is to keep our life in balance. It is important to keep a balance between the areas of our physical, mental, social and spiritual growth. If we have difficulty doing this it is helpful to find a good role model and ask them how they keep everything in balance.

Sometimes after we become free from our addiction we turn our entire focus on obtaining money so we can buy everything we desire. However, satisfaction and contentment do not come through material things. Or we find ourselves developing an intimate relationship with the first person who shows an interest in us. Others will tell us to not go so fast in this relationship, but we don't want to hear that because pride creeps in and tells us we can handle it.

Soon we find ourselves so busy with making money and our new relationship that we don't notice we're on that slippery slope which is leading away from our plans for our awesome future of reaching our destiny. We are in that fast-track mode, trying to make up for lost time, but sometimes getting out of balance in the process.

So we need to pull out our schedule again to re-focus and see what areas are overloaded and which ones are being neglected. Then we must recognize our busyness and rearrange our schedule to get our lives back into balance.

### **Control Your Stress**

People try to control their stress in many ways; some are good and some aren't. The bad ways include turning to alcohol, drugs

or some other type of addiction, ignoring the stress, adding more activities to avoid dealing with the stress, being blind to it because we think *it won't happen to me*, blaming others, and talking about it but never dealing with what is causing the stress.

Stress is defined by Webster as: “a constraining force or influence; a state resulting from a stress; especially one of bodily or mental tension resulting from factors that tend to alter an existent equilibrium.”

The best way to control stress is to have a plan ahead of time of what we will do when we feel stressful. The first step is to recognize that stress is imposed by our own inaccurate thoughts or perceptions. No person or situation makes us stressful. How we respond mentally to a situation determines whether stress develops.

Stress also shows up when we try to take responsibility for others behavior that is not ours. We try to change people and when they don't change we get frustrated and stressed. But we are attempting to do something we weren't designed to do. Only God can change people and He can do so through our efforts to influence the other person. We can change how we respond to the other person's actions. It's not easy, but it can be done.

Not all stress is bad. It can motivate us to do what is needed. For instance, financial stress forces us to get out and look for a job. It requires us to establish a budget and learn how to regulate our spending. Because we need money, we do what is necessary to get along with people at work so we won't get fired.

Some of the causes of stress in relationships are lack of communication, mental tension, making wrong assumptions, judging motivations inaccurately, different goals, lack of spiritual unity, and many other factors.

Stress can also occur when we *think* certain things are about to happen or our thoughts focus on perceived negative situations. Many times we see a situation and think in our mind what the effects will be. Then we get stressed because we don't like the outcome we think will happen. However, because this outcome hasn't happened yet, we are only guessing and this guessing is causing our stress. The real outcome may be entirely different. But we get stressed thinking the worse is going to happen.

We do not know what tomorrow will bring. We do not know for sure how a situation will end up. Therefore, we need to stay focused on today and stop our worrying about tomorrow. We can use Tapping to help us deal with the stress, fears and anxieties.

### **Stand Firm Against Peer Pressure**

As adults we don't identify the peer pressure against us as quickly as we can see it in children and teenagers. But it is there and we need to know how to stand firm against it.

What are some of today's peer pressures?

- An addict who has overcome his addiction decides to visit his old drug buddies because he or she misses them. When they meet, they pressure him or her to go to the bar with them or to get high with them.
- An event you want to attend is scheduled at the same time as your weekly volunteering time.
- The addict's friends or family make fun of the addict's new outlook on life. They may even tell the addict that because he or she relapsed so many times in the past that permanent change is hopeless. So why try? Join them for some fun!

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

- The addict (or you) are working towards fulfilling your destiny and others want you to hang out with them *all* the time, even though the entire time is wasted.
- Others recognize that the addict or you have changed for the better but they keep putting you down because they think they know you and that you don't have the character to continue along this new path to its completion.
- If the addict has relapsed numerous times, the world is watching the addict and waiting for failure so they can say, "I told you so!"
- The addict and you are bombarded by the world's message to put yourself first because nobody else will take care of you.
- Because "everyone else is doing it" then it's okay for you to do it (whatever "it" is).
- If you've been stuck in a problem for a long time and you suddenly have freedom, you have internal pressure to do everything you couldn't do before because your situation prevented it.

These are some of the types of peer pressure. Once we recognize these pressures, we have a choice to make. Will we continue walking in our new life following our new path that leads to our destiny or will we submit to the desire before us. Remember, it only takes one time for us to open the door for the addiction or our old enabling behavior to stick its foot back into our lives.

We cannot deal with fire and not get burned. Submitting to our old temptations gets us in trouble every time. It never brings us the satisfaction we think it will.

## **Choose Your Friends Wisely**

When I worked at a rescue mission I watched many graduates eventually return to their old friends who did drugs. Soon the new life they built of having a job, having enough money to rent an apartment, and being involved at a church was destroyed because they ended up doing drugs or drinking. Their choice of friends brought them to destruction.

We think we have the strength to be around our old lifestyle, but we don't. When we are tempted we tell ourselves, *doing this "one thing" only this once won't hurt*, but it does.

Many times we want to go back and try to help the people still stuck in the same problem we left. While this is a good desire we usually try to do it too soon. It takes time for our character to change and our heart to get deeply rooted in our new lifestyle so we are strong enough to withstand the temptations that will face us when we go back to help our friends. After we have been away from that environment for a good length of time and established strong relationships with emotionally healthy people, then we can go back to our old friends and try to help them without causing our own failure.

People who have been stuck in their problems for a long time usually only have friends who have similar problems. Part of growing in our relationship with others is to establish healthy relationships. This is why I suggest attending a group focused around your hobby or passion in life, rather than a support group. At these types of groups you will meet people who are emotionally healthy, have a different perspective on life than you, and people who love you as you are. Usually you will find good role models; people whom you can ask for their input on how to handle certain problems.

When choosing our friends we must make sure we don't choose only people who will agree with us. When we walk with

the wise we will grow wise, if we walk with fools, we will suffer harm.

### **Submit to Authority**

I'm amazed at the problems people encounter and they can't recognize the situation occurred because of their lack of submission to authority. This authority can be your boss, the rules of the road, local and national government, and others. To submit to authority requires us to die to our self-centeredness and pride, thinking that we know what is best for us.

How does lack of submission lead us to relapse? Our lack of submission leads to arguments, contention, strife, pride, and getting fired from our job. Then when we can't handle the emotional turmoil we revert to our old patterns. When we don't see the problem as one of lack of submission to authority, we are blind on how to remedy our situation. We soon are traveling down the slippery slope once again to our old lifestyle.

### **Pursue Your Future Passionately**

If you don't have an awesome vision for your future to strive for, there's nothing to stop you from relapsing. If you're not moving forward in your life, you're sliding backward. Nothing in life is more fulfilling than pursuing your destiny for your life. When we are surrounded by others who are as passionate about this or a similar vision, it is easier to stay on the proper course.

Without this pursuit, we tend to go back to our old way of thinking and acting. Our prior mind-set of *I am what I am, I cannot change* creeps in and eventually takes control over us. To avoid this we must daily review our vision and the goals already set, as well as continue to add more goals. We must not give up on the vision before us.

## **Manage Your Attitudes**

We can go a long way on our attitudes alone. When people come against us, or it takes longer for us to get where we want, maintaining proper attitudes sustains us through difficult times.

Our best attitude is that all things are possible! The deeper our understanding is that we create our outside world by our inner world—through our thoughts—the more confident our attitude will be. We can then live with an attitude of expectancy where we purposely look for things to develop according to our vision for our lives.

Successful people do the right thing and then they feel good. Unsuccessful people wait until they feel good and then do the right thing. We cannot wait for our feelings to tell us when to do something. We must have an attitude of taking 100% responsibility for our life. It is up to us to do what is right. No one else can do it for us.

To keep the proper attitudes requires us to stop our negative thinking as soon as it starts and replace it with attitudes of contentment and thankfulness.

Many times after we've been giving and giving to others, we turn our focus toward our own needs and become need-minded instead of seed-minded. However, when we become need-minded we become more needy! We end up meditating upon what people aren't doing for us instead of counting our blessings. This eventually builds such a wide gap between what we think we need and what others are capable of providing that it cannot be fulfilled by anyone. Soon we are back to complaining and sliding down the slippery slope to our old lifestyle.

But hope is available immediately! The choice is ours. Along with choosing to dwell on good things, we also need to quit

hanging around people who only complain or gossip.

We will rise only to the level of our thinking (our attitudes). The opposite is also true—we will sink to the level of our thinking (negative attitudes). Therefore, what we feed our mind and our heart determines our beliefs and ultimately comes out in our thoughts, attitudes, emotions and actions.

Often when we face a life challenge we have an attitude of *I can't handle this right now*. We run away from the situation. But in order to grow we have to go through the trial and push ourselves to grow. If we don't, the same trials keep coming up in our life until we learn the lessons they're trying to teach us.

### **Discover Personal Development**

An often overlooked area to work on is that of personal development. This entails learning how to reach peak levels of performance and success in your spiritual, personal and business life. Of course, one must define what "success" is. Reaching your goals, changing your character, becoming the person you were created to be are all "successes."

However, in order for success to come, you must take action. The good life doesn't come to you automatically. Transforming your thought life is the first part. Now you need to add action to those new thoughts. Learning how to develop your life to operate at its fullest potential requires purposeful planning on your part.

It requires you to step out of your comfort zone! But the results are well worth it. So where do you get this training? It depends upon what you're going after. One mistake a lot of people make is to only look within the arenas they are aware of for answers. You can read biographies of people successful in the topic of your passion. You can research the Internet to determine what attitudes, skills and talents are required to reach

your destiny.

You can find many people to help you learn how to set and achieve goals, whether they are for your career, financial, family, leadership, spiritual, communication, marriage, etc. Don't ever quit learning!

When you begin to work on developing your life, don't allow those around you to stop you by their comments. Your growth will cause discomfort in them because they want to grow too, but don't want to pay the price.

Go ahead, pay the price, and become the person you need to be to reach your destiny! You can start by learning the skills and habits taught in chapters 7 and 8 of this book.

### **Forgive Quickly**

Nothing will get us back into our old ways of thinking and self-pity than not forgiving someone *immediately* when they hurt us.

It feels comfortable to soak in our negative self-talk and to think the world is out to get us! But if you want to avoid going back to the rut you recently got out of, things have got to change.

First, we have to look at all the wrong things we've said and done that have hurt others. Wouldn't we want that person to forgive us? Yes!

So, why can't we forgive others immediately when they hurt us? Because it's not in our nature.

Now, we have to make a choice—are we going to forgive that person immediately, or drag it out until we find ourselves sliding down that slippery slope back into our old problems?

It's your choice! And once you decide to do so, then you need to stop rehashing the event in your mind and allowing yourself

to get angry and emotionally upset again.

So, plan ahead, particularly when any holiday season is coming up. When you go to parties or hang around certain people, who is it that always pushes your hot buttons? Determine today that you will not get upset when they say things that hurt you. Decide to forgive them, refuse to allow your thinking to rehash the wrong done to you. Then go one step further—reach out and show love to that person—somehow, some way. Buy them an extra gift. Send them a funny card.

Your chances of successfully changing your life lies in your ability to plan ahead and back those plans with the proper beliefs and inward determination.

By staying focused on loving and serving others, it is easier to die to your own self-centeredness. The next two chapters will equip you to do this.

### **Application Questions**

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1) Plan Ahead – How can you plan ahead to respond differently to these triggers:

- a. People who push your buttons and you end up rehashing the past and getting upset.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. Your negative self-talk or stinking thinking. Playing the role of victim.

2) Plan Ahead – How can your addict friend plan ahead to respond differently to these triggers:

a. People who push your friend's buttons and he or she ends up rehashing the past and getting upset.

b. Your addict friend's negative self-talk or stinking thinking. Playing the role of victim.

3) Stay Connected to Others – Do you have some type of calendar to help keep you on track? Keep things in balance by putting on your calendar things like: spending time with emotionally strong people, family and/or friends. Take note of how much time elapses between these interactions. List who you want to spend time with and how often.

4) Stay Connected to Others – Does your addict friend have some type of calendar to help him or her keep track of things? Your addict friend can keep things in balance by putting on his or her calendar things like: spending time with emotionally strong people, family and/or friends. Take note of how much time elapses between these interactions. List who you think your addict friend would want to spend time with and how often.

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

5) Handle Rejection – How do you typically respond to rejection? Do you continually rehash the event in your mind and/or tell others about it? Can you forgive that person for that rejection? Once you forgive it is necessary to stop rehashing the event, and as soon as possible reach out to show love to that person. Who can you do this for right now?

6) Handle Rejection – How does your addict friend typically respond to rejection? Does he or she continually rehash the event in their mind and/or tell others about it? Can your friend forgive that person for that rejection? Once he or she forgives it is necessary to stop rehashing the event, and as soon as possible reach out to show love to that person. Who can you identify that your friend should do this for right now?

7) Keep Your Life in Balance – What areas of physical, mental, social, and spiritual growth do you want to work on first and make time for on your calendar? Perhaps these areas of growth were set aside as you focused on your financial needs and the struggle to survive your interactions with your addict friend.

8) Keep Your Life in Balance – What areas of physical, mental, social, and spiritual growth do you think your addict friend needs to work on first and make time for on his or her calendar?

9) Control Your Stress – You can use Tapping and changing your thoughts or perceptions to handle stress. List your top two stress triggers below. Some causes are: trying to fix or control your addict friend, believing the accusations and blame from the addict that it's your fault, financial strain because the addict took money to feed his or her addiction, hearing the sound of a beer can pop open, tracking your addict friend to verify that he or she is out drinking or abusing drugs again, lack of help from your addicted spouse with household chores or getting children ready for school, etc. Now use Tapping to reduce those stress levels.

10) Control Your Stress – Your addict friend can use Tapping to help change his or her thoughts or perceptions to handle stress. List what you see as your addict friend's top two stress triggers below.

11) Stand Firm Against Peer Pressure – Review the list of possible pressure areas from your peers. What are the top two areas? How can you better respond to these pressures? Do you have anyone who can hold you accountable to your new decisions? If not, who can you ask to help you?

12) Stand Firm Against Peer Pressure – Review the list of possible pressure areas your addict friend might have from his or her peers. What do you see as your friend's top two areas? How do you think your friend could better respond to these pressures? Does your addict friend have anyone who can hold

him or her accountable to these new decisions? (It should be an emotionally-healthy person, not an AA sponsor.) If not, who do you think would be a good person for your friend to ask for help?

13) Choose Your Friends Wisely – Do you have a few emotionally-healthy friends? People who are not in Al Anon or struggling with the same issues you are. Are you able to open up to these friends to share what's going on with your relationship with the addict? If you don't have these type of friends, look for groups whose focus is what your passion is. Join them and begin making great friends.

14) Choose Your Friends Wisely – Does your addict friend have a few emotionally-healthy friends? People who are not in AA or similar type of groups or struggling with the same addiction issues as your friend. Is your addict friend able to open up to these friends to share what's going on with trying to quit his or her addiction? If your friend doesn't have these type of friends, look for groups whose focus is what your addict friend's passion is. Your friend should join them and begin making great friends.

15) Submit to Authority – What areas of authority do you see yourself not submitting to? How do you respond emotionally when you reject that authority? If you did submit to that authority, how could you change your self-talk to allow yourself

to obey and remain calm? Write out any statements you could internally think at the moment of deciding whether to submit to authority.

16) Submit to Authority – What areas of authority do you see your addict friend not submitting to? How does your friend respond emotionally when he or she rejects that authority? If your addict friend did submit to that authority, how could he or she change the self-talk to allow himself or herself to obey and remain calm? Write out any statements you think your friend could internally think at the moment of deciding whether to submit to authority.

17) Pursue Your Future Passionately – What can you do on a daily basis to keep your awesome vision for your future at the forefront of your thoughts? Do you have a list of goals for this week that will help you pursue your vision? If not, create a list right now.

18) Pursue Your Future Passionately – What do you think your addict friend could do on a daily basis to keep his or her awesome vision for future at the forefront of his or her thoughts? Does your friend have a list of goals for this week that will help him or her pursue this vision? If not, have your friend create a list right now.

19) Manage your Attitudes – Do you choose your attitude when you wake up in the morning? What is the best attitude you can choose for today? How often do you wait for your feelings to get totally out of control before you remember you can choose a different attitude? How often do you say, "I can't handle this!" What attitude can you change that to?

20) Manage your Attitudes – Does your addict friend choose his or her attitude when he or she wakes up in the morning? How often does your friend wait for his or her feelings to get totally out of control before he or she remembers he or she can choose a different attitude? How often do you think your friend thinks, "I can't handle this!" How can you help your friend change his or her attitude?

21) Discover Personal Development – What books, webinars, events or classes could you take to improve yourself? List the item and also what area of your life you wish to improve.

22) Discover Personal Development – What books, webinars, events or classes could your addict friend take to improve his or her life? List the item and also what area of your friend's life it will improve.

23) Forgive quickly – Do you catch yourself saying, “I’m not ready to forgive that person”? You are waiting for your feelings to tell you it’s time. Forgiveness is for you! Who do you need to forgive right now? You do not need to verbally tell that person, forgive them in your heart now.

24) Forgive quickly – Do you hear your addict friend saying, “I’m not ready to forgive that person”? Who do you think your addict friend needs to forgive right now?



## 7

# Practice Powerful Skills For Personal Growth

*Mastering new skills brings new hope, confidence,  
and bigger dreams. Kathy Williamson*

You cannot expect a change in you or your circumstances until personal growth occurs. The skills in this chapter apply to both the addict and you. Some are easier to learn and implement quickly. Others require a conscious effort on a daily basis. I suggest you take one or two skills to work on at a time. The first skill of Tapping will assist you in getting over frustrations that pop up when you begin to implement the other skills and habits. Tapping is also the first skill the addict should learn as it will help him or her handle the negative emotions that make the addict want to escape from.

The process to resolve the underlying issues is a two-pronged approach. One prong is to use Tapping on each of the issues. The second prong is to discover one's passion in life and develop a plan to implement it in your life. This will give you something to switch your focus to when things get rough.

### **Tapping**

It's hard to make positive changes when you've got anxieties

and out-of-control emotions running your life. You know what you need to do to change, but you can't make the transition because all your unresolved internal triggers show up to stop you. If you don't know how to handle it, you stay stuck.

Imagine what your life would look like if you had a skill to help you deal with those anxieties and emotions when they come up. You could take back control of your life. You no longer need to withdraw from being the person you want to be. You can take massive action steps with confidence. Your dreams are no longer out of reach!

This one tool can help you and the addict:

- The addict can stop the physical and emotional cravings for his or her drug of choice.
- Handle the anxieties that creep into your life.
- Control your emotions.
- Help to identify and change your negative thoughts.
- Improve your confidence.
- Overcome your hurts from your past.
- Replace your negative self-talk with positive thoughts.
- Stretch out of your comfort zone to take new actions to change.
- Pursue your vision for your life with gusto!

In your Journal of Insights, write out issues, behaviors, or thoughts that you see need changed in your life immediately. Now prioritize them according to which one should be first, as it will have the most impact upon your daily life.

## What Is Tapping?

Tapping (also known as Emotional Freedom Technique – EFT) is an emotional version of acupuncture, except it doesn't use needles. It uses a two-prong approach wherein you (1) mentally "tune in" to specific issues while (2) stimulating certain meridian points on your body by tapping on them with your fingertips. A meridian is a set of pathways in your body along which vital energy flows.

The theory is that **the cause of all negative emotions is a disruption in the body's energy system**. It's like your negative emotion gets stuck inside one or more of these meridian pathways and stays there until it is relieved by using Tapping. Therefore, no matter how much counseling you get, or praying you do, or whatever else you do to try to get rid of your negative emotions, they remain in your meridian pathways until dealt with through this process.

This is great news because once you use Tapping, you can have quick results. In fact, you do not have to replay in your mind every detail of what caused that negative emotion in the first place. Your negative emotion is not caused by your "memory" of that event. Your energy flow in your body got disrupted at the time of the event. Therefore, you do not need to go into great detail of your memories. This means that doing Tapping does not bring on more bad emotional feelings.

Yes, you will be asked to briefly recall your problem, which may bring on some discomfort, but that is all. Then you apply Tapping to that event or feeling and release the emotion that is stuck in your meridian pathway.

Through Tapping we deal with the cause of the disruption in your energy flow, not the resulting negative emotion. Think of it this way:

Distressing Event causes:

Disruption in the Body's energy System causes:

Negative Emotion

Most counseling methods try to treat the memory behind the negative emotion, but fail to deal with the disruption in the body's physical energy system.

This disruption in the body's energy system causes all kinds of problems. They include guilt, anger, fears, phobias, anger, grief, anxiety, depression, traumatic memories, PTSD, worry, guilt, and all limiting thoughts.

The medical profession has long known that emotional issues affect our body's chemistry and, in turn, can lead to everything from rashes and headaches, to addictions, impaired immune systems, cancer, and many more issues.

Since a lot of physical problems are caused by our negative emotions, once we deal with the underlying causes of our negative emotions, our physical problems go away.

### **Free E-book**

Space does not allow me to go into full detail about the process. Therefore, I have created an e-book for addicts on how to use Tapping for their issues titled *Tapping Away Your Addiction*. This is the breakthrough addicts have waited for to stop all cravings and emotional struggles to allow full recovery! You can get a free copy of that e-book by downloading it at [www.MyFriendIsAnAddict.com/bonuses](http://www.MyFriendIsAnAddict.com/bonuses). I encourage you to review my e-book and use the issues relevant to your own life.

Some people may object to using Tapping for a variety of reasons. This is okay as it is not absolutely necessary. When I went through my addiction in the 1980s Tapping (known only as EFT at that time) was being discovered and developed. Thus, the principles in this book still work if you decide not to use Tapping.

## **Forgiveness Brings Freedom**

Before you approach helping the addict regarding forgiveness, I suggest you use it in your life first. Let's take a closer look at what forgiveness is and is not.

To turn our focus from the past, or from today's problems, to the future requires us to let go of some of the ugly stuff we've been hanging on to for many years. Without forgiveness, we will always have a string tied to our past, holding us back from reaching the fulfilled, purpose-filled life.

"I will never forgive him until he pays for what he did to me!" These words spew out of our mouths and turn our stomachs into knots. We carry a grudge (known as bitterness), sometimes for years, and wonder why we can't enjoy life. Our tendency is to rehash the wrong that was done to us, not for the purpose of designing retaliation, but because it feels good to do so. While the person who hurt us carries on with his or her life unaware of our grudge, we let our bitterness smolder like ashes, and at times fan them into a full-blown blaze. This festering wound in our spirit can only be healed by forgiving that person.

We also use what another person has done to us as an excuse for our current behavior. I am not denying the pain and hurt we endured, but we are responsible for our behavior, despite how others act. When bad things were done to us as children, we did not know how to properly react. Now, as adults, we are responsible for our current behavior. Sometimes that involves forgiveness and restoration.

### **Definition of Forgiveness**

Forgiveness is the act of setting someone free from an obligation to us that is a result of a wrong done to us. It also entails a commitment not to bring up again the wrong that was committed.

To fully understand forgiveness, it helps to know what it is not. It does not mean that what the person did was okay. It does not mean that with time the memory will go away (the pain will, but not the memory). It does not mean there won't be any consequences for the bad behavior.

Forgiveness is also not based upon our feelings. I hear many people say, "I'm not ready to forgive that person." They're waiting for their feelings to tell them that it's okay. Those feelings rarely come. Even in the midst of the tremendous hurt we may be going through, we must forgive the person who hurt us now.

Our hurt will be healed by our forgiving that person and moving on with our own life, not by our withholding forgiveness.

### **Types of Forgiveness and the Process**

We want to hang on to the memories and let our feelings fester to their fullest fit of turmoil. We want the other person to pay for their mistake. However, reality shows that we are the ones who suffer, while the other person hasn't a clue of how hurt we are over the situation. Part of this healing process is learning to forgive.

### **Forgiving Others**

Forgiveness is a choice. It's a decision we make based upon our desire to improve our life, not based upon our feelings. If we wait until we feel like forgiving people, we will never forgive. How soon after an event are we to forgive? Immediately. However, we don't immediately forget the event when others hurt us, but we can learn to allow the painful emotion to lessen over time.

Forgiveness is a process. Once we make the initial decision to forgive someone, we must decide whether we need to verbally tell that person we forgive them, or whether our internal

decision is sufficient. This decision will be determined by the individuals involved and the circumstances. Dealing with our personal emotional pain should not bring additional emotional pain to others.

After our act of forgiveness, when the memories surface, we must immediately remind ourselves we have forgiven that person. We are to stop our thought process from rehashing the event and stirring our emotions into a frenzy. This thought process is where most people enjoy replaying the event in their mind and allowing themselves to feel justified for their reactions (both mentally and physically) to the hurt. Some don't want to let go of the memory and the hurt. They want to hold it as an ace for when that person hurts them again, then they can recall *all* instances of hurt to attack the person. Sound familiar spouses?

This process is not easy nor is it a one-time event. Sometimes it takes years for the pain from the memories to completely go away. Note: I didn't say the memories will go away. Hopefully, the memories stir us to become better people because of what happened to us and the lessons we learned from them.

What we turn our thoughts toward is important. Instead of dwelling upon other problems we may have, our goal is to direct our energy toward our future. Involvement in a project big enough to immerse ourselves in is what we're looking for.

### **Seeking Forgiveness**

When we become aware that we have hurt someone, we are to go to that person as soon as possible and ask that person to forgive us.

This perspective differs from the above section on forgiving others. In that scenario, a person has hurt us and has not asked

us for forgiveness. Here is a scenario under this section that we may not recognize: as a child, our parents did something that caused us great pain, and over the years we developed bitterness toward our parents. This bitterness now affects our relationship with our parents. As an adult, we are to forgive the things done to us as a child. Depending upon our relationship with our parents, we need to ask our parents for forgiveness for the bitterness we have or had toward them. However, if doing so would make things worse (i.e., they are unaware you are bitter toward them, nor do they know why), then it may not be a good idea to verbally tell them you forgive them. It helps to write out your request for forgiveness, detailing the reasons, so you can get it out of your mind for good, and then tear up the paper.

### **Forgiving Ourselves**

What I see a lot of today is not giving or receiving forgiveness and staying stuck in the realm of feeding upon our guilt and also the sympathy we get from others. We enjoy our pity-parties. However, they lead to self-hatred every time we try to do better and we fail. We are the hardest person on ourselves. It's time to stop looking at the negative and start living in the positive. Forgiving ourselves is the first step to let go of this bondage we find ourselves in.

### **Restoring Relationships**

After forgiveness has been given or received, we are to take the initiative to restore broken relationships. It's up to the other person whether he or she will accept our attempt at reconciliation. A lot of time should not elapse between the time of the hurtful event, our forgiveness, and our attempts at reconciliation. The more time allowed to pass, the harder hearts become—both ours and the other person's.

Restoration efforts should have the proper motivation and attitude. We are to lay aside our selfish desires and to love

others unconditionally. Thus, our motivation is to put others ahead of our own desires. Because of our right motivation and our outpouring of our love, miracles do happen.

### **Hindrances to Forgiving**

If you feel like something inside is stopping you from seeking forgiveness, review the following hindrances and see if any of them apply to you.

*Pride.* Forgiving others may make us appear to be weak. We also enjoy the attention and sympathy we receive from others who know we've been wronged.

*Control.* We want to make sure the person is punished, in case God forgets. We won't release the person into God's hands.

*Ignorance.* We've not been taught how to respond to hurts and painful situations. We find it difficult to forgive because we haven't experienced others forgiving us.

### **The Keys to Forgiving**

One of the keys to a forgiving spirit is to see the freedom it will bring us, and perhaps a restoration of the relationship.

A second key is that we have to want to change. We must want to rid ourselves of the guilt, allow peace to fill us and then move on with our life.

### **Results of Forgiveness**

When we think of forgiving others we usually don't think of the benefits and how our life will be changed for the better.

*Freedom from bondage.* We have instant freedom from our internal turmoil. Our bitterness is gone. We don't feel tied to our past any longer.

*Pain from memories begins to fade.* As we let go of our grip on the past, the pain from our memories begins to fade. As the pain lessens, we spend less time dwelling upon our past.

*We see the forgiven person in a different light.* We can slowly change how we feel towards the person we forgave.

*Possible reconciliation.* Relationships now have the freedom to grow and develop into healthy, loving relationships.

As you can see from the above, forgiveness is something we must do to get rid of the bitterness, resentment and anger. This is something we must do daily, even for the small things that people do that affects us.

### **Build Confidence To Do Anything**

I have met a lot of addicts who are creative people. Unfortunately, they have never been challenged to do great things, nor shown the way to channel their energies into something productive. They have dreams but rarely do they have someone to encourage them to live out those dreams. This lack of encouragement leads many into having low self-esteem or confidence in their abilities.

The words confidence and self-esteem can be interchangeable. Confidence is described as "belief in oneself and one's powers or abilities; self-confidence; self-reliance; assurance," while self-esteem is described as "a realistic respect for or favorable impression of oneself; self-respect."

Spouses and friends of addicts lose their confidence after being continuously verbally attacked by the addict blaming them for their problems. Over time they tend to lose a proper perspective of their abilities to handle life's ups and downs.

## **What is Your Confidence Level Now?**

The first step is to identify the confidence levels of you and the addict. On a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the highest level, where do you see yourself? Where do you see the addict?

What makes you rank yourself or your addict friend at that level? In your Journal of Insights, list both your and the addict's attributes, or lack of them, that make you resonate with that level. These attributes include:

- Your negative or positive thoughts
- Backing away from or seizing opportunities
- Prior failures or successes
- Ability to keep commitments or agreements
- What others have said about you either negative or positive
- Personal hygiene habits and the way you dress

Now that you know where you are starting, let's look at how to increase confidence. If you feel anxiety as you attempt these new actions, use Tapping to calm yourself and give yourself courage.

## **How to Increase Confidence**

Referring back to chapter 3 regarding changing your beliefs to change your future, that content plays a big part in helping you identify your false beliefs about yourself and how to change them. If you don't know why you have negative thoughts, remember the back-track sentence of "I cannot do this because ..." and fill in the rest of the sentence. Fear stops many from trying new things. However, if you look at your past, you may have done something similar and were successful at it. Let's use

the list of attributes you discovered in identifying your current level of confidence and discuss how to stretch yourself to increase your confidence.

- Your negative or positive thoughts. You must stop rehashing any negative thoughts or believing negative statements the addict may want you to believe. Instead, dwell upon positive thoughts about who you are and what an awesome future you can have. Write these positive statements in your Journal of Insights so you can easily refer to them in the future when you get stuck in a negative thought loop pattern. One thought I use to instantly stop negative or worrisome thoughts is *I like myself*. I repeat this either in my mind or out loud until I overcome the negative energy that was building through the previous anxious thoughts.
- Backing away from or seizing opportunities. The past is over, but do you know why you backed away from opportunities? Was that fear real? How will you handle fears and insecurities when they arise with future opportunities? Sometimes we need to have a “fake it until we make it” attitude. A lot of our beliefs cannot be changed through intellectual knowledge alone. Action is required. Thus, “act as if” you have those qualities needed for that situation, and they will show up.
- Prior failures or successes. What are the big failures and successes from your childhood to this date? What lessons did you learn from each? How can you take those lessons and apply them to your current situations?
- Ability to keep commitments or agreements. Nothing hurts us more than saying we will do something and then fail to keep that commitment. What stopped you from carrying through on commitments? What was the internal struggle? What specific fearful thoughts were

there? Is there a pattern? How can you turn those fears around so you can keep your commitments? If you can't keep small commitments, you won't keep large ones. Start small and build up your confidence.

- What others have said about you either negative or positive. We are trained to focus on the negative. We can be told 99 positive things about ourselves, yet we rehash the one negative statement made to us. We must forgive that person for what they said and then stop rehashing our negative thoughts. Do you keep a box of notes or cards where someone said something positive about you? If not, start collecting them. Even an email or a social media post can be printed and put into this box. Periodically review them to give yourself an emotional boost!
- Personal hygiene habits and the way you dress. Have you noticed that when you dress a little better than you normally do that you feel better about yourself? This is so simple and it works every time. Taking a shower, putting on makeup, spraying yourself with perfume, and dressing in your favorite color or outfit brightens your spirit and makes your day wonderful! You will notice you walk a little taller and things don't bother you as much. Try it, it works every time.

This is not a complete list of things you can do to increase your confidence and self-esteem. I suggest you do a Google search on other ways to build confidence and self-esteem.

### **Establish Boundaries**

Boundaries are established to help you—not in an effort to influence the addict. It is possible the addict changes as a result of the boundaries you implement. Due to the fact your friend has had free reign to do whatever he or she wants, when you begin

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

to institute boundaries, the addict will fight back. It is best if you institute only one boundary at a time. When it is sufficiently established and heeded to, then add another one. Here are some suggested boundaries common to people living with an addict. These relate to the addict's behavior. Boundaries for your behavior are discussed afterwards.

1. No drugs or alcohol are allowed around me or in the house.
2. Your drug-using friends are not allowed in our home.
3. Should you be arrested, I will not bail you out nor pay for your lawyer.
4. I will not accept any more insults or ridicule.
5. I will not give or loan you any more money, whether it is to pay bills, buy food or put gas in your car.
6. I refuse to lie or cover for you anymore, no matter what the circumstances.
7. If you aren't here at dinner time, you are not welcome to show up and join us for other activities during the evening.

This is not a complete list of boundaries, only the most popular ones.

However, how can you still improve your life if the addict refuses to abide by the boundaries you set out? It is not the addict's behavior that gets you upset, it is your response to it. You do have complete control over this. Let's discuss some boundaries you can put on yourself to improve your life.

- Don't take the addict's accusations personally. Find a phrase to tell yourself when your addict friend begins to verbally attack you. When I was working on getting my life back after my ex-husband sucked it out of me I

would tell myself, *This is his problem, not mine. Don't get pulled into his argument. I am on the way up in my life and won't let anyone pull me back down!* Then I refused to verbally respond.

- Stop rehashing the addict's repeatedly broken promises, the addict's lies or blaming you as the reason for abusing alcohol or drugs. Switch your focus to working on your life and building an awesome future.
- When around your friends, if you're used to sharing how upset you are at your addict friend/spouse, it's time to stop. In fact, I suggest you get some new friends, perhaps people involved in your passion in life. You need to be around healthy-minded people in normal settings. If you are attending Al Anon, it might be better to slowly reduce your attendance. Their philosophy is that the addict cannot be changed because the addiction is a disease that will continue for the addict's lifetime. However, as explained in this book, once the underlying issues are identified, resolved and the addict learns how to handle negative emotions (through Tapping), the need to escape from life through an addiction no longer exists.
- If physical abuse is happening, determine to get out of the situation as soon as possible. The addict's promises to change will not happen unless he or she gets help on how to handle anger. If you separate and the addict eventually gets help, the possibility of reconciliation still exists. But you need to do everything for your safety, and especially if you have children. Ask yourself, "How bad does the abuse need to get before I will leave?" Near death? You don't need to live a life of fear. Act now to make a plan to leave. Call the National Domestic Helpline for ideas

## **Bring Love Into Every Situation**

Every person seeks love and significance in life. Love takes on a life of its own and can do things we can't do. It fills the deepest hole in our soul. Most people do not understand that, according to the Bible, when love is brought into a situation, it never fails. What does that mean? One meaning is that God's love toward us never fails nor never ends. God's love is unconditional and will never be withdrawn from us.

What does this have to do with bringing love into every situation when human love can be finicky? Even though our love is not pure like God's love, we sometimes make it conditional or hold back until we feel it is okay to love that person. But if we make a decision to show love no matter what, it takes on a magical presence and does things beyond what we are trying to accomplish. However, how do we exactly show love to people?

## **Know The 5 Love Languages**

As different personalities exist, so do different ways to express love. Understanding these differences will transform every relationship you're in. Once you know your love language, then you can share it with others so they will know how to show their love toward you in a manner that you will know it is love.

You also need to determine what the love language is for each of the people with whom you interact on a regular basis. This can be done by observing the person, or by asking them. They may not know at first, but after reading the following material you can help them to identify their own love language.

I would suggest you read the book *The 5 Love Languages: The Secret To Love That Lasts* by Gary Chapman. Also, *The 5 Love Languages of Teens: The Secret To Loving Teens Effectively* by Gary Chapman. Basically, five types of love languages exist; and within each type there exists a variety of

ways to express that type of love. Let's take a brief look at each of them.

Words of Affirmation – Do you crave compliments, words of encouragement, or words of kindness spoken to you in a humble manner? While most people need words of affirmation, some can get along fine with only a word or two now and then. But if you base someone's love towards you based upon how often they compliment you or give you words of encouragement, then this type of love may be your main theme.

Quality Time – The type of time focused on within this language is togetherness time. This is where you give each other focused attention with quality conversation. You share experiences, thoughts, feelings and desires. It's seen as a time to build a relationship, not to work on a project or on a problem to be solved. Rather than seeking advice, you are seeking understanding. It's a time of sympathetic listening with a view to understanding the other person's thoughts, feelings and desires. Together you learn how to reveal yourselves to each other. This quality time can include quality activities.

Receiving Gifts – What woman doesn't like to receive gifts? So you have to compare the other types of love languages to see whether this type of love is your main way of feeling loved. Gifts include both tangible and intangible things. Being physically present with someone during a crisis is powerful in this category.

Acts of Service – You tend to do things for others or you expect to receive acts of service from others. It's important for you and the other person to know what the *specific type of service* is that you recognize as love being shown toward you. Your spouse may do a lot of acts of service, but if they're not the ones that you consider important, it doesn't count—and he or she won't know that unless you tell them.

Physical Touch – Some people are natural “touchers” while others can’t stand to be touched. This can cause a lot of problems if one desires to be touched and never gets touched (hugs, hand on the shoulder, hold hands, etc.). This is an area where you usually have to let your spouse know that you enjoy being touched and that it is a way you know he/she loves you. If you don’t tell your spouse, they will never know and you will continue to feel unloved. Most women deeply desire to be held whenever they cry and extra hugs during a time of crisis.

While the above is a brief description of each type of love language, it helps to understand that we usually show love to others in the same manner that we want it shown to us. So if you see yourself already demonstrating love to someone else through one of the above situations, look inside yourself to see if that is how you also want to be shown love.

Many times children grow up thinking they are unloved. In reality, they needed to be shown love in one manner, but their parents showed love in their own way, which did not signal love to the child. Looking back on your childhood, do you recognize this?

Understanding these love languages is vital to help you learn how to develop healthy, loving relationships.

Another eye opener is to look at your children, especially if you’re having trouble with your teens, and determine their love language.

As you read through these five skills I hope you took notes in your Journal of Insights. For a new skill to become engrained so it becomes natural requires constant repetition. When you master these new skills it will bring you new hope, confidence and allow you to dream bigger. The next chapter identifies five additional habits that will help you influence the addict as well as improve your life.

## Application Questions

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1) Tapping – Have you begun to use Tapping on your emotions? Which emotions do you find yourself using it for the most? List both negative emotions and the positive emotions you want.

2) Tapping – Has your addict friend begun to use Tapping on his or her emotions? How has it improved his or her disposition?

3) Forgiveness Brings Freedom – Who from your past have you not forgiven for something that person did to you or did not do? Will you forgive that person right now? If not, why not? Explain. Do you need to forgive yourself? For what? What keeps you from forgiving others or yourself?

4) Forgiveness Brings Freedom – Who from your addict friend's past has he or she not forgiven for something that person did to him or her or did not do? Does your friend need to forgive himself or herself? For what? What keeps your friend from forgiving others or himself or herself?

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

5) Build Confidence to Do Anything – On a scale of 1-10, where is your confidence level? Why do you put it at that level? What will you do to increase your confidence?

6) Build Confidence to Do Anything – On a scale of 1-10, where is your friend's confidence level? Why do you put it at that level? What can your friend do to increase his or her confidence?

7) Establish Boundaries – What boundaries do you want to establish to influence your addict friend's behavior?

8) Establish Boundaries – What boundaries do you want to establish for yourself regarding your addict friend's behavior?

9) Bring Love Into Every Situation – What is your love language? How does that show up in your life? How can you share with your addict friend this information, along with ways you would like him or her to show love towards you?

10) Bring Love Into Every Situation – What is your addict friend's love language? How does that show up in his or her life? How can you now show love in a way your addict friend will recognize it is love?



## 8

# **Implement 5 Habits To Turn Dreams Into Reality**

*If you stop learning, you stop living.* Kathy Williamson

Your habits determine your ability to succeed in life. Fortunately skills and habits can be learned. However, before I talk about the five habits to develop, let's take a look at some current habits that may need to be eliminated—either because they take too much of your time or they bring you down. Remember, one goal mentioned in chapter 4 was to shift your focus to spend 80% of your time working on building your awesome future, and 20% on identifying and resolving underlying issues. Developing these habits falls into the 80% bracket.

### **Habits To Stop**

Most people don't think about what habits they need to stop in order to grow into the person they want to become. While most people have a "to do" list, you should also have a "not to do" list. Add any of the following habits you engage in to your "not to do" list. Once you become aware of this activity, it will be easier to quickly remove these habits.

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

- Activities that do nothing to move you forward in life. These include watching TV, surfing the Internet, watching endless YouTube videos, reading social media posts and watching videos on Facebook, and a myriad of other activities that do not add to the quality of your life.
- Spending time with friends rehashing how bad your life is and how hopeless you feel. While it feels good to have others give you sympathy, most do not have any helpful insights to help you move forward.
- Having pity parties. Yup, you've got to stop feeling sorry for yourself and thinking your future is hopeless. You *can* become the person you need to be to carry out your dreams.
- Stop trying to rescue the addict. Recognize the times when you set aside living your life to spend time trying to get the addict out of a problem he created because of his addiction.

Now let's look at the top five habits that will help you turn your dreams into reality. These dreams include both yours and the ones your addict friend.

### **Choose the Right Attitude**

Attitude is a choice, like happiness is a choice. Many believe they do not have any choice over their attitudes. An attitude results from our life's experiences, beliefs, and self-talk. It is the self-talk aspect that allows us to make a choice. We can choose an attitude of self-encouragement and self-motivation, or we can choose an attitude of self-defeat and self-pity. This power to choose resides in everyone.

Our habitual bad attitudes usually come from our past experiences and events. These can result in low self-esteem, fear, stress, anger, resentment, and an inability to handle

change. If you continually tell yourself *I can't handle this!* then you won't be able to handle it. However, if you change your self-talk to *I can handle this. It may be uncomfortable for a little while, but I can get through this*, then you will get through the situation—and with less stress and anxiety.

Before we get into how to improve your attitude, let's take an inventory. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the best attitude, how have your attitudes been over the last 7 days? Were you aware you could have chosen a better attitude at any time? I know that interacting with an addict can bring out the worse in us. We often blame the addict for how we behave. Our attitudes become negative, hopeless and cynical. Hopefully you already identified some of your stinking thinking in the application questions throughout this book. Let's look at some ways to purposely turn around your attitudes.

**Affirmations.** Positive affirmations repeated throughout the day will help rewire your brain. Speaking them out loud is more powerful. Affirmations are best if they are made up of words charged with power, conviction and faith. What type of affirmations will help you best? You have an awesome vision for your life—the different aspects of that vision can be turned into energy-charged affirmations.

**Visualization.** Tied in with affirmations is the process of using powerful visualization. Take those aspects of your vision for your future and visualize the completed scene. See yourself in it. What emotions would you feel? What would people be saying to you or what type of compliments would they be telling you? When you get upset because of the addict's behaviors or his or her attitude, you can pull yourself out of that situation, find a place to sit in quietness and use your affirmations and visualization techniques. You can write them down ahead of time in case you get too upset to remember what they are. Then you will have something to draw you out of the entanglement with the

addict.

The Power of Words. All words have power, whether they are positive or negative. They have the power to bring into your life more of what you talk about. If you say “I hate this!” then more things will show up in your life for you to hate. If you say “I would not be able to handle things if the addict \_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank).” Then when that thing shows up in your life, you won’t be able to handle it. To be able to handle situations the addict puts himself or herself in (which makes you mad), or how the addict might accuse you as being the reason he or she drinks or does drugs (which makes you feel guilty for doing even normal things), then you must use your words to change your attitude and situation.

Connection to Your Spiritual Power. Attitudes can change quickly if you connect to your spiritual power, knowing that you are not alone in your situation. I am a Christian and have always found that when I go to God about my situation and ask for His help or guidance, my attitude improves. I recognize it isn’t completely up to me to change things, that God is on my side and He will help me as I bring Him into the situation.

Exercise. What does physical exercise have to do with improving your attitude? Everything. First, it will take your mind off of whatever is bugging you. Second, it releases endorphins and other chemicals in the brain to help you feel better. Third, you will feel better about yourself after exercising because you did something great for yourself.

### **Control Your Thoughts and Words**

I have already covered a lot in this book about controlling your thoughts and words. However, this is not a minor adjustment. It requires constant observation of your thoughts and words. The best way to start this change is writing down your negative thoughts, self-talk, and words you have had in the last seven

days. Even as you read this book you might have negative thoughts or beliefs come up on what is being taught. Write those down too.

Throughout the entire process of change set forth in this book this is a key element to be successful. You must take control of your thoughts and words in order to:

- Avoid pity parties
- Stop getting into unnecessary arguments with the addict
- Control and replace your knee-jerk responses
- Feel more in control of yourself in stressful situations
- Keep yourself moving forward, especially if the addict fails to respond positively to your attempts to influence him or her
- Be a better influence on your children during these stressful times

Earlier I indicated that the picture in our mind *always* wins over our willpower. How do we create that picture in our minds? By our thoughts, the words we speak, and even the physical pictures we look at. A lot of times we have a knee-jerk reaction to something the addict does and immediately our mind *pictures* all the prior times he did this stupid thing and how hopeless we felt each time—then our emotions take over leading us down the path to misery again. We must stop the rehashing of past events and replace those thoughts with a picture in our mind of what we want in life. A picture of something good that we have control over making it happen.

Once I decided to take back my life and stop letting my former husband suck the life out of me—every time he tried to pull me into an argument I thought to myself, *his anger is his*

*problem, not mine, and I refuse to play the game with him.* I didn't need to prove that he was wrong in what he was saying. So I would keep my mouth shut and let him fume. I would not let my emotions respond in a negative way. It was a real struggle to keep myself from jumping into the argument.

Now let's turn the table and look at how to improve our lives by thinking and speaking the right words. In the previous section on choosing the right attitude I shared how words have power. It is important to start today to change the words you speak. Here are some examples:

- I will remain calm, even though my addict friend is trying to get me upset.
- I am worthy of living a life of abundance and freedom.
- I can handle this situation (whatever it is that the addict is doing). It may be a little uncomfortable, but I can get through this.
- My identity is not tied to what the addict does or does not do. I am a great person and no one can take that from me.

Here are some sample statements the addict can use:

- I have an awesome future to pursue and I will not let my focus be changed.
- I choose to believe I am capable of overcoming my addiction.
- I take full responsibility for my life. I no longer blame others for my drinking or drug abuse.
- I desire to (speak out his vision for his life) and I commit to seeing it come true.

- I refuse to let my emotions and negative self-talk tell me what to do.
- I can handle these emotions of hurt. It may be uncomfortable for a while, but I choose to forgive whoever was involved, stop rehashing the event, and move on with my life.
- I like myself!

When you find yourself stuck in a negative thought loop, repeatedly speak out loud, "I like myself" and you will find your emotions calming down and your thoughts shifting to better ones.

### **Get Rid of Labels & Excuses**

Another aspect of controlling our words is to get rid of labels and excuses. "Hello, my name is Joe and I'm an alcoholic" is a phrase known to many who attend various types of support groups modeled after Alcoholics Anonymous. Despite the fact that Joe has not had any alcohol for five years, he still calls himself an alcoholic and attends a weekly support group. But is he? He tells himself, "Once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic, I'll never change." Joe keeps himself chained to his past, afraid to let go and grab hold of his future.

Identifying oneself as an addict becomes part of the person's identity, when in reality it is something he does, not who he is. If a person believes it is part of his or her core personality, then it becomes engrained and is more difficult to remove until he or she learns the truth. However, once a person identifies that the label they are using is not part of who they are, then they can begin to change, as well as stop using it as an excuse. This goes against what addicts are being taught today—that it is a disease, it's not their fault, and they can only learn how to live with it but will never get completely rid of it. I hope by now you see that

this is false.

Labels are prolific today. Some are so inclusive that no matter what behavior problem we may have, we can find a label for it. Even normal behavior can qualify to fall under one of these labels. A few of the widely used labels include:

alcoholic	abused person
addict	adult child
codependent	mentally ill
enabler	victim
low self esteem	disease

We like labels because we're looking for something that tells us why we act certain ways. We think they give us reasons for our behavior and provide boundaries for us to conform to. However, labels add more problems, rather than assist us in overcoming them.

Labels are descriptive, not diagnostic. Their definitions are general and can be applied to even good behavior. As we review the use of labels, let's keep in mind who determines their definition and who decides what is good or bad behavior.

To gain a proper perspective of the impact of labels, we will discuss:

Five common problems with labels

A look behind the labels

God's response to labels

### **Five Common Problems With Labels**

Following are some common problems with labels, few of

which are explicitly talked about.

*Used As An Excuse.* If we examine the words we say, we may find we're using labels as an excuse for our behavior or lack of behavior. Problems misidentified as diseases allow a person to think he or she is not responsible for their behavior. Yet, the alleged cure for the disease is behavior modification, not medical intervention. While a big debate exists about labeling certain behavior as diseases, I encourage you to review your circumstances in light of the material presented in this book.

I do not deny that some physical conditions affect how a person acts and reacts. (However, if your doctor says you're suffering from alcoholism, depression, addictions, eating disorders and that these are diseases, this is what should not be accepted as being truth.) If a thorough medical checkup does not reveal any true medical condition, I challenge you to look at your life from a different perspective.

*Victimization Role.* The label of victim entraps a person into seeing the whole world through this narrow viewpoint. This particular label is rarely spoken of by the victim. Rather, it is a role he or she plays in life. The victim cannot see his or her position of responsibility in the situation. They portray the image of being helpless, a victim of circumstances and upbringing. They are in a reactive role to life, rather than comprehending they can learn to respond differently to their situations.

*Forever Trapped.* An underlying feeling of "I am what I am, I cannot change" accompanies many of the labels. The more we repeat this self-talk, the deeper this feeling is embedded. The adage of "once an alcoholic always an alcoholic" is not true. By accessing the proper motivation (healthy relationships and having a purpose in life) and learning to live according to the truths you're learning, your old habits can be put aside and never touched again.

Labels stick to us even after we've outgrown them. We continue to claim them by repeating the words out of habit. People view us in light of the labels we proclaim. Such a stigma is difficult, but not impossible, to get rid of.

*Endless Therapy.* If counseling focuses only on specific problems and not on helping us get our entire lifestyle in line with focusing on implementing our awesome future, it can take years for change. Labels force us to look only at specific issues. However, the wrong motivation which caused the initial problem, and then the subsequent wrong responses, should be identified in all areas of our lives and dealt with. If not, the problem continues in other areas, thus keeping us in the proverbial counseling cycle. This cycle may not be with only one counselor. Many addicts find themselves switching counselors for one reason or another. This endless trap is easy to get sucked into when counselors are not properly trained on how to bring permanent change to an addict.

A common misunderstanding exists that it takes a long time to overcome problems. This is simply not true. In situations where our problems are properly identified, the proper motivation is found and applied, change can be quick and permanent. With proper beliefs and motivation, we'll think properly, and we can overcome any obstacle.

Another area which keeps us stuck in our problems and prolongs our transformation process is a lack of change of focus from being self-centered to being others-centered. This change of focus should begin immediately, even while the underlying problems are being worked on. We spend a lot of time and emotional energy on our problems. If we don't have something else to turn our focus toward, we tend to dig up minor problems and turn them into major ones. If all of our problems were resolved, what are we to think about? Start focusing on today and the future and being involved in a plan that utilizes your

passion in life.

*Normal Behavior Characterized as a Disease.* In January 1996 an article in the *Los Angeles Times* entitled "Death of a Label" stated that the label of "codependency" was finally dead. Somehow, society hasn't heard this good news. The recovery movement is keeping this label alive and well, to the detriment of those stuck in their addiction and those close to them. Society has a tendency to label kind, caring givers as diseased. Codependent characteristics are typically feminine traits and, today, have nothing to do with alcoholism.

Codependency, along with a proliferation of other labels, has gained access to the classification of disease by the medical and psychology industries. However, what classifies the behavior as either normal or bad, depends upon the motivation behind it. Since codependency covers a multitude of behaviors, an in-depth look at each person's situation is required to uncover the exact behavior and the wrong motivations behind it.

### **A Look Behind The Labels**

Let's look at the world's definitions of a couple of these labels and then what the truth is.

*Addictions*—A person feels he has no control over the use of certain items, be it drugs, alcohol, food, gambling, sex, work, exercise, use of the Internet, etc. It is now classified as a disease and people are told "it's not your fault."

*Reality:* A person makes these choices for various reasons. Man's heart is self-centered and does things to please himself. Here are some of the reasons people stay stuck in addictions:

- Life is boring
- They're afraid that working on their problems will be too painful

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

- The addiction feels good
- They don't know what to do with their free time
- Peer pressure
- It's a way of handling stress or emotional anxieties
- They've given up any hope for change

We need something bigger than "me, myself, and I" to draw us out of our rut—such as using our passion-filled vision as an avenue to reach out to love and serve others.

*Codependent*—A person gets his or her self worth, security and happiness only from other people. They sacrifice themselves to please others, even if it means doing something wrong. Being codependent is bad—one must become self-sufficient.

*Reality:* We were created to depend upon each other. Woman was created to be loving, caring, compassionate, giving, committed, a helpful companion or partner for her spouse, emotional, concerned, a mother, etc. However, we are not to go against our moral values in order to please someone else. A lack of knowing how to communicate and how to develop healthy relationships is present in people who call themselves codependent.

*Adult child of an alcoholic*—This term was originally applied to an adult who as a child had one or two alcoholic parents. It attempted to identify the dysfunctional behavior of said adult. However, the term has been shortened to "adult child," which now focuses upon the "child in each of us" who has not matured because of the hurt still inside of the adult which the child received during childhood. They promote that the path to freedom requires a person to go back and re-live the painful experiences of their childhood.

*Reality:* When good role models are absent, a child does not learn proper communication and relationship skills. Thus, as adults, they attempt to get their needs met in unhealthy ways. Many dynamics to the family structure have eroded during the last 20-30 years:

- Lack of communication
- No healthy demonstration of love
- No touching
- No encouraging
- Lack of family time together (around the dinner table, evenings, weekends, vacations)
- Lack of commitment in marriages
- The invasion of alcohol, drugs and the Internet
- The medicating of children mislabeled with ADD or ADHD
- The self-centered approach of parents (passed on to their children)
- Unresolved problems (lack of forgiveness and restoration of relationships)
- Lack of personal responsibility
- Cell phones that disrupt face-to-face conversations and sharing of real communication and love

We do not need to re-live our past. We are to forgive others, take responsibility for our action today, and walk toward maturity. If we change from attending a support group to attending a group focused around our passion, we will find good adult role models who will encourage us in our growth.

What labels do you see the addict or yourself using to

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

describe your situation or yourself? Listen to yourself during the day and become aware of the words you use. As indicated earlier, our words contain power and we must be careful that we don't promote negative outcomes in our lives unconsciously.

Write down the labels you use for your addict friend and for yourself. How can you stop using those labels? What positive label could you use instead? Here are a few examples:

Victorious

Unique

Conqueror

Go-getter

Beautiful

Inspiring

Next to the list of labels you have for the addict and/or yourself, write out new positive labels and start using them.

### **God's Response to Labels**

I want to make a quick note about how God responds to labels. When you research names in the Bible many of them were changed by God. When He wanted to do something through that person He changed their name (label) to something that had a more positive meaning. While man may have named himself or herself in a negative way, God has better plans and changes the name to what they will become!

Whenever their new name was spoken, that name was filled with faith and power. The person eventually became what their new name represented. Remember, the words we speak have power, even something as insignificant as our name.

### **Serve Others**

Have you ever reached out to someone to love and serve them and when you left you felt better than they did? In fact, you liked that feeling so much that you couldn't wait to get back to the situation of loving and serving others so you could

experience that feeling again.

That is the emotional fuel you are seeking to pull yourself out of a negative situation and into a better future. Add to that the fact of using your passion in life as that avenue to reach out to love and serve others and you are well on your way to a better life.

However, a lot of people feel they need to get their life straightened out before they could be of any value of helping others. This is furthest from the truth. First, none of us have our lives completely straightened out. We all continuously grow throughout our lives. The sooner you can find an outlet to do this, the quicker you will overcome your problems.

Where do you find these opportunities? Find groups of people who like to do the same things you do. If you are good at something, is there a place where you can teach others how to do it? Search the Internet to find local groups. Also look for groups that interest you even if you have never done that activity. It can be fun to stretch to do something you've always wanted to do but didn't know where to do it.

Being around new people, especially emotionally healthy people, helps you see other ways of handling problems, ways to strengthen relationships, receive encouragement from people who have already walked the road you are on, and a myriad of other advantages.

### **The 5 Second Rule**

Author and speaker Mel Robbins wrote a book entitled *The 5 Second Rule*. She teaches you how to transform your life, work, and confidence with everyday courage. Over 8 million people have discovered this simple secret to changing anything. If you can count 5- 4- 3- 2- 1... and then take physical action, you can have everything you want.

It takes courage to change. Where do we find that courage? Most of us get right up to that line we know we need to cross over in order to change. Then we back down and never step into our greatness. Mel's *5 Second Rule* assists us and gives us the courage to step over that line (whether the line is imaginary or real) and do whatever we have been afraid to do.

Her book covers areas like: how to become the most productive person, improve your health, increase productivity, end procrastination, how to become happy, stop worrying, end anxiety, beat fear, become fulfilled, build real confidence, pursue passion, enrich relationships, and live the life you were created to live.

What is the *5 Second Rule*?

The moment you have an instinct to act on a goal,  
you must 5- 4- 3- 2- 1 and physically move or  
your brain will stop you.

It's that simple, with profound results. You can either count backwards in your thoughts, or say it out loud. The important thing is to physically move at the end of the countdown.

Where can you use this rule in your life? Almost anywhere. It can help you stop rehashing your past, feeling hopeless, being scared to try new experiences, and much more. Once again, if you use it to stop doing something, know ahead of time what you want to replace it with. Instead of negative thoughts, what positive thoughts do you want? Instead of feeling rejected, feel empowered. Tired of being anxious? Replace it with gratitude and happiness by using the rule.

Now it's time for you to make a list of things you want to change in your life. These are areas where you have walked right up to the line but backed down at the last second, never to obtain what you wanted. Your list can cover little things, big

things, and huge things! The 5 Second rule will help you get beyond your internal obstacles that stop you and take the action you know needs to be taken to move you forward toward your dreams.

### **Be Around the Right People**

Many leaders tell us that we are the product of the five people we hang around with the most. This includes items like our financial ceiling, quality of our relationships, how big our dreams are and our confidence to fulfill them, whether we complain about everyone and our circumstances or we do something about them, and a lot more.

If you have been in a rut for a long time, being around the right people is critical to your personal growth. What excuses do you have for staying isolated where you are in life? Here are a list of some of the ones I've used in my life:

- I live in a small town with limited opportunities to grow my business.
- It's hard to make friends here in this city, and I'm not the only one to say this.
- I don't have money to help build my business.
- I don't have anyone to encourage me in my life.
- Doors are closed where I live to allow me to teach my material regarding getting out of addictions or showing friends how to influence addicts.

Now, here's the truth about the above statements:

- Most of my business growth is over the Internet. It doesn't matter where I live!
- I have not followed up on the people who indicated to

me that they would like to be my friend.

- I can build my business without needing money up front.
- I do belong to a program where I have access to 12 coaches who provide personal guidance and encouragement as I develop my business.
- I have not reached out to do speaking engagements locally. Who knows what doors one speaking opportunity will open? I am only an hour and a half from a large metropolitan area where many more opportunities await me.

Once I look at the truth, I see many opportunities to increase the quality of the people I am around. To overcome the fear of reaching out to make new friendships, I use the 5 Second Rule to propel me forward.

It's your time. Write down the excuses you think about that stop you from moving forward in your life, especially in finding quality people to be around.

I am sure you notice how these habits overlap. Because of this, improving one of the habits also improves the other habits. New habits will increase your hope and give you more energy in life because you will have more confidence.

### **Application Questions**

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1) Habits to Stop – What habits do you need to stop? These could be negative habits or ones that take too much of your time away from doing other things.

2) Habits to Stop – What habits do you think your addict friend needs to stop? These could be negative habits or ones that take too much time away from doing other things.

3) Choose the Right Attitude – Although we discussed this in an earlier chapter, today's focus is on tools to help you turn around your attitudes. In each of these five categories, write out how you will improve: Affirmations, Visualization, Words you Speak, Connection to Your Spiritual Power, and Exercise.

4) Choose the Right Attitude – In each of these five categories, write out ideas on how you can influence your addict friend to improve: Affirmations, Visualization, Words you Speak, Connection to Your Spiritual Power, and Exercise.

5) Control Your Thoughts and Words – After looking at your negative thoughts for the last seven days, write out positive or inspiring statements to replace them. What words can you speak to improve your perspective of your current situation? See the examples in this chapter.

6) Control Your Thoughts and Words – What statements do you think would help your addict friend to improve his life? See the examples in this chapter.

7) Get Rid of Labels and Excuses – Looking at the list of labels in this chapter, which ones do you use? Why? What positive label could you use instead?

8) Get Rid of Labels and Excuses – Looking at the list of labels in this chapter, which ones do you see your addict friend using? What positive label could your friend use instead?

9) Serve Others – Have you found a place to love and serve others? If not, brainstorm some places to check out. Are there places where you and your spouse (your addict friend) can volunteer together?

10) The 5 Second Rule – Have you tried it yet? What areas of your life can you use this on? What areas in your life have you held yourself back from pursuing a change? Will you use this rule to help you?

11) The 5 Second Rule – Has your addict friend tried it yet? What areas of your friend's life can you see him or her using this on? What areas in your friend's life has he or she held himself or herself back from pursuing a change?

12) Be Around the Right People – Meeting new people can be hard. What excuses do you use to avoid meeting new people?

13) Be Around the Right People – What excuses do you see your addict friend use to avoid meeting new people?



## Loving An Addicted Spouse

*Love all, trust a few, do wrong to none.*

William Shakespeare

Marriage was designed for each person to contribute to the full development of the love relationship. However, in today's society many have not been taught how to handle their negative emotions or how to plan an awesome future. Great communication skills are almost non-existent. When one spouse slips into escaping from things they can't handle through an addiction, the marriage relationship gets out-of-balance.

The addict begins the excuses and starts the blame game. The addict blames everyone else, the current circumstances, and his or her upbringing for the reason for the addiction. If the non-addict spouse has low self-esteem, then that person begins to believe it is his or her fault that the addict uses. The constant games the addict plays messes up any common sense the non-addict spouse had before this situation began.

What happens when the addict says he or she will stop drinking or doing drugs? If the addict goes to the typical AA or 12-step type support group, it will be a long road to any significant, long-lasting change. Since nothing happens

immediately, the addict resorts to drinking or drugging because the addict can't handle the negative emotions. Did the addict want to stop? Yes. But there was nothing offered to him or her to replace the focus on the addiction. Remember my earlier story about the green frog? If they are told to focus on *not* doing their addiction every day, then the picture of their addiction in their mind overrides their will power to stop every time. Relapse awaits! It takes more than a decision to stop. A change of focus has to happen.

The same outcome is true if an addict goes into a rehabilitation facility. While they are there for a longer period of time, rarely do any of the programs they offer deal with identifying the underlying issues the addict is escaping from, resolving them, and teaching the addict how to handle unwanted emotions. Learning how to handle outside triggers—like stopping at a bar, meeting with friends who also drink and do drugs, being around relatives who push their hot buttons—will not help long-term. Frequently, the outside triggers are triggering the internal, unresolved issues of the addict. Once the internal issues are resolved, the outside triggers no longer have an impact. This is a major shift in perspective that must be recognized.

This chapter is focused on you and learning how to properly love yourself and others. Can showing tough love to an addict help? Not by itself. Will learning to love yourself improve your world? Yes. However, you need to keep everything in balance. You must keep in mind the entire Roadmap Out of Addiction and have each aspect operating in your life.

Let's look at the various ways of loving, enabling, manipulation, and self-love.

### **Proper Motivation Behind Love**

Several motivating factors behind the way we love others and

ourselves might need changing:

- We want that person to change their behavior before we will love them in the manner they are seeking love. This is called manipulation.
- "I will love that person no matter what. I need his love. Therefore, whatever he asks me to do, I will do, even if it goes against my morals." This is called codependency and enabling
- "I will love that person, but I will not carry out his requests that I do things that are against my morals. I will continue to love him, even while I stand strong against his drama to induce me to do things." This is called setting proper boundaries through self-love.

Love must flow from a genuine relationship, not from manipulative behavior to achieve a particular result.

### **Codependent and Enabling**

To properly love yourself it is necessary to take a look at your behavior to determine if your current way of loving falls in the category of enabling others. You also need to look at how you provide self-care when things are going bad and when things are going good in your life.

Keep in mind as we look at these behaviors that a fine line exists between loving and nurturing someone and doing so with the wrong motivation. Women by nature were created to be the nurturer. Many in the recovery field tend to label all of a woman's nurturing attributes as being codependent behavior. I disagree. That is why it is important to look inside yourself and find the motivation behind your words and actions. Writing these down in your Journal of Insights will help bring clarity to the matter.

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

Here are some possible behaviors that might indicate codependent enabling:

- Protecting the addict from negative consequences of his or her actions.
- You are so wrapped up in sorting out the mess of the addict's life that you lose your own identity. You become addicted to the chaos. (Which is why when the addict stops the drinking or drugging, and his behavior is somewhat normal, you are now struggling because the chaos that you are addicted to is gone.)
- The addict takes advantage of your behavior. This enables many to stay in denial.
- You put up with mental and physical abuse. You may believe that you deserve this type of treatment.
- When the addict begins to get better and is less manipulative toward you, you struggle to cope because your identity was tied up in looking after this person and *fixing* him or her.

What are some of the specifics of how a person might cover up for the addict?

- You call in to his work place and make an excuse for why the addict can't go to work today.
- When your friends mention that they haven't seen the addict lately, you make excuses for why he or she isn't available.
- When the addict gets sick and vomits all over the place, you clean it up (because you don't want anybody to know, including your children). However, if the addict refuses to clean it up, somebody has to; so don't beat

yourself up if that falls to you to do.

- Your friends keep asking you to go out and do things, and you decline, making excuses as to why you have to stay home (you need to take care of the addict who is out of control).
- Family members become suspicious that something is going on with your addict spouse and you make excuses.
- The stress from this whole ordeal is affecting your work life. People begin to notice and you tell them more excuses.
- You may be relying on your own addiction in order to handle the drama from the addict
- You have bruises on your body from the physical abuse and you already have a set of excuses to choose from.

Do you see yourself in any of these behaviors? Sometimes people say it is easier to do these things than to deal with the backlash of not doing them. But what kind of life does it leave you living? One of living in fear and always on the lookout of how you have to cover up so nobody else will know your family secret.

How do you remedy this? It takes time and a lot of self-love first in order to begin to change each of the behaviors you have identified. Many people (I didn't say "all") who are in an intimate relationship with an addict may have low self-esteem issues. Thus, in order for you to learn to love properly, you need to raise your level of self-esteem. You must have in place the courage to stick to your new decisions to act differently. However, it doesn't have to take a long time to get to the point where you can begin to implement at least one change in your behavior.

Choose one behavior you would like to change first. Write out several ways you could respond differently to the situation. Which way is the best? Notice I didn't say "feels the best" because your feelings always want you to stay away from confrontation or change. What is the second behavior you want to change? Then prioritize the rest of your list of behaviors you want to change. Now let's work on building up your courage to take action. Remember, the 5 Second Rule is great to help you take action.

### **Tips To Build Self-Esteem**

In case you don't know, all change occurs first in our mind and our thoughts. Then we create the outer circumstances. So it's no surprise that the tips on how to build your self-esteem deal with the internal dialogues you have.

1. Put a stop to your inner critic. You know what I'm talking about. That voice that seems to yell at you when you do something wrong, or don't do something you were supposed to. However you can't *stop* thinking. You need to write out some positive statements you can use when that inner critic raises its ugly head.

2. Improve your motivation habits. What will motivate you to be courageous at stepping out and trying new behavior, and sticking to it, is your vision (the picture in your mind) for the desired outcome. This desired outcome is for your life, not the life of the addict. Can you imagine how much better you will feel by loving yourself and taking a stand for yourself? If you add a new, positive behavior to your life while you're trying to change a negative one, then you can focus on the benefits of the positive behavior. If you have a hobby you always wanted to try, use that as motivation for yourself. Your thinking might be, *If I implement this new behavior that I'm scared to do, the result will be less tension in my life, and the benefit will be I will have more emotional freedom to try this new hobby I am excited to*

*get started!* Wait! I can hear your internal response right now. You're thinking, *If I implement this new behavior, my addict spouse will create even more hell in my life and I can't handle that right now!* You are not responsible for his reaction. You can detach from responding to his inflamed response, as he is trying to draw you into his drama. This is the beginning stage to let him know you are no longer going to play his games. Can you think of ways to respond better? Perhaps leaving the room or going for a drive so you can take care of yourself right now. Write these options in your Journal of Insights so you will have them available to you when you can't think clearly in the heat of the moment. When things don't go right, you should always come back to your Journal of Insights for encouragement.

3. Take a two-minute self-appreciation break. This is hard for me to remind myself to do. I am always "pursuing" and not taking time to appreciate what I have accomplished, even if it is something small. I suggest you take several of these appreciation breaks during the day. Once during your lunch hour, and again before you go to bed. Of course, if you're having a bad day, do them more often. In your Journal ask yourself, what are three things I appreciate about myself? Or, what three things did I accomplish today?

4. Do the right thing at the right time. We already know what we *should* be doing, but we don't. Let's change that starting today. If you catch yourself procrastinating or being lazy, have the courage to take immediate action. Use the 5 Second Rule to help you. Don't drag it out, saying I'll do it later. No, do it now. *Tomorrow* never comes today. Again, you have to replace the negative self-talk going on inside you and get yourself motivated to change your life.

5. Let go of perfectionism. Do you get paralyzed and don't take action because you're afraid of not living up to some standard? When you were growing up did you try to get your

parent's attention by being perfect? Is your relationship with the addict no longer perfect and you are paralyzed because you don't know how to fix it so it is perfect? Being perfect is a myth. Don't buy into it. Decide that *good enough is good enough*. Lower your expectations of perfectionism for yourself.

6. Learn how to handle mistakes and failures in a positive way. Yes, mistakes will occur when you implement new behavior, and that's okay. However, you must reign in your self-talk and stop the critical accusations. Do you have a friend whom you can ask to be your accountability partner as you go through this stage of making changes? Don't be afraid to ask that person to help you. Share with your friend you're not necessarily looking for guidance every time, but you need someone to bounce things off of and someone who will encourage you to continue down the right path. After you recognize you have made a mistake, ask yourself how you can do better next time. What did you learn from this? Plan ahead how to properly act or respond next time to avoid feeling like you failed.

7. Love everyone—including yourself. The foremost way to love yourself is to forgive yourself. We are our hardest critic, and all that criticism is coming from our thoughts. After we forgive ourselves, we must stop rehashing what hurt us and move on with our life. This is part of loving yourself. From the five love languages discussed in an earlier chapter, have you had a chance to share them with your spouse? Do you know what your spouse's love language is and what yours is? What about your closest friends? Do you know what their love languages are? If so, how can you reach out to show love to them? By shifting the focus off of your problems and onto loving and serving others it puts you in a better frame of mind which allows you to handle the stress of living with an addict.

## Not All Spouses Can Be Changed

When I married my second husband I had been divorced for 24 years. I married my first husband when I was 18 and it lasted for seven years. As a shy person I had been in a few relationships but none led to marriage until this relationship in 2002.

About two years into the marriage I woke up one morning and realized my life had been sucked out of me. I was not myself and I didn't like it. I determined I was going to get my life back, even if it meant my husband would get mad at me for standing up for my decisions that were contradictory to what he wanted me to do. A friend of mine suggested he might be a narcissist. Through my research I determined that he was. The thing about narcissists is that usually only their intimate partner catches the signs; they seem oblivious to others in his life.

Some of the signs were:

- There was no give/take in our conversations. If I talked about a subject, he would interrupt and take that topic and talk about it in his life. Nothing was said about how upset I was. He had no capability of being empathetic or showing sympathy. I still remember one day I was sitting in his office and he had another employee in there who was sharing a problem she was dealing with. He sat there and let her talk about it. I thought, *this is interesting! He is letting her talk and talk, yet if I begin talking about a situation he butts in and takes that subject and talks about his life.*
- He would say whatever was necessary to either make himself look bad or to look good in a situation. He fooled many people.
- He was a pathological liar. By the time I left him I had

no idea what was true about his past. I had caught him in so many lies that I no longer believed anything he said. If I confronted him on the lies, he would be silent and look at me, or let his volatile anger take over.

- His paranoia showed up quite often. He always believed others were talking about him behind his back. He didn't allow me to maintain a friendship I had because he thought she was against him. The first two times he was paranoid that he was going to get fired, I quickly began looking for jobs in his field that he could apply for. But he didn't do anything. He sat around and moaned about how he was sure he was going to get fired. But he never was fired. After I realized he did not want to improve his situation but only wanted to complain, I no longer responded that way.
- He would come home from work and dump on me. He wanted my sympathy, which at first I gave him. But once I recognized the narcissism, I refused to be sympathetic toward him. They are double-faced too many times.
- He knew more than anybody else. Therefore, no one could tell him anything new. He knew more than the pastors. He knew more than any counselor. He knew what was best for others and he told them so. Since he believed there was nothing wrong with himself, there was no reason to seek help. It was everybody else's fault.

Fortunately, he did not have all the characteristics of a narcissist. Some will stalk a person because of their feelings of insecurity.

When I made that decision to take my life back, I did not have divorce in my mind. But as things played out over the next

year or so it became clear that he would not seek help, as he thought there was nothing wrong with him, and what could a counselor tell him that he didn't already know. As things grew worse I eventually decided to leave him.

As both of us were Christians and in ministry, the decision to divorce my husband was not taken lightly. A book that helped me to understand Scripture on this topic is, *Divorce: God's Will? The Truth of Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible for Christians* by Stephen Gola. It goes in-depth on the numerous Scriptures concerning divorce and remarriage, too many to discuss here. After reading the book and researching the Scriptures he discusses, I came to the conclusion that divorce was an option for me. Sometimes I wished that my husband would have hit me, as then I would have left him on the spot. But emotional abuse is not something that outsiders recognize because it is not visible. If you are living with a controlling, manipulative spouse, who are you serving? Man or God? What does God want? He wants us to have freedom to worship Him and become righteous in His sight.

I want to take a moment to share with Christian women some insight that helped me in my decision to divorce. Two of the words in the Bible that cause confusion were misinterpreted in many Bible versions. These two words are 'separated' and 'divorce.' A lot of the original content related to God hating it when man would separate from his wife (without giving her a Certificate of Divorce) and marry another lady. This is what caused the sin. However, when a man or woman is properly divorced (a Certificate of Divorce was obtained), no sin is attributed for the divorce or remarriage (see 1 Corinthians 7:27, 28). There also were other times when God commanded people to divorce. So a substantiated divorce according to the Bible was not based upon only a few moral reasons.

## **Are You at the End Of Your Rope?**

It is not easy living with an addict spouse, especially if you also have children in the home. Only you can decide if you are at the end of your rope and you want to seek a divorce. Hopefully some of the principles I teach in this book have helped in your relationship with the addict.

If you are ready to leave your spouse, I encourage you to plan ahead as to when and how you will do so, especially if any physical abuse is happening. For help with escaping from an addict who abuses you, I suggest you contact the National Domestic Abuse Hotline to obtain strategies for a safe exit. Hopefully sooner than later. When I worked as a counselor on crisis hotlines, many abused women were too scared to leave, due to the threats made by their husband or boyfriend. I will ask you the same question I asked them, “How bad do the injuries need to get before you do something about the situation . . . near death?” As you ponder your answer, don’t fool yourself thinking he or she would never get that far in the abuse. Out-of-control anger can result in many unintentional actions. Don’t let yourself or your children become victims when alternatives always exist.

## **Where To Find Proper Support**

If you need help in knowing how to apply these actions to your life or your marriage, I encourage you to join our private Facebook Group. Inside you will receive feedback from me as well as video trainings on this material. You will also see how others are being able to implement this material into their lives.

After reading this book perhaps your viewpoints on addictions and also on how to take back your life have changed. If so, you will no longer desire to be around others who will not support you nor encourage you that you can *influence* the addict to change. Most of the principles taught in this book, once

implemented, the desire for the addiction goes away as a byproduct. The same can hold true for you taking back your life. By focusing on applying these same principles to your life, you will get your life back.

Developing friendships with emotionally-healthy people (away from the addiction realm) can be the best medicine for you. Returning to a life of normalcy will do wonders for you. These types of friendships can be found in groups of people who have the same passions and desires as you. If you are a Christian I suggest you find a home group through your church where you can meet and develop friendships with like-minded people. If your church does not offer home groups, then find a church that does. Even if you are unable to implement any other strategies set forth in this book, finding these right type of emotionally-healthy friendships will dramatically improve your life.

You can also find support through books you read. Look for books outside your problem area (being married to an addict). Read biographies of successful people. Find books on your passion and how to fulfill your dream. Locate others who are doing what you want to do with your passion and read up on them and, if you're able to, have lunch with them.

Attend motivational conferences. Also conferences or events on a topic you have always wanted to learn more about. Expand your outlook on life and you will get relief from your daily life with your addict spouse.

A better life awaits you. But you have to grab hold of it. What is your next step?

Even if you are not a parent of a teenager who is abusing alcohol or drugs, I encourage you to read the next chapter as it contains material that could explain some of the actions of today's adults.

## Application Questions

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1) Where are you at emotionally in your marriage? Examples: You want the marriage to work, but don't know how. You are on the verge of leaving or kicking your spouse out. You are already separated. No decision on divorce yet. Divorce papers have been filed.

2) From what you have read so far in this book, do you want to try to implement this material?

3) The first marker in the Roadmap Out of Addiction is to discover one's passion in life and find an outlet for it through loving and serving others. Is there something that you and your addict spouse can do together? Your passions may be different, but as a couple what did you thoroughly enjoy doing together prior to the introduction of the addiction? Can you bring that event back into your lives?

4) Review the possible behaviors listed that might indicate codependent enabling. List the ones you feel might apply to you. What are the top two behaviors that if they were changed would have the greatest impact in your life? Write out how you can respond differently.

5) If you implement the new behavior you set forth in your answer above, what kind of backlash do you think your addict spouse would do? How can you respond to that backlash and hold your new position? Write out ways you can handle it. Examples: don't get pulled into the argument or accusation; walk away; in your mind tell yourself, *this is his chaos, not mine, and I will not get pulled into it.*

6) Review the list of seven Tips to Build Self-Esteem. What are the top two that you want to work on first? Write them down and the steps you can take this week to begin this change.

7) While a person might believe that with God all things are possible, we still cannot make the other person change and God will not override a person's decisions. Do you think your spouse has personality traits that cannot be changed versus the changes that came about because of the affects of the alcohol or drugs? Explain.

8) If you are a Christian and struggling with whether divorce in your situation would be approved by God, write down what your exact concerns are. I suggest you read the suggested book *Divorce: God's Will? The Truth of Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible for Christians* by Stephen Gola. What new truths will set you free?

9) Are you willing to give some more time before a decision is made for divorce to allow time for implementation of the material in this book? Why or why not?

10) Is your addict spouse physically abusing you? If so, how soon can you separate? Call the National Domestic Hotline (800) 799-7233 for further assistance immediately, even if you're in a calm atmosphere now.

11) Do you have emotionally-healthy friends? If not, look for groups that meet based on what your passion in life is and start making new friendships. Go to [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com) to find local groups. Look at that website and write down the types of groups that interest you.

# 10

## **Guidance For Parents of Addicted Teens**

*The influence of parents is seldom discussed by their children, but the effects are lifelong. Kathy Williamson*

Every generation of parents sees the current teenage culture as being much worse than when they were teenagers. This is true when each generation has more deficiencies in their abilities to communicate, teach life skills, and provide an emotionally healthy environment.

However, the blame is not solely based on parental skills. The arrival of the Technology Age adds to the complexity of teens struggling to find their identity and obtain the skills to thrive as an adult. The face-to-face relationship is replaced by texting, social media posts and other online activities.

Studies today also confirm that teenagers are maturing at a later age. Therefore, a lot of them remain living at home into their mid-twenties, an age where the parents felt their child should have been handling adult responsibilities years ago.

Very few teens are taught coping or communication skills before they get out of high school. The transition from teenager

into young adult can be scary. Many teens avoid this by enrolling into college, as that is all they know on how to live when they don't have skills to plan a future or confidence to pursue dreaming a bright future for themselves. Hopefully while they are in college they will mature and do some serious thinking about their future.

Many teens are stuck in a lifestyle of rebellion by time they reach high school. Rebellion comes from "rules without relationship" and also "relationship without rules." A balance of both is needed. It is never too late to influence a rebellious teenager.

Whether you have recently discovered your teenager is abusing alcohol or drugs, or if you have been struggling for years with trying to help your child, hope still exists that you can influence your teenager.

The causes for stress in teens are different than what causes stress for adults, although some overlap occurs due to the influx of technology. In order to understand what teens are going through in their inner world, I want to show you how the Technology Age has impacted their abilities to handle life.

### **Technology's Impact**

The Technology Age, while it has improved many areas of our lives, has brought added pressures and stress to teenagers, which are not readily observant to their parents. Parents may see their teen glued to the cell phone texting all day long and think that is their way of communicating. But it goes much deeper than that.

The human desires of teens have not changed over the years. They are the need to feel safe, to feel liked and loved, have their basic needs met, to be successful, and to feel valued and important. How they are accomplished in this Technology Age is

vastly different than when we were teens.

Stress for teens in today's world comes from:

- The expectation of instantaneous feedback in everything they do. They expect a person to respond to their text immediately, and they must immediately respond back. They don't want to miss out on anything, so they sleep with their phones so they can know of any incoming texts. When they take a test in school, as soon as they walk out of the classroom they want to know their results. Being in his high alert mode brings stress, as well as being asked to wait for anything.
- Lack of coping skills. It is difficult for parents to teach coping skills to their teens when they are not privy to their teen's Social Media posts and don't know that they were recently attacked verbally or bullied over and over. However, software is available for parents to monitor all of their child's Internet activity, so they know what is going on in their teen's life. See List of Resources for Parents available as a bonus download on my website.
  - Part of learning coping skills for teens is to be able to identify emotions. A lot of teens are unable to identify their emotions, and/or they misread the emotions of others. The lack of being able to identify emotions and know how to handle them adds stress. Otherwise they might medicate to dull the unknown emotions they are physically feeling.
  - Many times parents will intervene and handle a situation for their teen instead of teaching the teen how to handle it. Thus, the teen lacks coping skills.

- Another factor is the over-structured life of the teen by the parents, going to various activities, with no down time or input from the teen.
- No privacy in their lives. Kids can no longer hide their problems. Social Media posts can instantly share all the teen's activities (good, bad or ugly) with the world, many times including pictures. Therefore teens must always be on their good behavior to avoid embarrassment. In a Social Media driven world no opportunity for privacy exists.

The popularity of teens is no longer determined by their looks, personality or the activities they are involved in. In today's Technology Age their popularity is defined by how many "likes" they get on their Social Media posts. At the time of writing this book the two most popular Social Media websites for teens are Instagram and Snapchat. The more risqué the post, the more "likes" it achieves. Parents must monitor their child's online activities to avoid dangerous interactions, to understand what their child is being subjected to, and for any sexting posts.

The teens' viewpoints of life are skewed through the lens of the Internet. Parents grew up with the news available on TV twice during the evening. The Internet has news streaming 24/7 (and some of that news is fake). Many times a teen will see something on the news before his or her parent does and ask the parent about it. Then the parent is scrambling to find out about it so they can discuss it.

### **Where Does a Parent Start?**

Education about addictions is not the answer. Education about the negative effects of abusing alcohol or drugs is not a strong enough motivation to overcome the emotional turmoil a person is going through. Let that statement sink in.

The top three reasons teens abuse alcohol or drugs are: stress, boredom, and to keep from feeling sad. Others include peer pressure, wanting to experiment, to feel good, and to fit in. The top drugs of choice are: alcohol, marijuana, cigarettes, and prescription drugs.

Education on how to identify emotions and how to handle them are needed. Once the negative emotions are identified, some cannot be changed by merely replacing them with positive thoughts. For teens, their identity is tied to how many people like them and any negative comments toward them cause a deeper emotional response than how an adult would respond.

The process taught in this book helps a person overcome their current array of negative emotions and also provides them with skills to handle any future negative emotions, thus avoiding the need to escape life through an addiction.

Boredom plays a major role in teens abusing alcohol or drugs. With the cuts to funding extracurricular activities in many schools, teens have fewer opportunities to participate in activities that would provide the natural emotional high they need. Countries outside the U.S. who have a much lower teenage rate of addiction do so because they have many opportunities for teens to be involved in activities and more involvement by parents in the teens' lives. On my website under the resources tab I provide a link to an article entitled *Iceland Knows How To Stop Teen Substance Abuse. The World Isn't Listening* (January 17, 2017, Emma Young, Mosaic. One of their philosophies is "Why not orchestrate a social movement around natural highs: around people getting high on their own brain chemistry—because it seems obvious . . . that people want to change their consciousness—without the deleterious effects of drugs?" And it works.

For families who do have the time and financial means to provide activities for their teens outside of school, a balance of

activities and family life should be in place. The over-abundance of activities and/or lack of the teen's input on what he or she wants to do can bring stress.

I am going to walk you through how the Roadmap Out of Addiction™ process applies to parents of addicted teens. If you turned directly to this chapter for immediate help, you must go back and read the book to this point. I taught many things that will help you understand this process in intricate detail. Let's look at each stage of the roadmap and how it applies to how you can influence teenagers or young adults.

### **1) Shift Focus to Passionate Living**

By the time you are reading a book like this your frustration level is probably quite high as your teenager has been struggling with his or her addiction for quite a while.

#### **Remember, it takes more than a decision to quit!**

There must be a shift in focus from "not doing the addiction" to focus on building an awesome future that a person does not want to mess up. This shift does not occur overnight, nor is it a one-time exchange of thought patterns.

The big question for teenagers—and most adults—is what are you passionate about in your life? What are you excited about doing? Usually teens think I am talking about what they want to do as a career. Not true. One's passion in life may or may not turn into a career that can financially support the person. Go back and review chapter 4 on how to determine one's passion in life. Remember, when I say plan for the future, the future is this afternoon, tomorrow, next week, next month. Their passion is something they love to do—an activity, which may or may not lead into a paying career.

This shift in focus results in the teenager spending 80% of his or her free time in developing a plan for the future which

involves their passion in life, determining what he or she needs to learn to carry out that plan, finding someone to hold them accountable, and then daily being aware of that plan and taking action to move forward. The remaining 20% should be used to resolve any underlying issues that resulted in the teen escaping life through an addiction. Keep in mind, boredom is a big obstacle for teens, especially if they are highly creative.

Your role as the parent is to (1) help the teen identify his or her passion, (2) guide them to develop a goal using that passion to reach out to love and serve others at least once a week, (3) be there for them to talk out these new challenges, and (4) don't nag them about stopping their addiction. You might go through this process for your own life and have you and your teenager discuss how each of you are handling each phase of this new outlook on life.

If your teenager or young adult does not live at home but you still have contact with him or her, each of your phone conversations (or text messages) should include you inquiring about how they are doing on working on developing an awesome future. You are aiming to get your child to have a reason *not* to mess up his or her life by abusing drugs or alcohol.

## **2) Learn to Handle Emotions**

Teenagers, let alone adults, have little skills on how to handle their emotions. Before they can look into identifying what underlying issues they are escaping from, they need to learn how to identify and handle their emotions. Why open a can of worms if you have no way to cope with the mess? Also, by determining one's passion in life, the teen will have something to turn his or her thoughts and activities toward while developing these new coping skills.

This second marker on the Roadmap does not have a chapter of its own because it is a culmination of various elements listed

below:

Change Your Beliefs	Chapter 3
Build Your Confidence and Self-Esteem	Chapter 7
Use Tapping to Control Emotions	Chapter 7
Learn the 5 Love Languages	Chapter 7
Control Your Thoughts and Words	Chapter 8

Review each of the above and determine which one you can use first to help influence your teenager. A good book to assist you is *Growing Up Social: Raising Relational Kids in a Screen-Driven World* by Gary Chapman and Arlene Pellicane.

### **3) Shift Your Beliefs To Change Your Future**

As a parent you may already believe that addictions are not a disease. However, your teen has been told that it is a disease and he or she has no hope of ever getting free from it. This may leave the teen feeling hopeless and thinking, *why even try to stop if I'm already doomed to fail?* Your focus should be on the fact that thousands of addicts have freed themselves from their addictions and never gone back. Encourage your teen that he or she is strong enough to be one of those good statistics and that you would like to show him or her how to overcome the addiction.

One important truth to let your teen know is that it takes more than a decision to say "no" to drugs or alcohol. It takes a major shift in focus and the activities they do. Help your teen understand that it takes time to get this new way of living into a daily habit and that he or she need not get frustrated if failure occurs (such as drinking or drugging, or sitting around and doing nothing in life). However, also tell the teen that change can occur in as little as three to four months if he or she works diligently at implementing the material in this book. Giving people a timeline gives them hope. Their addict friends may portray to them that since they have tried to stop and couldn't,

then it must be a disease. However, the majority of addicts have not been given this Roadmap Out of Addiction™ and therefore are not aware it is possible to permanently get out of an addiction forever.

Another aspect of the teen's beliefs that needs changing is that they do have the ability to do whatever they want in life. Your teen may have never shared his or her big dream with you because of fear of being made fun of, or the lack of confidence to carry it through. Even if you as the parent don't believe in your child's ability to fulfill that dream, go ahead and encourage your child to go for it! A person can do anything they put their mind to (unless the person is 5'5" and wants to be the next Michael Jordan!).

#### **4) Resolve Underlying Issues**

This is a tricky section for parents for fear that you as the parent are the cause of the underlying issue. Many parents question whether they were a good enough parent; or may put forth that they were the best parent and it is the child's responsibility for succumbing to an addiction. I am not here to put blame on anyone. I am here to help equip you to influence the addict with skills and mindsets necessary to move beyond the addiction and into living an awesome life.

Unfortunately, sending your teen to a rehabilitation facility may not bring about the result you desire. Most rehab centers are a hodgepodge of treatments, the majority created around the typical AA or 12-Step program, which do not (1) identify the underlying issues the addict is escaping from, (2) help the addict resolve those issues, (3) teach the addict how to handle negative emotions, (4) nor how to build an awesome future. They may focus on teaching the addict how to handle triggers, but the triggers are only there because the underlying issues have not been resolved. Therefore, shortly after getting out of an inpatient program they relapse—because they do not know

how to handle their emotions.

This is also the reason many addicts leave rehab after a day or two or a week—because they aren't given the skills to immediately be able to handle the emotions that arise when they realize they have to handle life without their alcohol or drugs. Tapping provides almost instant relief from the negative emotions that bombard addicts who are trying to get clean.

Because addicts are taught to focus on *not* doing the addiction, relapse awaits. Recall from chapter 3 that the picture you have in your mind is what will occur in your reality. Giving your teenager a copy of this book and my website address for addicts ([www.OutOfAddiction.com](http://www.OutOfAddiction.com)) may be the best thing to help your teen. If they do not live at home, mail them a copy of the book. Don't wait for your teen to make the effort to get this book, because he or she is living in hopelessness.

Review the 18 underlying issues previously identified to determine if you can identify any issues your teen may have.

Also in chapter 5 was a chart identifying the skills and habits necessary to overcome each of the above issues. The best place to start is with identifying who caused emotional hurt in your teen's life and guide your teen to forgive that person, and to stop rehashing that event.

### **5) Plan Ahead to Avoid Relapse**

Since it takes time to change one's thoughts, beliefs, and actions, the possibility of relapse is still there. Therefore, it is important to keep the following elements in the forefront of one's mind:

- Build confidence
- Serve others

- Keep focus at 80/20
- Establish boundaries
- Be around the right people
- Bring love into every situation
- Control your thoughts and words
- The 5 Second Rule

The above applies not only to your teen but also to your life. It also takes time for you as the parent to realize hope still exists for your teenager to dramatically change his or her life. Focusing on building your own awesome future will give you some positivity in your life as you go through learning how to influence your teen.

### **Setting Boundaries**

Let's look at setting boundaries with teens. John Townsend has a great book entitled *Boundaries with Teens: When to Say Yes, How to Say No*. It covers a multitude of ways to interact with your teen, including setting boundaries. However, I would like to look at setting boundaries with your teen from the viewpoint of the material in this book.

Most boundaries are set to discourage negative behavior of the teen. You can find an abundance of these on the Internet. But in order to implement the material herein, I suggest you think about the following positive boundaries to put into place for your teenager:

- Begin with one hour each day to focus on planning and building an awesome future. Expand it to two hours when ready. Example: the future could be tomorrow, next week, next month, etc. where your teen is engaged in his or her passion.

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

- Find a positive environment for your teen to interact in at least twice weekly. Preferably something focused around your teen's passion. This will also provide an atmosphere of being around emotionally-healthy people who may be able to teach your teen how to handle problems without resorting to abusing drugs or alcohol.
- Are there books your teen can read on the subject of his or her passion? Read one book every two weeks. Then have your teen share his or her insights from the book with you and any action steps that can be taken. Encourage your teen that studying and growing does not stop once they are out of high school or college. It is a life-long endeavor that will benefit them beyond what they can imagine.

As these are positive boundaries, there aren't necessarily negative consequences if they don't do them (other than not growing into maturity). However, you might think of some positive reward (or have the teen come up with the reward) for having done the above on a regular basis for one month, two months, four months, etc.

What about boundaries for you as the parent? You might self-impose a boundary of not allowing yourself to get upset when your teen fails. Set up a schedule to talk with your teen about his or her progress in implementing the material in this book. Another boundary is to not beat yourself up thinking you are the only reason your teen has an addiction. The boundary would be to not take personally what your teenager says to you (that you are the reason he or she does bad things). Addicts, no matter their age, tend to blame their addiction on everyone but themselves.

### **Serving Others**

Regarding this element of serving others, if your teen is not

at an age where he or she can go someplace without you, discuss with your teen options for you and your teen to go volunteer together and serve others. If you look for volunteer opportunities for adults, many will also mention that children are welcome too. Are there school activities that the two of you can become involved in? If your teen is at a point where he or she refuses to serve others, it is still a good idea for you to do so for yourself. It gives you relief from your daily stresses and gives you a better perspective on life.

### **Controlling Thoughts and Words**

Learning to control thoughts and words is critical through this process of change. Most teens have not been taught that they can control their thoughts and words which are behind their emotions. It is important that their self-talk be identified so it can be changed. As a parent you can usually get a glimpse of what they are thinking by the words they say. Then you can discuss with them what they might be thinking and offer them alternatives (new beliefs).

### **6) Repeat This Process on Any New Problems**

Unfortunately, growth does not take a straight line to the desired goal. Sometimes when one problem is resolved, another one surfaces. A once bored teen who now is on fire for life and has an overflowing schedule may develop stress and confusion. Then skills need to be developed to handle stress. Clarity on one's goals in life and the steps to get there gets rid of confusion. Keep handy the chart of underlying issues and the skills and habits necessary to resolve them as both you and your teen grow through your problems.

Never forget that your influence as a parent lasts a lifetime!

### **Application Questions**

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1) Is your teenager rebellious? If so, can you recognize in your household any “rules without relationship” and/or “relationship without rules.”? Explain.

2) Out of the three main stresses for teens—expectation of instantaneous feedback, lack of coping skills, and no privacy in their lives—which one(s) can you recognize in your teen’s life? What clues make you believe this?

3) On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the coping skills of your teen? Why? What types of situations does your teen need to learn how to handle better?

4) Can your teen identify at least five emotions? (Ask them!) Also, what are the physical or mental demonstrations of those emotions?

5) Is your teen bored? How do you know?

6) Is your teen overloaded with too many activities? Or activities they would prefer not to do? (Ask your teen.)

7) Do you know what your teen is passionate about? What he or she loves to do and could do it all the time? If not, discuss it with your teen to determine the answer. What is your teen's passion? Is it active in your teen's life right now? If not, how can you bring it into your teen's life on a regular basis?

8) Does your teen need to be taught how to identify different emotions? Can your teen identify his or her emotions? What is your teen feeling most days?

9) Have you introduced your teen to Tapping? Explain to your teen how to use it to calm any negative emotions (even if they can't identify what that emotion is). They can even do it in secret if they're afraid their friends might make fun of them.

10) Low self-esteem is prevalent in a lot of teens and young adults. Can you recognize your child's self-esteem level? Review chapter 7 on how to build confidence and self-esteem. What actions can be taken to help improve your teen's self-esteem?

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

11) Has your teen or young adult been stuck in an addiction for a long period of time as to make him or her believe there is no way out? Review chapter 3 on changing beliefs. What are the top two beliefs that if changed would provide the most turnaround in your teen's life?

12) Does your teen have a dream for his or her future? What is it? (Ask them if you don't know.) How can you help your teen create a clear picture for that future and then encourage them to go for it?

13) (Before exploring what the underlying issues may be, be sure the first two markers on the Roadmap Out of Addiction are in place.) What underlying issues do you think your teen is dealing with?

14) What skills or habits do think your teen needs to learn in order to overcome these underlying issues?

15) To help your teen plan ahead to respond to triggers in a healthy manner, identify what his or her triggers are and discuss a better way to respond to each.

16) Reviewing the boundaries (positive ones) to set for your teen, which ones can you implement? Discuss them with your teen to come to a decision.

17) What boundaries will you set up for yourself as the parent?

18) Serving Others – What opportunities are there for your teen to volunteer someplace? What are the opportunities for you? Do it together?

19) Discuss with your teen the idea that he or she can control thoughts and words. Help the teen come up with more positive thoughts to think and speak. What are they?



## **Freedom For Veterans And Their Families**

*Veterans have fought for freedom for each of us,  
now it's time for us to fight for their emotional freedom.*

Kathy Williamson

At the writing of this book, 30 veterans a day commit suicide with 65% of them being age 50 or older. Many do so while waiting for help from the Veterans Administration. The toll on the families of veterans is enormous. Also according to the VA, more than one in five veterans with PTSD have a substance use disorder and one out of three veterans who seek addiction treatment has PTSD.

Forty thousand veterans are homeless in the United States. While shelters and homes are being provided to assist in reducing the veteran homeless situation, a much greater need exists to assist veterans with the mental health issues they deal with that keep them from being able to live a normal life, keep a job and have a bright future.

My full disclosure is that I have not lived in a family with a veteran who had many of the issues discussed below which lead

to an addiction. However, I have come across a modality of treatment that can help veterans resolve almost all of their underlying issues. And it doesn't have to take that long to do so.

### **Symptoms and Struggles**

The most prominent problems non-veterans know about veterans is that a lot of them suffer from flashbacks, nightmares, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Let's take a closer look at PTSD and how it displays itself. It not only affects one's emotions, but also can create physical ailments. PTSD is listed as one of the 18 possible underlying issues of an addiction I listed in earlier chapters. Because it produces its own issues, the most common symptoms of PTSD are listed below:

- Insomnia
- Digestive disorders
- Flashbacks and nightmares
- Irritability, jumpiness, being easily triggered by events
- Rage, grief and guilt
- Anxiety, panic, attacks, depression
- Feeling isolated and unsafe

While PTSD is not limited to people who have served in the military, for the purposes of this chapter we will focus on veterans.

Too many issues or problems exist that veterans may deal with to go over each one in this book. But I will highlight a couple of the major ones below. The information in the charts below comes from a seminar I attended several years ago presented by the U.S. Army Reserve Command entitled "Welcome Home."

The mindset of a veteran who has returned from active duty in battle conditions is narrowly focused, compared to the mindset before being deployed or even before enlisting in the armed forces. The chart below contrasts the mission oriented in war and the mission oriented at home/ job/school.

War	Home/Job/School
Once a mission is assigned, other, unrelated tasks, are unimportant.	Multiple competing tasks cause confusion and chaos.
Decisions need to be quick, clear and accurate.	May get angry/frustrated with those who get in the way of mission.
	Difficulty participating in cooperative decision making.

Emotions play a major part in all of the underlying issues that addicts escape from. For veterans, their emotions and anger play different roles when they are in war or at home/job/school.

War	Home/Job/School
Control emotions	Insensitivity to others "look hot headed, hard headed"
Numbing (It don't matter)	Decreased ability to read others emotions "you look / act emotionless"
Anger useful, protective, is a survival skill	Decreased emotional enjoyment; irritability; defensiveness; increased aggression "fed by constant frustration"
	Increased alcohol/drug use to avoid feeling emotions

# My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

For many veterans when deployed in a war zone they are on an adrenaline rush 24/7. Coming home to a normal atmosphere makes it difficult to adjust to a non-hypervigilance environment.

War	Home/Job/School
6 months a year or more of daily and nightly hypervigilance	Inability to slow down, relax  Sleep changes – “too little or too much”  Difficulty functioning without the adrenaline rush  Monitoring environment/perimeter  Attempts to relive the “rush”

When a veteran parent returns to his or her family, things have changed while he or she was gone. Family members may be:

- More independent
- Used to making their own decisions
- New friends/relationships
- Children may be significantly different
- New routines
- New perspectives
- Changes in the environment

The above is presented to help you as a family member or friend to have a little bit of knowledge about what to expect when your veteran friend attempts to return to normal living. It will help you if you can identify what your expectations are from your veteran spouse. Expecting relationships and routines to return to they way they were prior to deployment is not a realistic expectation.

Here are some helpful hints on what to do for the veteran reintegrating into society:

- Don't let them isolate/segregate
- Don't let them think they are going "crazy"
- Don't act like their issues are unimportant
- Don't let them let the negative attitudes/behaviors of others influence their behavior.
- Don't make excuses for their behavior or ignore potential underlying issues.

### **Older Veterans**

With the majority of suicides among veterans being committed by those age 50 and older it shows the long-term negative effects of being in a war followed by unresolved issues. Even those who have had long-term counseling often find no relief from their symptoms, flashbacks, nightmares, anger, etc.

Earlier in this book I presented the theory behind Tapping. The theory is that the cause of all negative emotions is a disruption in the body's energy system. It's like your negative emotion gets stuck inside one or more of these meridian energy pathways in your body and stays there until it is relieved by using Tapping. Therefore, no matter how much counseling you get, or praying you do, or whatever else you do to try to get rid of your negative emotions, the disruption remains in your meridian pathways until dealt with through the Tapping process. Certainly the trauma of the intensity of living in a war zone causes this disruption in one's energy meridians.

This Tapping process (also called EFT) has been shown to significantly improve the lives of veterans struggling with PTSD and other maladies. See the Veterans EFT Tapping Project's

website <http://www.VeteransEFTTappingProject.org>. Be sure to read the testimonials from vets on the same website who have found permanent relief by using EFT.

### **Treatments Available**

Most treatment plans offered to veterans for their various problems include: medications, talk therapy, self care, support, buddy aid, family care, and community care. However, the Veterans Association is overwhelmed with the number of veterans who need assistance and many fall through the cracks while waiting for appointments.

We now have good news to help veterans! In October of 2017 the Veterans Administration approved EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques aka Tapping) as a viable treatment for their patients. This approval means that VA therapists will be able to use EFT with their clients suffering from PTSD, depression, anxiety, pain and other conditions. However, this does not resolve the issue of long wait times to get in to see a therapist.

Due to the fact that not many VA therapists have been trained in using EFT, the “Veterans Stress Project” was developed as a non-profit online portal to connect veterans with practitioners. See Appendix B Resources for their contact information. Also on my website under the resources tab I provide a link to an article on how EFT successfully treats PTSD in ten sessions or less. You will also find a link to an article where the VA announced its approval of EFT and gives some general information about it. Recall that I created an eBook for Tapping (EFT) for addicts and that is available as a free download. This eBook will be more helpful to you as the spouse, family member or friend of the addict.

Another helpful resource is a book, *EFT for PTSD*. The first edition was written by Gary Craig who contributed significantly to bring EFT to the attention of the public in the U.S., as well as

identifying how it helps veterans with PTSD and other issues that arose from their time in service to their country. The second edition was written by Dawson Church, Ph.D. and expands upon its application. This book contains enough information that a veteran could learn the technique and apply it without the need to have sessions with a trained EFT or Tapping Coach.

### **Application of the Roadmap**

The starting point on the Roadmap Out of Addiction™ for veterans is different from the normal place to start for other addicts. For most addicts, their starting point is to discover what they are passionate about and bring that activity into their lives on a weekly basis. This gives the addict something to switch his focus to as he walks the path out of addiction.

Because we already know most of the underlying issues that a veteran is trying to escape from, getting in touch with an EFT or Tapping Coach would be the first step. Due to the intensity of the emotional issues, those emotions must be resolved to allow the veteran to return to some normalcy of emotional living. Most of the EFT or Tapping Coaches can do sessions over the phone or Skype.

If the veteran is still in active duty, he or she may not be able to carry out some of the elements discussed in this book. However, you as the spouse or family member can proceed to apply this material to your life.

Here are some brief notes on each marker on the Roadmap Out of Addiction™ for veterans:

1. **Learn to Handle Your Emotions.** While this is normally the second marker, it is the starting point for veterans. Once the emotions are under control and the underlying issues resolved, a lot of the need to medicate through alcohol or drugs is also resolved.

2. **Shift Focus to Passionate Living.** If a person is still in the Armed Forces, he or she may not be able to implement this section. However, if the person intends to return to civil duty after his or her term is up, then the person can make plans to pursue their passion once out of the confines of the Armed Forces.

3. **Change Your Beliefs and Thoughts.** Veterans can become depressed and feeling hopeless if they look at other veterans who have not been able to resolve their PTSD. However, with the availability of Tapping, new hope is now on the scene.

4. **Resolve Underlying Issues.** Once the underlying issues causing the intense emotions of veterans is resolved through tapping, then the list of the other underlying issues of an addiction can be reviewed. If other issues appear, then they can be resolved.

5. **Plan Ahead to Avoid Relapse.** As a person goes through the first four markers in this Roadmap, he or she is still vulnerable to relapse. Review the 12 triggers of relapse in chapter 6. Tapping can also be used on each of these triggers to reduce the emotional impact of that trigger and replace it with positive thoughts and action.

6. **Repeat This Process on Any New Problems.** As growth happens new problems may arise. When they do, one's attention is laser-focused on it, like it was on the addiction. Going through this Roadmap will get you back on track.

The best way we can help veterans who are struggling is to fight for them to obtain their emotional freedom. Once obtained, your help is needed to spread the effectiveness of using Tapping to obtain emotional freedom in a relatively short time, no matter how long a veteran has been struggling.

## **Application Questions**

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- 1) What can you identify as some of the symptoms and struggles the addicted veteran is having?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2) Review the comparison charts of a veteran during war versus home/job/school regarding mindset, emotions and the adrenaline rush. What areas can you identify the veteran struggling with?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3) Looking at the family dynamics, what elements have changed while the veteran was deployed?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4) If you are living with an older veteran who served in older wars, what issues does he or she still struggle with?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5) What current treatment(s) is the veteran receiving to assist him or her recover? Are they working?

6) Review with the veteran the resources available to assist the veteran by using Tapping (EFT). Is the veteran willing to try this methodology to assist him or her? If not, why not? [You can also use Tapping to overcome any objections to Tapping.]

7) Are you as the family member willing to try Tapping as an option to help you with your frustrations and emotions? Identify what emotions you struggle with the most. Most are listed in my ebook *Tapping Away Your Addiction*. When will you begin to utilize Tapping?

8) Review the six markers of the Roadmap set forth in this chapter. Are there other major issues that need to be resolved? Identify the issue(s) and the skills and habits that would help the most to overcome the issues.

## 12

### **Organize the Roadmap For Your Situation**

*A roadmap gets you from point A to point Z.  
Without it, many stay stuck needlessly in an  
emotional state that can lead to death.*

Kathy Williamson

You just read a lot of information and probably most of it was new to you. Where do you start to apply this information, and how? In this chapter I will walk you through the Roadmap Out of Addiction™ process. In Appendix A I provide conversation starters to assist you in each of these areas.

You may be wondering, *why can't I get my addict friend to go into a rehabilitation facility? Surely they all know what they are doing and can help my addict friend better than I can!* This is faulty thinking. (However, be aware whether your addict friend needs to go through detox under the supervision of professionals.) You may have skipped over reading the chapter for Parents of Addicted Teens, so I will repeat what I said in that chapter about rehabilitation facilities.

Unfortunately, sending an addict to a rehabilitation facility may not bring about the result you desire. Most rehab centers are a hodgepodge of treatments, most created around the typical AA or 12-Step program, which do not (1) identify the underlying issues the addict is escaping from, (2) help the addict resolve those issues, (3) teach the addict how to handle negative emotions, (4) nor how to build an awesome future. They may focus on teaching the addict how to handle triggers, but the triggers are only there because the underlying issues have not been resolved. Therefore, shortly after getting out of an inpatient program they relapse—because they do not know how to handle their emotions.

This is also the reason many addicts leave rehab after a day or two or a week—because they aren't given the skills to immediately be able to handle the emotions that arise when they realize they have to handle life without their alcohol or drugs. Tapping provides almost instant relief from the negative emotions that bombard addicts who are trying to get clean.

Because they are taught to focus on *not* doing the addiction, relapse awaits. Recall from chapter 3 that the picture you have in your mind is what will occur in your reality. Giving your addict friend a copy of this book and my website address for addicts ([www.OutOfAddiction.com](http://www.OutOfAddiction.com)) may be the best thing to help your friend. If the addict does not live at home, mail him or her a copy of this book. Don't wait for your addict friend to make the effort to get this book, because he or she is living in hopelessness.

You, as well as all addicts, need to start on the Roadmap at the first road marker. However, for spouses and family members of veterans they need to begin with and understand the second road marker in order to influence the veteran addict to get control of his or her emotions first.

I strongly urge you start by applying this information to your own life first, especially if you are a spouse, girlfriend or boyfriend of the addict. Why? In order to handle the negative feedback of the addict you need to have in place hope and a plan for yourself. Hope that you can get yourself through the situation with your addict friend, and a plan for growing yourself despite the promises and relapses of the addict. Once you have more control over your emotions, then you can reach out to begin to influence your addict friend.

Now that you have been taught on all aspects of the Roadmap Out of Addiction™, the chart should make better sense to you.

### **The Roadmap Out of Addiction™**

Before an addict can work on identifying and resolving the underlying issues (Marker #4), certain skills need to be in place. The first two markers should be worked on simultaneously. Being able to switch one's focus to their passion in life and also being able to handle day-to-day negative emotions allows an addict to then go deeper into the process to overcome the addiction.

On the next page is the order of the Roadmap. Beneath each marker are the knowledge, skills and habits needed to implement that portion of the Roadmap. You will notice that many of these the skills and habits overlap the six markers.

<p><b>Marker #1</b> <b>Shift Focus To</b> <b>Passionate Living</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discover your passion in life</li><li>• Bring it into your life on a weekly basis</li><li>• Shift to 80/20 focus</li><li>• Serve others</li><li>• Bring love into every situation</li><li>• Control your thoughts and words</li><li>• The 5 Second Rule</li></ul>	<p><b>Marker #2</b> <b>Learn To Handle</b> <b>Your Emotions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify your stinking thinking</li><li>• Use Tapping to control emotions</li><li>• Establish boundaries</li><li>• Build confidence</li><li>• Be around the right people</li><li>• Bring love into every situation</li><li>• Control your thoughts and words</li><li>• The 5 Second Rule</li></ul>
<p><b>Marker #3</b> <b>Shift Your Beliefs To</b> <b>Change Your Future</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify your beliefs and replace with truths</li><li>• Choose the right attitude</li><li>• Bring love into every situation</li><li>• Control your thoughts and words</li><li>• The 5 Second Rule</li></ul>	<p><b>Marker #4</b> <b>Resolve Underlying</b> <b>Issue(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the issue(s)</li><li>• Apply forgiveness</li><li>• Use Tapping to eliminate negative emotions</li><li>• Build confidence</li><li>• Bring love into every situation</li><li>• Control your thoughts and words</li><li>• The 5 Second Rule</li></ul>

<b>Marker #5</b>	<b>Marker #6</b>
<b>Plan Ahead To Avoid Relapse</b>	<b>Repeat This Process On Any New Problems</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build confidence</li><li>• Serve others</li><li>• Keep focus at 80/20</li><li>• Establish boundaries</li><li>• Be around the right people</li><li>• Bring love into every situation</li><li>• Control your thoughts and words</li><li>• The 5 Second Rule</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apply this process to all new problems until you reach your destiny</li><li>• Then take your life to the next level</li></ul>

The Roadmap was designed to be followed in the order laid out. The first two markers need to be learned and well implemented before moving on to marker number three. You will notice chapters exist for each of the road markers except number two. The second marker on the Roadmap is a culmination of various elements listed below:

Change Your Beliefs	Chapter 3
Build Your Confidence and Self-Esteem	Chapter 7
Use Tapping to Control Emotions	Chapter 7
Learn the 5 Love Languages	Chapter 7
Control Your Thoughts and Words	Chapter 8

Each of the above are utilized to help control one's emotions. The one that works the fastest and has the best results on controlling emotions is the Tapping process.

### **Kickstart Process for the Addict**

I read many posts on social media about the promises made by addicts to stop and then relapse occurs within a couple of days

or a week. While you are working on applying the Roadmap to your own life, I provide below a kickstart process you can share immediately with the addict to help him or her stop relapsing.

1. Advise the addict that it takes more than a decision to stop. It takes a major shift in what he or she daily focuses on. We are aiming for eventually an 80% focus on building an awesome future utilizing one's passion, and 20% focusing on identifying and resolving underlying issues.

2. Focusing on *not* doing the addiction creates a picture in the mind of doing the addiction and how good they felt while doing it. Recall that the picture in one's mind is what creates the reality. This also applies to the addict's vision of wanting to go hang out with his or her friends who drink or do drugs. The addict needs a reason not to do the addiction and that comes from building a vision for an awesome future.

3. The addict must determine what he or she is passionate about and bring that activity into his or her life at least on a weekly basis. Help the addict to develop some mental pictures of this future so he or she will have something to switch the focus toward.

4. Have the addict focus only on living today. Thinking that he or she would need to spend 80% of his or her free time focusing on the future may be too much to comprehend. Therefore, the addict begins by only focusing on today, maybe the next hour.

5. Advise your addict friend that he or she needs to learn how to control his or her emotions and a way does exist to do so that works quickly. Download my eBook *Tapping Away Your Addiction*. Print two copies, one for you and one for your addict friend. Learn the Tapping process yourself so you can teach it to your friend. You can go to my website to see videos showing the process.

6. Before the addict begins the process of identifying the underlying issues he or she is escaping from, the addict must have a way to handle the emotions. Therefore, do not approach the third marker of the path out of addiction until the above items are well established.

However, remember that it takes more than a decision before transformation can occur. A major shift in focus and learning Tapping to control emotions must occur first.

### **Applying the Roadmap Out of Addiction**

One of the free downloads is the Journal of Insights. These two pages should be downloaded and printed in multiple copies. One of the pages is for you journaling your insights about yourself. The other page consists of two columns, one for you and one for the addict. For this chapter, print out numerous copies of the two-column page.

The markers on the Roadmap are listed a few pages back. I want you to take the first two markers and on your two-column page list each of the underlying bullet points for each marker. For example, the points under marker 1 are:

- Discover your passion in life
- Bring it into your life on a weekly basis
- Shift to 80/20 focus
- Serve others
- Bring love into every situation
- Control your thoughts and words
- The 5 Second Rule

It would probably work best if you do the following:

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

- List the first bullet point
- Under your column, write your answer to, what is your passion? Under the addict's column, what is his or her passion? If the addict does not know, what do you see as being their passion and how can you begin a conversation with the addict about it?
- List the second bullet point
- Under your column, describe how you can bring your passion into your life on a weekly basis. Under the addict's column, what options are available for him or her to bring the passion into their life on a weekly basis?

Repeat for each point for markers 1 and 2. This may seem like a lot of work, but it is worth it. Growth will not magically happen. It takes intention and detailed planning before it will come to fruition.

Before you can move on to the remaining markers, the first two need to be well implemented. Tapping not only helps with emotions, it will also help with the physical cravings the addict struggles with. However, once again I remind you to be sure to determine if the addict needs to be professionally supervised as he or she detoxes.

For the remaining markers two through six, continue on your two-column page and list each of the underlying bullet points for each marker. Identify for both you and your addict friend how each item can be implemented into your lives. Where the same skills and habits are listed for numerous markers, list how those points pertain to that particular road marker.

I had suggested in the beginning of this book that you read it through completely and then go back and answer the questions. Now that you have the big picture, along with all the intricacies to make it happen, reread the book and answer the questions.

To begin conversations with your addict friend about this material, refer to Appendix A for Conversation Starters.

After you have had success by following this Roadmap Out of Addiction for both yourself and/or your addict friend, check out Appendix C regarding joining our community of Renegade Influencers who want to create an addiction-free world.



# **Appendix A**

## **Conversation Starters**

Effective communication requires that we know what we want our end result to be. In our conversations with addicts we want the addict to carry through with the new knowledge we convey to him or her. In order to do so, the addict must think through what we are saying and his or her responses must feel as though they came up with the idea. Therefore, instead of telling the addict what to do, we ask open-ended questions. These are questions that cannot be answered with just a yes or no. This allows the addict to respond with an answer that he or she feels they can own. It may take some practice on your part to develop this way of communicating.

If the addict does not fully respond, instead of telling the addict what you see is true about him or her, make a suggestion. For example: “have you ever considered ...?” or “what do you think would happen if you did [this – explain it]?”

The conversation starters follow the order of the markers on the Roadmap Out of Addiction™. At times I may explain what your intended result is so you will know how to phrase the conversation and keep it pointed in the right direction. Use the words you normally use in your everyday conversation. Some of my words may not be words you would use.

It is best to start these conversations when the addict is in a calm state of mind.

### **Shift Focus to Passionate Living**

Goal: Help the addict discover his or her passion and bring it into the addict’s life at least on a weekly basis. Help the addict to stay focused on that activity, instead of pursuing the addiction.

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

- What do you want to do with your life long term?
- What dreams did you have at one time for your life?
- Are those dreams still something you want to achieve?
- If so, what can you do this week to start working toward that dream?
- If no dreams or goals for his or her life: What is something in your life that gets you excited?
- What do you think that you and I could do together on a weekly basis that would bring some type of purpose back into our lives [some activity]?
- Do you have any friends who could help you reach your dreams? Who?
- You might find some people who enjoy doing [your activity] by looking for a group on meetup.com. Would you be willing to check that out and possibly find a group who can help you reach your goals?
- You know, I've learned that it really helps to have these dreams for our lives. If you had a million dollars, and all your bills were paid and you had all the stuff you wanted to get, what would you then do with your life?

## Learn to Handle Emotions

Goal: Provide new tools for the addict to use to handle his or her negative emotions.

- I know at times it is difficult for all of us to handle our negative emotions. I recently learned a new technique to help me with handling my emotions. Would you be interested in learning it?

- (If yes) I printed out an ebook on it. It's called *Tapping Away Your Addiction*. Although it is written for addicts, it covers various types of negative emotions we all may experience. [Go through and show the addict how to do the Tapping.]
- (If no) You may not be interested at this moment, but here is a printed copy of an ebook on it. It's called *Tapping Away Your Addiction*. Although it is written for addicts, it covers various types of negative emotions we all go through. When you're ready for it, you can learn it in just a few minutes.
- Another way I learned to help myself when I get frustrated is to shift my thoughts to focus on my dreams for my future. What could you turn your thoughts toward to help you stay focused on more positive things in your life?

### **Shift Your Beliefs to Change Your Future**

Goal: To begin identifying false beliefs that may be keeping the addict stuck. Also deal with the addict's negative thoughts and self-talk. Then realize that the picture in one's mind always trumps willpower! Review the thoughts of an addict from chapter 3 to see which ones apply to your addict friend so you can begin conversations about them. Have an alternative belief ready to counter his or her false beliefs.

- If you were to take away the "disease model" about addictions, what do you think are the causes of addictions? Why do you believe that?
- What do you think it takes to stop drinking or abusing drugs long term? Why do you think that?
- I know you are probably being told in your AA meetings that it is a disease and you will never get over it; that

you can only learn how to manage it. Is that what you really believe? Why?

- What is your response if I tell you that there are lots of addicts who got clean and stayed clean for years?
- Why do you think you can't do that too?
- I have recently learned that the picture in our minds overrides our willpower. I am working on changing the pictures inside my mind so I can live better. Do you recognize this happening in your life? Can you give me some examples?
- What positive pictures can you focus on in your mind when you find yourself becoming negative? [Hopefully it's the addict's passion and vision for an awesome future!]

### **Resolve Underlying Issues**

Goal: Identify all underlying issues the addict may be escaping from facing. Use the chart in chapter 4 and identify the skills and habits necessary to remedy the issues. Remember, before attempting this section be sure the addict has learned skills to control his or her emotions.

- I know a lot of people use alcohol or drugs so they don't have to handle their negative emotions. Do you have any idea of any issues or negative emotions you might be trying to escape from? [Discuss. If there is one that the addict keeps talking about, then stay on that topic and try to resolve it before identifying at a later time other possible issues.]
- If the addict can't think of any: I came across this chart that shows some possible underlying issues that people might be dealing with. Do you want to take a look at it?

[A one-page chart of this is in the bonuses section.]

- Which of the skills or habits do you want to work on first to help you resolve this issue? [You can either let the addict read that section in this book or have enough knowledge that you can teach it to the addict.]

### **Plan Ahead to Avoid Relapse**

Goal: During the time it takes for the addict to change his character, overcome underlying issues, and develop a solid plan for his or her future, relapse triggers are still sensitive. Knowing them ahead of time reduces their impact.

- I notice that when 'x' happens it seems to trigger you to go drinking. Do you recognize that? How can we come up with a plan for you (or us) to react in a better manner?
- What do you think is a better way for you to handle 'x'?
- [Repeat for each known thing that triggers your addict friend.]

### **Review of Skills and Habits**

Goal: Determine which of the five skills and five habits would best benefit the fastest growth of your addict friend. As the friend or spouse of the addict you might be able to see these missing elements better than the addict.

This section doesn't have conversation starters because it is something you will look at privately and determine how to help the addict implement the skill or habit you believe will help him or her the best.



# Appendix B

## Resources

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Website: Veterans EFT Tapping Project –  
<http://www.VeteransEFTTappingProject.org>

Website: Veterans Stress Project – <https://StressProject.org>

Website: Welcome Home Vets –  
<http://www.WelcomeHomeVets.org>

## **Appendix C**

### **Renegade Influencers Creating an Addiction-Free World!**

You are invited to join our community of Renegade Influencers. What's a renegade? A renegade is a person who deserts and betrays an organization, country or set of principles; a person who behaves in a rebelliously unconventional manner. So what does this have to do with our efforts to influence addicts? Everything!

Our approach is contrary to what the majority of society are being taught about the cause and cure of addictions. Here are a few of our beliefs that spur us on to reach out to influence addicts and restore relationships:

- We believe we have the knowledge, skills, and power to influence addicts to change
- No addict is beyond reach
- We are not deterred by what the professionals say about addictions
- We cannot be defeated
- The proof of our method of influence is in our results

The approach to influence addicts you just read in this book is contrary to all other approaches. It takes courage and strong conviction to be consistent long enough to see the other person changed.

## My Friend Is An Addict – What Can I Do?

This Roadmap can also be used to prevent people from becoming addicts. This is great news for teens and young adults. Our future generations cannot wait any longer for this help

Is our goal to be an addiction-free world too big to grasp? All great movements start with one person. Others join as they get hold of the impact of the vision. As the size of the movement increases so does the momentum. But it all starts with each person doing their part to reach out to influence addicts and ask others to join in our vision.

In an effort to equip you to overcome any hurdles you may encounter I provide a monthly newsletter (e-newsletter and/or in print, your choice) with tips and guidance. For immediate assistance you can ask questions inside our private Facebook group.

For more information and to join, go to our website: [MyFriendIsAnAddict.com/renegade](http://MyFriendIsAnAddict.com/renegade).

Together we can help the over 24 million addicts in the United States, along with their families, be restored to living great lives!

## About The Author

Kathy Williamson overcame a ten year addiction to pain medicines in 1990 and has been clean for almost thirty years, without attending support groups. Through her experiences, observations and being a crisis hotline counselor for over 12 years, Kathy created her own Roadmap Out of Addiction™ process to help addicts get clean and stay clean. She offers these proven recovery tools to families and friends to use to influence their addict friend toward permanent change.

Kathy knows what it is like to have your life totally taken over by an emotionally unhealthy spouse. She was able to take back her life and now helps spouses of addicts take back their lives by learning how to apply the principles in the Roadmap Out of Addiction™ to their own lives.

Kathy's dream is to train and equip thousands of people and professionals to become members of the Renegade Influencers community whose vision is to create an addiction-free world.

She is an author, speaker and addictions coach and offers coaching, workshops and programs through her business *Out of Addiction Forever*.

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Or visit the appropriate website for further information:

Friends & families of addicts: [MyFriendIsAnAddict.com](http://MyFriendIsAnAddict.com)

Addicts: [OutOfAddiction.com](http://OutOfAddiction.com)

Training of Professionals: [OutOfAddictionTraining.com](http://OutOfAddictionTraining.com)

## NOTES

## NOTES