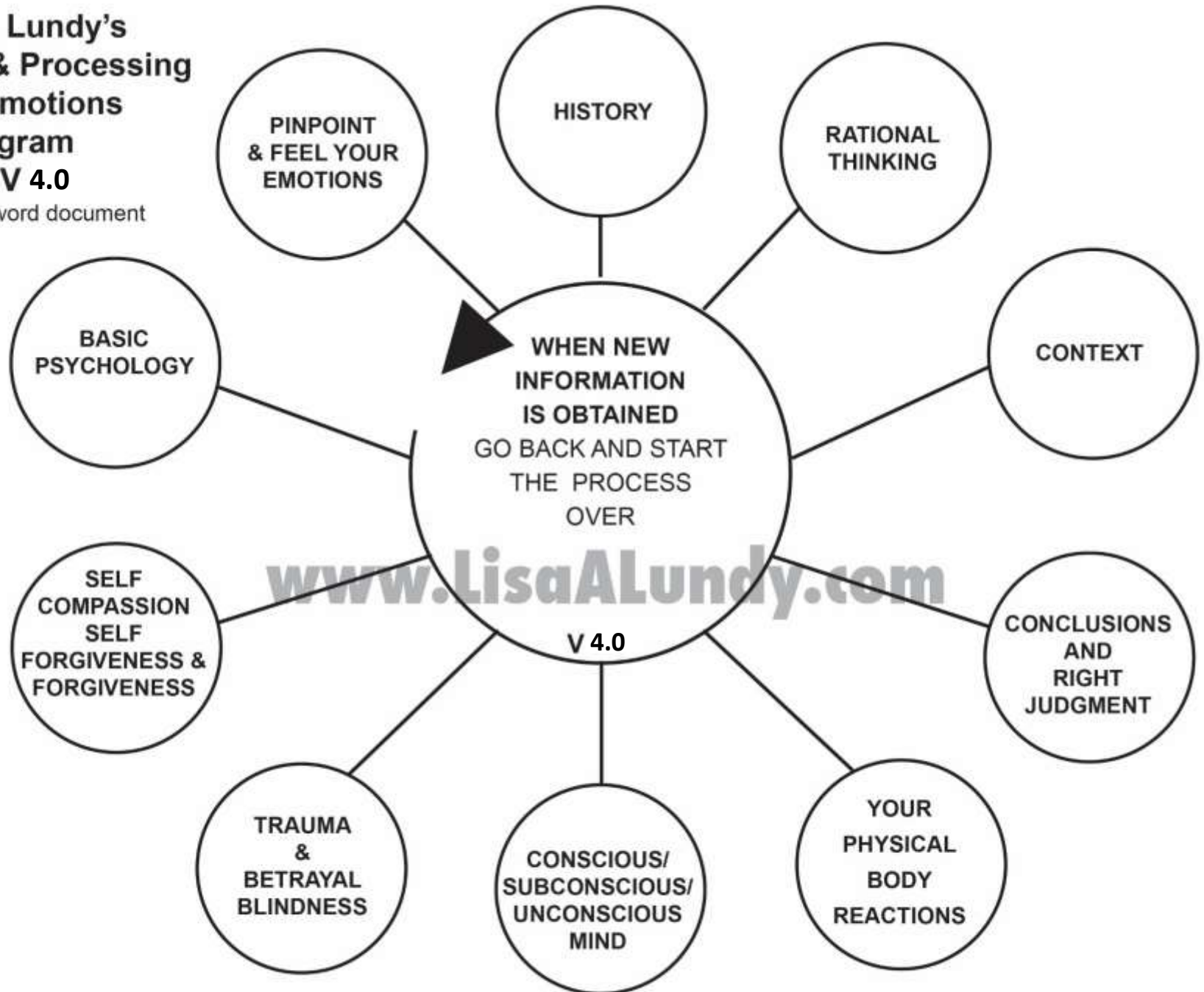


**Lisa A. Lundy's
Managing & Processing
Your Emotions
Diagram
V 4.0**

*See attached word document



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Lisa A. Lundy's Managing and Processing Your Emotions Diagram Recommendations (V4.0)

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- 1. Please READ ALL Recommendations prior to using this model.

- 2. This workbook seeks to provide guidance, information and suggestions on how you could manage and process your emotions. If you feel yourself getting upset in using this material, stop and seek professional help.
- 3. It is complex. There are so many factors that come into play when processing and managing your emotions.
- 4. NOTE: This entire process happens over time. It does not happen in one hour or even one day. It is a PROCESS. It takes time. I describe it as circular and not linear because there are many pieces and it is *not an ordered process* in my opinion. It could be ordered, but I have not discovered any order in the deconstruction of my process for this. So, I am saying that it is not an ordered process because I am not aware of it.
- **5. Psychoneuroimmunology:** In my opinion, this is one absolutely critical piece of science that people would do well to both understand and embrace. Psychoneuroimmunology is the field of science that brings together psychology, neurology and immunology under one umbrella to provide the research that your mind and body are intimately connected. The bottom line of psychoneuroimmunology is that your mental health impacts your physical health and your physical health impacts your mental health, which can be in a positive or negative way.
- Before you dismiss this science out of hand, I think it is important that you know that the history of psychoneuroimmunology spans thousands of years according to George F. Solomon in Chapter 2, titled *The Development and History of Psychoneuroimmunology*, in a book titled *The Oxford Handbook on Psychoneuroimmunology* published by Oxford University Press. The research on this relationship is down to a deep level of cell-mediated (Th1) and humoral (Th2) immune responses, which is far above my pay-grade or understanding. Based on the research I have read, this is a done deal as far as the proof-positive that your mind and body are connected, which underscores the significance of learning HOW to manage and process your emotions and to recognize the impact of your emotions on your physical health and vice versa.
- Your physical body can provide signals or tells that something is going on with you. However, that is not at all how we are living in society. People generally do not attribute an ache or pain in their physical body or some illness or health problem with trauma, some painful emotion or something that is going on in their life. That is not commonly recognized, yet it is what we already know from science. I have a podcast titled: Neuroplasticity and Psychoneuroimmunology that will provide a rather brief summary of the most relevant aspects of these scientific game changers and what that means to human health and wellness.
- **6. The Difficult Emotions:** I define the difficult emotions as those involving some type or aspect of pain – sadness, loss, grief, anger, betrayal, abandonment, trauma, abuse of any kind, mean and cruel behavior or actions by others, pain, resentment, shock, and so on. This is the term that I use and is not a widely used or even recognized term. I find that most people do not have any issues or problems dealing with the happy, joyous and positive emotions so this diagram and process is for the difficult emotions.
- As you are building your emotional intelligence, you may find it helpful to use a journal to write out the different aspects that I have laid out here to help train your mind in this technique. It could also be helpful to talk through the aspects I have included with a friend and compare their reactions and input to your own thoughts and reactions.

Breaking Down the Elements in Emotional Processing & Management

Your View of Life, Values and Beliefs

Your values, beliefs and views on life and people acts as a filter and color palate for managing and processing your emotions, which may be below your awareness at this time. It is important to know that

core values, beliefs, attitudes, views, stereotypes and many other things will impact the dynamic of managing and processing your emotions.

I have a particular point of view in how I manage and process my emotions, which you may or may not agree with. Personally, I am a big diehard fan of love, loving others, being kind and appreciating others. I believe that MOST people are good. Because I have dealt with a clinically diagnosed psychopath, I am well aware that there are evil and bad people in the world. Yet, my choice is to stand for, look for and believe in the good of people and humanity while keeping an eye out for bad actors. My love and affection for people, humanity, the human condition, the plight of others is my filter for life and how I manage and process my emotions. You may have a very different filter.

A person who believes that the world is out to get them or that most people are bad has the opposite filter or lens and will process their emotions differently. Whatever your particular view on life and people is will color the process as I hope you can see.

Emotional Bandwidth

When you are dealing with the difficult emotions as I call them – sadness, grief, anger, loss, resentment, betrayal, shock, trauma, pain to name a few of them – it is extremely valuable to understand the idea of your emotional bandwidth, which is not static. Your emotional bandwidth changes over time based on a variety of things, which I cover in my podcast on emotional bandwidth.

There will be times when you simply do not have the capacity or the emotional bandwidth to deal with some difficult emotions and as a result you will have to set the emotions and situation aside until a later time when you can deal with them. That is reasonable as long as you go back to the emotions and manage and process them. Understanding that you are a human being with limits especially when it comes to your emotions is very helpful and can be freeing. This is especially true if you are in an abusive situation of any kind. Emotions that you do not manage and process do not magically disappear, so if you have too much going on to deal with any difficult emotions you have to eventually go back and deal with them. Otherwise they will lay in wait in your subconscious and unconscious mind for a future day sometimes exploding in the process.

You are not a robot. You do not “power through” the managing and processing of difficult emotions. A basic grasp of your emotional bandwidth and the aspects that can positively or negatively impact your emotional bandwidth will help you have a happier and healthier life. You can either listen to my podcast or look at the transcript for the basics, which I believe will help you have more compassion for yourself and others.

Process and Manage Emotions in Snippets or Bits

The difficult emotions are painful. Because the difficult emotions are painful, I manage and process my difficult or painful emotions in snippets or bits – a little bit here and a little bit there – so that I can keep my life moving forward and so that I am functional in life. When deeply painful things, situations or events happen, it is usually too much to take in all at once. Dealing with the difficult emotions in small snippets or bits is what I recommend because it is manageable and you will not be left unable to function.

In addition to managing and processing the difficult emotions in small pieces or snippets, I am very kind to myself and compassionate with myself while I am dealing with painful emotions. I highly recommend that you be very kind and compassionate with yourself in general, but especially when you are going through the steps to manage and process difficult emotions. Be extra kind to yourself. Boost self-care and self-soothing activities while you are dealing with the difficult emotions.

Allowing, Sitting with and Being With Your Emotions

While no one, myself included, likes painful things, situations or events, pain is a part of life. Pain is inescapable. It is important to provide some window of time to “allow”, “sit with” or “be with” your emotions without having to numb them or distract yourself from them. This is best done in snippets or in little bits here or there. What is extremely helpful to me is having the ability to generate my own happiness separate from my circumstances, situations and the things happening in my life.

Why this is critical, in my opinion, is because I have always had painful situations going on in my life. Had I not developed the capacity to generate my own happiness separate from my life circumstances and situations, I would have had a life of deep depression. It is entirely possible to develop the skills and abilities to have happiness in your life at the same time that something deeply painful and problematic is happening. Yes. They are not mutually exclusive.

At this very moment in time as I write this, I have multiple situations that are extremely painful going on. I have done what I can do about them. And it is still so deeply painful that it is horrible. Some of the situations have been going on for more than 2 or 3 years. It is wildly helpful to be able to generate happiness for yourself separate from your circumstances. You cannot control other people. You can, however, find happiness while you are dealing with painful emotions.

We know from the research that any emotions that you do not deal with lay in wait in your subconscious and unconscious mind for a future date to be dealt with and sometimes the emotions that have not been managed and processed will explode at a future time. That we know from the research. Allowing, sitting with and being with the difficult emotions is a critical piece of managing and processing your emotions. You can't skip over this part. Yet, it is the part that people want to skip over because it is uncomfortable and painful to feel painful or difficult emotions.

This may mean that you need to have a good cry to help release the pain. It might mean you have to watch a sad movie to prompt the tears and crying if it doesn't bubble up on its own. It might mean that you need a nap or more sleep. What I do not suggest under any circumstances is that you sit with, be with or allow difficult emotions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. No. I do NOT recommend that in any way. Deal with the difficult emotions for a little bit one day and then a little bit a few days later giving yourself a break. This is NOT a quick process. This takes time. It takes me a LOT of time. Maybe you will be faster at this than I am. Speed is not relevant in my opinion.

Rational Thinking

The opposite of rational thinking is irrational thinking, which is also known as a cognitive distortion. A cognitive distortion, as the name implies, is a distortion or warping of your cognitive processes. Cognition (noun) is defined as the mental process of knowing, including aspects such as awareness, perception, reasoning and judgment. Thus, a cognitive distortion means that there is a flaw, warp or distortion in your knowing, awareness, perceptions, reasoning or judgment. The way you think – either rationally or irrationally – impacts how you process and manage your emotions.

I have used the analogy of a carnival fun house mirror for a cognitive distortion where the mirrors are deeply distorted causing you to look taller, wider or off. You know if you go into a carnival fun house of mirrors that your image is going to be distorted by the mirrors. With a cognitive distortion in people, many people or most people are NOT aware that they have some flawed way of thinking and perceiving. They are NOT aware that they have a cognitive distortion – yet it impacts them across the board even though they do not know about their cognitive distortion.

Cognitive distortions are very, very common. The good news is that you can deal with a cognitive distortion and take steps to move towards rational thinking. One cognitive distortion is called emotional reasoning. Emotional reasoners will tell you that they excel in emotional intelligence and with their emotions, yet the truth is that they use their emotions as facts to reason with instead of reasoning with facts. When you ask an emotional reasoner for the facts that they used to arrive at a specific conclusion, they will give you their emotions devoid of facts because to them their emotions are the facts.

For your own emotional and mental fitness, it is best to identify any irrational thinking patterns and begin the intentional actions to move towards rational thinking. I have a podcast on Cognitive Distortions, which might be helpful to you. You should understand that IF you have a cognitive distortion, your thinking is flawed or inaccurate. Here is a partial list of common cognitive distortions. Do not be upset if you have one because you can learn to move towards rational thinking. If you have a cognitive distortion, your mental and emotional health will improve as you take the actions to move towards rational thinking.

1. **Catastrophizing**
2. **Minimizing**
3. **Grandiosity**
4. **Personalization (taking everything personally)**
5. **Magical thinking**
6. **Leaps in logic**
7. **Polarized thinking (Black or White thinking or All or Nothing thinking)**
8. **Paranoia**
9. **Delusional thinking**
10. **Filtering**
11. **Overgeneralization**
12. **Jumping to conclusions**
13. **Control Fallacies**
14. **Fallacy of Fairness**
15. **Blaming (hold other people responsible for your emotional pain)**
16. **Fallacy of change**
17. **Global labeling (aka Mislabeling)**
18. **Always being right**
19. **Mind Reading (assuming what someone else is thinking without much to go on)**
20. **Emotional Reasoning**

The Negative Thinking Pack

The “Negative Thinking Pack” is my own made up name for items, which we know from the research typically travel together, which includes negative thinking, overthinking, ruminating, brooding, catastrophizing and the like. If you are prone to the “Negative Thinking Pack”, you will – in my experience of working with people over a few decades – process your emotions differently. It is my experience that this kind of thinking can create a downward spiral much like a run-away train and leave a person tanked. It is a difficult way of thinking, which it not helpful.

Some people who have this “Negative Thinking Pack” will from time to time get stuck or stalled in processing their emotions, which is helpful to know. If you are prone to the “Negative Thinking Pack”, it is my opinion that this will give the way you process and manage your emotions a negative color, which would be absent for someone who doesn’t have the negative thinking pack, which is significant.

The other aspect for someone who has the negative thinking pack is that it takes advantage of the self-defeating prophecy instead of the self-fulfilling prophecy. It doesn’t feel good to have the negative thinking pack in place and it isn’t helpful to your physical health as we have learned from the field of science called psychoneuroimmunology. I have a podcast that covered psychoneuroimmunology, which could be a place to start for understanding this rich field.

Stand-Alone Self-Esteem

Stand-Alone Self-Esteem is my own made up term referring to feeling worthy, feeling deserving, feeling good enough and lovable SEPARATE from your job, the roles that you occupy in life, separate from your finances or money, separate from your circumstances, separate from your relationships. If you happen to have low self-esteem, it will color and impact how you manage and process your emotions in my experience of working with people.

When you have low self-esteem, it acts like a filter through which you perceive life. From my experience in coaching individuals over decades, the impact of low self-esteem in life is dramatic and widespread. Low self-esteem will impact how you manage and process your emotions leading you to different feelings, different perceptions, different decisions and a different outcome than a person who has

healthy stand-alone self-esteem. Like irrational thinking or cognitive distortions, low self-esteem impacts your thinking and perceptions. You can build self-esteem over time with intentional actions.

Trauma and Betrayal Trauma

If you are in an abusive situation whether it is some kind of abuse from your family of origin, or if you are in an intimate partner relationship – married or unmarried, or you are dealing with abuse from work or some other source, it is even more important that you ultimately learn how to manage and process your emotions. You may not be able to manage and process the abuse while you are in it because you may just have the struggle of a lifetime to GET THROUGH the abuse. That is reasonable.

Once you have escaped or been otherwise able to get away from the abuse, it will be wildly helpful and healthy to manage and process your emotions about the trauma, abuse and what happened. Betrayal trauma is common and that may involve betrayal blindness. Trauma bonding could be at play. These are important aspects that come into managing and processing your emotions.

Betrayal Trauma, Generational Trauma & Trauma Bonding

Betrayal Trauma=used to refer to a kind of trauma independent of the reaction to the trauma. From Dr. Freyd (2008): *Betrayal trauma occurs when the people or institutions on which a person depends for survival significantly violate that person's trust or well-being. Childhood physical, emotional, or sexual abuse perpetuated by a care giver are examples of betrayal trauma.* Domestic abuse is betrayal trauma.

Betrayal Blindness: is the unawareness, not knowing, and forgetting exhibited by people towards betrayal. This blindness may extend to betrayals that are not traditionally considered as “traumas”, such as adultery, inequities in the workplace and society, etc. Victims, perpetrators, and witnesses may display betrayal blindness in order to preserve relationships, institutions, and social systems upon which they depend.

Institutional Betrayal=refers to wrongdoings perpetuated by an institution upon individuals dependent on that institution, including failure to prevent or respond supportively to wrongdoings by individuals (ie. Sexual assault) committed within the context of the institution.

Trauma Bonding=is when a person who has been abused develops an unhealthy attachment to their abuser, The people who are most vulnerable to trauma bonding are those with a childhood history of abuse – either physical, emotional, sexual or neglect or whose childhood environment was volatile, neglectful or abusive. The victim of abuse may defend the actions of their abuser, feel a sense of loyalty, isolate from others and so on. Trauma can create powerful emotional bonds that are resistant to change. Following abuse or an abusive incident or series of incidents, perpetrators will often try to redeem their reputation by offering some kind of help or gesture of support.

Generational Trauma AKA Inter-Generational Trauma or Transgenerational Trauma=is that idea and theory that trauma can be unwittingly passed from generation to generation in ways that we don't necessarily fully understand; generational triumph over trauma or adversity is on the upside something that can also be passed from generation to generation. We have families where alcoholism is generational. We have families where domestic abuse is generational. This can be powerful for children and young adults who want to break the cycle and bring generational triumphs to their lives triumphing over adversity and breaking family patterns.

Understanding the Impact of Trauma (NCBI Bookshelf: National Library of Medicine; National Institutes of Health:

Everyone reacts differently to trauma.

- Trauma responses are NORMAL REACTIONS to ABNORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- Some Trauma Responses: PTSD; Exhaustion, Confusion, Sadness, Anxiety, Agitation, Numbness; dissociation; blunted affect; depression; persistent fatigue; sleep disorders; nightmares; fear of reoccurrence; flashbacks; avoidance of emotions or sensations associated with the trauma; anger, shame, fear
- CAN IMPACT: emotional, physical, cognitive, behavioral, social and developmental areas
- Reactions to trauma when emotional dysregulation is at play: self-medication – substance abuse; disordered eating; compulsive behaviors like gambling or overworking; or other high-risk or self-injurious behaviors
- SOME PEOPLE find creative, healthy and industrious ways to manage strong affect generated by trauma
- **Emotional Blunting:** inability to feel positive or negative emotions; detachment or reduced emotional responsiveness, common in people with depression. Common as a trauma response.
- **Numbing:** a biological process whereby emotions are detached from thoughts, behaviors and memories. This can be difficult to address because numbing symptoms hide what is going on internally emotionally.
- **Physical Symptoms:** chronic health conditions; sleep disturbances; gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, neurological, musculoskeletal, respirator, dermatological, urological problems and substance use disorders.
- **Somatization:** indicates a focus on bodily symptoms or dysfunctions to express emotional distress. Many individuals who present with somatization are likely unaware of the connection between their emotions and the physical symptoms that they are experiencing.

Psychology Terms That Can Be Very Helpful

Self-Fulfilling Prophecy: A *self-fulfilling prophecy* is a prediction that causes itself to be true due to the behavior (including the act of predicting it) of the believer. *Self-fulfilling*, here, means “brought about as a result of being foretold or talked about,” while *prophecy* refers to the prediction.

- Corollary **Self-defeating prophecy** – extremely important to understand – the opposite

Splitting: A defense mechanism where you view either yourself or someone else or something else as either all good or all bad. Splitting can happen when a person’s emotions are too difficult or overwhelming for them to process so they resort to idealizing one party and devaluing another. This can be a result of early life traumas, abuse or abandonment.

While this is an aspect of borderline personality disorder, not all splitting is dissociative nor does it mean that you have borderline personality disorder. Some writers and clinicians note that splitting is found in everyday life where it can be helpful in categorizing or making sense of complexities like good vs. evil. It is not necessarily pathological or an indicator of borderline personality disorder. It could be a sign of a cognitive distortion (all or nothing or black or white thinking). This term can be helpful in making sense of another person’s actions towards you if they have “split” you for some reason.

Projecting: Projection is the process of displacing one’s feelings onto a different person, animal, or object. The term is most commonly used to describe defensive projection—attributing one’s own unacceptable urges to another. For example, if someone continuously bullies and ridicules a peer about his insecurities, the bully might be projecting his own struggle with self-esteem onto the other person.

- Extremely common – IMHO
- Very, very helpful to know yourself and how you feel to see when this is actually happening

Denial: Denial is a defense mechanism proposed by Anna Freud which involves a refusal to accept reality, thus blocking external events from awareness. If a situation is just too much to handle, the person may respond by refusing to perceive it or by **denying** that it exists.

Emotional Intelligence (EI/EQ): the capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically.

Conscious Mind/Unconscious Mind/Subconscious Mind:

The conscious mind contains all of the thoughts, memories, feelings, and wishes of which we are aware at any given moment. This is the aspect of our mental processing that we can think and talk about rationally. This also includes our memory, which is not always part of consciousness but can be retrieved easily and brought into awareness.

The unconscious mind is a reservoir of feelings, thoughts, urges, and memories that are outside of our conscious awareness. Most of the contents of the unconscious are unacceptable or unpleasant, such as feelings of pain, anxiety, or conflict. The **unconscious mind** comprises mental processes that are inaccessible to consciousness but that influence judgments, feelings, or behavior (Wilson, 2002).

According to Freud (1915), the unconscious mind is the primary source of human behavior. Like an iceberg, the most important part of the mind is the part you cannot see. Our feelings, motives and decisions are actually powerfully influenced by our past experiences, and stored in the unconscious. Most reports break down the mind into this type of division: 10% conscious mind and 90 % Unconscious/Subconscious mind.

Emotional Reasoning: This term, meant to describe a particular type of cognitive distortion, was first employed in the '70s by [Aaron Beck, the founder of Cognitive Therapy](#) (later expanded to Cognitive Behavior [Therapy](#), or [CBT](#)). To Beck, whenever someone concludes that their emotional reaction to something thereby defines its reality, they're engaged in emotional reasoning. Any observed evidence is disregarded or dismissed in favor of the assumed "truth" of their feelings. Additionally, Beck believed that such reasoning originated from negative thoughts, best appreciated as involuntary, uncontrollable, or automatic.

So, for example, if you're feeling overwhelmed by something, such a feeling "proves" that the present circumstance is too much for you to handle. And this explains one key aspect of [procrastination](#)—as in, if you *feel* you'll fail at something, you'll probably put it off, or not even attempt it.

Minimizers: Minimizing takes an event, phrase, statement, or action of any size and makes them smaller, less of an issue, and projects the issue onto the other individual or inanimate object in the incident or situation. This can be described as a "side-step away from denial".

Monsterize: To make something or someone into a monster. To give someone a very bad reputation; demonize, vilify.

CLUES to this: Use of the words "always" or "never"

You NEVER do X, Y, or Z

You ALWAYS blame me

You NEVER help me...

You ALWAYS dismiss my ideas

Misplacing/Displacing Anger (Kicked the Dog situation): Displacement is a defense mechanism, a coping strategy that entails a disavowal of thoughts, feelings or impulses that we view as being inconsistent with and unacceptable to our sense of self. Specifically, displacement involves directing these intensely

uncomfortable experiences toward a less threatening target than the original triggering target. Displaced anger and aggression may reflect the most destructive forms of displacement, as it often causes a ripple effect of negative energy.

Narcissist/Narcissistic Behaviors: **Narcissistic** personality disorder — one of several types of personality disorders — is a mental condition in which people have an inflated sense of their own importance, a deep need for excessive attention and admiration, troubled relationships, and a **lack of empathy for others**.

Psychopath Checklist: Revised & PCL: SV

Developed by Dr. Robert Hare, et al, originally the Psychopathy Checklist, which later became the Psychopath Checklist–Revised (PCL-R) is an essential component of any assessment protocol within forensic and correctional settings that has been in use since 1980. Later a screening version was developed (PCL: SV)

PCL-R has been repeatedly tested in clinical and forensic practice (Grann et al. 1998, Hare 2006, Hare et al. 2006, Neumann et al. 2007, Hare et al. 2005, Bolt et al. 2004, Guay et al. 2007, Hare & Neumann 2008), and the results indicate that PCL-R has very good psychometric properties and is recommended for assessing psychopathic traits.

The questionnaire can be used by experts specially trained for this purpose, who have professional experience in working with forensic populations. The assessment of psychopathic traits can be performed in two ways. The first is based on interviews (125 questions) and data from documents, and the other is based on the forensic psychiatric records. If you can find the PCL-R or better yet, the PCL: SV online, it can be helpful in understanding people who might be in your life. It is a tool that I believe should be widely understood and used.

Gaslighting: **Gaslighting** is a form of **psychological** manipulation in which a person or a group covertly sows seeds of doubt in a targeted individual or group, making them question their own memory, perception, or judgment.

- Example: Someone says: I want to make sure you don't do X. (Three times.)
- You say: No, I'm not going to do X.
- Later you realize that you have been accused in a direct fashion of something very negative.
- You confront the person, who says "I didn't mean that actually." And then they dismiss, demean or diminish what they actually said.

Coping Mechanisms or Coping Strategy: Coping mechanisms or coping strategies are the actions or methods that people use in the face of stress and/or trauma to help them manage painful or difficult emotions. Healthy coping mechanisms or strategies help people deal with stress in a positive way that contributes to their emotional well-being instead of providing a negative impact on their well-being.

Passive-Aggressive Anger/Behaviors:

Passive-aggressive behavior is a pattern of indirectly expressing negative feelings instead of openly addressing them. There's a disconnect between what a passive-aggressive person says and what he or she does. For example, a passive-aggressive person might appear to agree — perhaps even enthusiastically — with another person's request. Rather than complying with the request, however, he or she might express anger or resentment by failing to follow through or missing deadlines.

Specific signs of passive-aggressive behavior include: resentment and opposition to the demands of others; procrastination and intentional mistakes in response to others' demands; cynical, sullen or hostile

attitude; frequent complaints about feeling underappreciated or cheated; hostile joking is a prime example of this kind of behavior.

Assertiveness:

Assertiveness is a social skill that relies heavily on effective communication while simultaneously respecting the thoughts and wishes of others. People who are assertive clearly and respectfully communicate their wants, needs, positions, and boundaries to others. There's no question of where they stand, no matter what the topic. Individuals who are high in assertiveness don't shy away from defending their points of view or goals, or from trying to influence others to see their side. They are open to both compliments and constructive criticism.

Boundaries (or Lack of Boundaries):

1. a psychological demarcation that protects the integrity of an individual or group or that helps the person or group set realistic limits on participation in a relationship or activity.
2. Types of Boundaries: Mental; Physical; Emotional; Spiritual; Material, and so on.
3. Boundaries are learned. If yours weren't valued as a child, you didn't learn you had them. Any kind of abuse violates personal boundaries, including teasing.

****This is extremely important! Falls under self-care!

Co-Dependent: a person with an excessive emotional or psychological reliance on a partner, typically one who requires support on account of an illness or addiction.

Scapegoat/Scapegoating:

Dr. Graham Wilson points out that psychodynamically speaking, scapegoating is defined as a "process by which the mechanisms of projection or displacement are used to focus unwarranted levels of aggression, hostility, frustration, etc., on another individual or group." Aggression, hostility and frustration are behaviors, as is the act itself of scapegoating.

What underlies them is emotional energy and it is the pain of experiencing this energy within that leads an individual or group to seek to displace it unconsciously. This is why scapegoating is seen as a defense mechanism (aka coping strategy). It is possible for the scapegoating to be done by an individual or a group. In dysfunctional families one or more members of the family can be scapegoats. Scapegoating can also be done in workplaces, and in organizations and other areas of life outside of families.

Double-Bind: a situation in which an individual receives contradictory messages from another person. For example, a parent may respond negatively when his or her child approaches or attempts to engage in affectionate behavior but then, when the child turns away or tries to leave, reaches out to encourage the child to return. Double-binding communication was once considered a causative factor in schizophrenia. [proposed by British anthropologist Gregory Bateson (1904–1980)]

According to Gregory Bateson, a double bind is a communication dilemma that comes from a conflict between two or more messages. So, it doesn't matter what you do, because any choice you make will be wrong. This is a situation in which communication only causes suffering and can lead to psychological disorders.

This can be found in some dysfunctional families

Dysfunctional Families:

A dysfunctional family is one in which conflict and instability are common. Parents might abuse or neglect their children, and other family members are often forced to accommodate and enable negative

behavior. In some cases, dysfunctional families can be the result of addiction, codependency, or untreated mental illness.

- Given the prevalence of Dysfunctional families of 70-96%, this is an area worth understanding
- Upcoming podcast on Dysfunctional families

Empowering Attitudes & Beliefs/Disempowering Attitudes & Beliefs:

Beliefs or attitudes that forward your life, empower, inspire or uplift you in a positive way are empowering attitudes or beliefs. Disempowering attitudes and beliefs are the ones that are self-limiting, negative, or do not empower your life.

Enmeshment:

Enmeshment is a description of a relationship between two or more people in which the personal boundaries are unclear or meshed together in some fashion.

Questions to Consider Before You Begin

- Are you the safe person for this individual or group? If you are not familiar with the idea of being the safe person for another human being then I highly suggest that you get grounded in the concept because it is critical for managing and processing your emotions properly in my opinion. I have a podcast titled: When You are the Safe Person – that should be helpful.
- If anger or frustration is involved, is misplaced or misdirected anger going on? Anger or frustration can be misplaced or misdirected away from the source to either someone or something else – it can be misdirected onto yourself or another entity. This is important to distinguish when you are processing your emotions. Given the lack of anger skills in the world, generally speaking, I believe that this is fairly common.
- Is it possible that envy, jealousy, or resentment is in play in the background?
- Is there a gang mentality involved (others in agreement)?
- Are you blaming yourself or someone else? What can you be responsible for in the mix?
- Do you actually know the truth or just think that you know the truth? These can be two very different things.
- Do THEY know the truth? Do THEY think they know the truth? My podcast on Lies, Secrets and Telling the truth may be helpful because the truth can be dicey as it is not always what you think.
- Was a smear campaign going on? (Very possibly if a narcissist, psychopath, sociopath or other abuser was involved in the past.)
- Is the OTHER person going through something difficult? Are they dealing with a life challenge, a trauma or a loss? This can impact their behavior and it would be helpful to bring compassion to the table IF the OTHER person is going through some hardship.
- Was there malice or malicious intent involved? Many situations that are deeply hurtful and/or painful do NOT involve malice or malicious intent. Sometime a person gets triggered and if you are their safe person, you may get some fallout. Sometimes you will not know the INTENT if you do not ask that question.
- Splitting: This is a specific psychology term that I have included because it has been so valuable to me since I learned it when it comes to managing and processing my emotions involving other people. Splitting is basically a cognitive dissociation action where you make either a person, a group, a party, an event or something ALL good or ALL bad. You “split” something where one element or person is the “good guy” and one element or person is the “bad guy”. If someone splits you and you know about this concept, you can say to them – “Are you splitting me?” If they do not know about splitting and they are engaged in splitting – they should know that they are doing that IN MY opinion because it can be a sign or signal of more serious mental health issues.

1. PINPOINT & FEEL YOUR FEELINGS

- Use an emotional word vocabulary sheet to pinpoint all of the emotions you are feeling about the situation or whatever happened. Note: You may have mixed emotions and feel both relieved and angry about one event or you may feel sad and happy about one event. It is reasonable to have mismatched emotions about one event or situation.
- Once you have identified your feelings you then must FEEL your feelings. Don't numb the difficult emotions. You have to allow yourself to feel your feelings. Give your feelings space. Give it time.
- If you are processing feelings that are painful, sad, involve loss, betrayal and trauma, it would be reasonable and probably appropriate for you to cry at some point when you are processing out your emotions. Allow yourself to cry or sob because we know from the research that tears can be healing and because of the release of oxytocin and feel good chemicals or endorphins (endogenous opioids) we know that emotional tears can help you feel better and ease pain. Allow for as much crying as you can because that is helpful.
- If crying doesn't come naturally to you or is hard for you AND you are going through a loss, grief, sadness, trauma or pain, you might find watching a sad movie or show can help you get the tears flowing – initially from the show or movie and then your own tears will likely come.
- The emotions you initially feel are not necessarily the emotions you will feel once you have begun the process to contemplate and process the various aspects I have included in my diagram and this text. For example, initial feelings of being shocked, hurt, and betrayed may over time as you look at the various aspects that I have included move into more compassionate, loving and understanding emotions as you perhaps recognize that the other person(s) were projecting and you are their safe person, or they got triggered unrelated to you. My caveat is that your emotions may change as you contemplate and process your emotions.
- Generally speaking, we as a society have a fairly low vocabulary when it comes to emotions. My suggestion to use an emotional word vocabulary sheet is because there is a big difference in emotions depending on the word. We use words like happy, sad, upset, mad, depressed, irritated, annoyed, bothered as some of our general categories. That is not very helpful. Use an emotional word vocabulary word sheet until you have expanded your own personal vocabulary significantly.

2. CONTEXT

- What is the context of the situation, what happened, or what was said. What is your point of view, your understanding of things. What is the other person(s) point of view. When managing and processing my emotions, I feel it is critical to include the context of the situation, which also means considering the relativity of anything else going on at the time. If the person involved in the situation you are processing your emotions on has just lost a loved one, or is in a domestic abuse situation or is experiencing a major life trauma, then that is relative as it deepens the context. It is relative in my opinion and should be considered under the umbrella of context.

3. HISTORY

- Do you have any history with how you are feeling? Is this a common or familiar feeling? Is there a pattern to this feeling or with this person, entity or organization? What is the history?

4. RATIONAL THINKING

- Covered in a previous section. This is very important to be emotionally and mentally fit.

5. CONSCIOUS MIND, SUBCONSCIOUS/UNCONSCIOUS MIND

- From your conscious mind, your core values, beliefs, expectations and attitudes will shape how you manage and process your emotions about the situation and impact how things move forward or what happens as a result. You might not be aware of your core values, beliefs, expectations, attitudes in which case that is laying in your subconscious or unconscious mind. What you are aware and aware of cognitively is what is in your conscious mind, which by most accounts represents around 10% of your mind.

- Your unconscious and subconscious mind has hidden decisions, values, beliefs, attitudes, memories, unprocessed emotions and other things that will or may impact how you manage and process your emotions although you will likely not be aware of this, it is going on regardless of your awareness. This includes your attitudes towards the world, other people and so on. The subconscious and unconscious mind together represents approximately 90% of your mind by many reports.
- When you are managing and processing your emotions, things may surface or bubble up from your subconscious or unconscious mind, which can be helpful, surprising, or impact how you manage and process your emotions. If you were triggered by a situation, person or some aspect of life, it could be coming up from your subconscious or unconscious mind – also very helpful to recognize.

6. TRAUMA & BETRAYAL BLINDNESS

- Is there trauma, betrayal trauma or betrayal blindness in play or involved? Is trauma bonding going on? Are there trauma responses involved?
- Trauma and betrayal blindness were not included in my original podcast on managing and processing your emotions. I have added this in now that I understand that most people in the world have had some trauma even if they are blind to the trauma(s), and trauma either past or current trauma can play a role in not only how you feel but in your response to a given situation. Therefore, it seems prudent to open this area up and include it in processing your emotions particularly when or if you are experiencing trauma responses.
- For some people, once they understand that they had childhood trauma or adverse childhood experiences (ACE – Adverse Childhood Experiences: free testing can be found online for ACE) and they begin to understand that their low self-esteem, or depression, or anxiety or their sleeping issues or any number of other problems are related to trauma that has not been dealt with – they feel freed up and they are relieved. If you experienced an adverse childhood experience (ACE) or trauma, it is not your fault. It may impact how you manage and process your emotions and how you were put together as a human being.

7. BASIC PSYCHOLOGY

- A very basic understanding of psychology can be helpful in managing and processing your emotions in my opinion. Terms like scapegoating, double-bind, splitting, gaslighting, projecting, passive-aggressive anger, denial, tactics of manipulation, signs of narcissistic behaviors, hallmarks of a psychopath or sociopath, trauma, trauma responses and betrayal blindness are examples of terms that can help you make sense of what is going on as you process your emotions.

8. Self-Forgiveness, Self-Compassion & Forgiving Others

- There are many situations and things that happen to us as people that are morally wrong, criminal, horrific, perverse, cruel and bankrupt in every way, which can leave you feeling like a victim. If you were the target of abuse of any kind, trauma, exploitation, theft, crime, betrayal, abandonment, and several things like that – you would naturally feel victimized and experience a deep loss of power.
- It is in my view very important for you to take back your power and move from feeling like a victim or target to a more powerful position, which I am well aware is not easy. This is a choice. You can remain feeling like a victim. You are absolutely well within your right to manage and process your emotions and retain victimhood. It is a choice to look instead for the silver lining or how you can grow from an injustice or wrong.
- **Self-Forgiveness** is important when you are dealing with your emotions because it is not helpful or healthy to hold a grudge against yourself. You do not have to forgive yourself. But why would you not forgive yourself? I have heard people say the phrase – “I will never forgive myself for...” and that is your right to hold that position. I am saying that holding a grudge against yourself does not contribute to your wellbeing and in fact has a negative impact on your mental and physical health.

- **Self-Compassion** is different than self-forgiveness and equally important in my opinion. Self-compassion means being kind to yourself instead of harsh and critical. This is one piece of managing and processing your emotions. Are you beating yourself up over this or being hard on yourself? While that is extremely common, it is not helpful to you. If you are beating yourself up or being hard on yourself, it will cast a different color on how you manage and process your emotions in my opinion, which can cloud or confuse the process.
- Using a lens or filter of being kind to yourself and loving to yourself will lead you down a different path than processing your emotions through a critical, harsh or judgmental lens or filter.
- **Forgiveness of Others** is not required in managing and processing your emotions. It is optional. I do want to be clear that holding grudges against other people, entities, organizations or groups is not the healthiest or most powerful position. Holding grudges has been shown to negatively impact mental and physical health. Forgiveness is a choice. Not forgiving can leave you potentially in a victim status and just as importantly create more baggage for you to lug into your future.

9. CONCLUSIONS & RIGHT JUDGMENT

- There are a variety of conclusions you could arrive at as you wind down the steps of managing and processing your emotions. Here are some thoughts about that:
 - Does the situation or what was said, done or what happened make sense? It might not make sense. If it doesn't make sense, then you would do well to consider and contemplate whether or not you have all of the facts.
 - Is someone lying outright or distorting the truth? Lying frequently causes confusion and will have many things not make sense.
 - Is there some aspect of psychology that will help you make sense of this? Are you the safe person? Are you the scapegoat? Are they projecting? Was it a case of displaced or misplaced anger? There are very, very basic aspects of psychology as I cover in my podcast by a similar title that will be extremely valuable in helping you make sense of situations, people, events and the like.
 - Is the other person in a domestic abuse situation? Has a smear campaign been going on and this is a person who is an unwitting "Flying Monkey" in the smear campaign or knowingly participating in a smear campaign because they choose to?
- In some instances, you may not be able to come to a conclusion right away other than it does not make sense or that you need more information. In those cases, you will have to set aside your conclusion for a later date.
- In some instances, you will arrive at the conclusion that you should take a watchful approach and see what unfolds in the near future or in your next interaction with the person.
- You could conclude that a person, situation, or something that happened was mean, cruel, vindictive, or had malicious intent, which is very different from a person who gets unknowingly triggered (subconsciously) and then behaves badly. We all get triggered now and then and we all make mistakes or get things wrong from time to time. Intentional maliciousness is very different than a triggered person who reacts poorly.
- I am not suggesting that you accept abuse. I am not suggesting that you tolerate bad treatment, bullying or turn a blind eye to disrespect or other problematic behaviors. I am suggesting that I believe it is important to consider all aspects prior to making a conclusion and in the case where it is bullying, mistreatment, or other problematic behaviors or communication, that you sort it out and take the appropriate action(s).
- You may recognize in the process of going through the various aspects of managing and processing your emotions that this is a cycle. Cycles are meant to be broken instead of repeated. It takes courage and bravery to break cycles because some people are likely to be upset that you are breaking the cycle.

- Be open and willing to go back and reevaluate your conclusions in the future because you have new information or because you have new experiences or for several other reasons. Sticking to a conclusion because you came to it previously is not always best for you.
- Once you have arrived at a conclusion you will then have to use right judgment to decide what actions are appropriate – if any. There may be actions to take as a result or there might not be any actions to take.
- Part of right judgment is knowing when to express your feelings, thoughts, and opinions and when it is best to save it for another day or not express it at all. There will be times when it is simply too much for the other person to hear what you have to say especially if they are not highly skilled in emotional regulation. This is hard for some people to hold it or keep it to themselves, in which case I suggest that you write it all down and then your brain will get a break knowing that all of your emotions, thoughts, opinions, and so on have been captured for a future day. That technique works very well.
- Sometimes you won't have enough information to know whether it is the right time or not or what to do, so you have to give it your best shot.

10. YOUR PHYSICAL BODY REACTIONS

- Long before I had heard of the science of psychoneuroimmunology, I was aware that deep emotional pain could present in some type of physical reaction in my body.
- One bodily reaction to the “difficult” emotions category – painful emotions is crying. Allow yourself to cry when the tears come because emotional tears cause your body to release oxytocin and endorphins or feel good chemicals (endogenous opioids), which help you to feel better and ease physical and emotional pain. Tears and crying are part of processing your emotions in my view.
- For this aspect of processing and managing your emotions, pay close attention to any reactions you have in your body or any changes or sensations you have in your physical wellbeing. I have had skin eruptions, back pain, knee pain, and a severe tooth pain complete with the symptoms of an abscess that were all traced back to emotional pain that I was dealing with at the time. For me, once I have a physical symptom that I connect to any emotional pain I am processing, I can get relief from the physical symptoms usually within a short window of time – however it must be noted that I am highly skilled at managing and processing my emotions and have decades of experience with the mind-body connection and the manifestation of symptoms of stress, trauma, emotional pain, etc.
- This idea that emotional pain, confrontation, trauma, or other negative situations emotionally can show up in the body is a foreign concept to many people. Yet, the research on psychoneuroimmunology proves that this is true. Pay attention to what is going on in your body. If you have a chronic medical condition, that could be related to a trauma from years or decades ago.
- Pay attention to feeling tired, fatigued, suddenly feeling like you have to take a nap or go to sleep, headaches, skin eruptions, rashes, sudden congestion or a runny nose when you feel very well, any aches in the body. Notice and pay attention to your body and any changes as you identify, manage and process your emotions over time. This happens OVER time. For me this can takes weeks to process a painful situation or months.

11. WHEN NEW INFORMATION IS OBTAINED (Start Over)

- There will be times when you learn new information, or new circumstances arise or you have a new experience and because of that you gain new insights or wisdom that you did not have previously, then GO BACK and start the process over again with the new information. There are many instances that will cause this to kick in. Once you buy your first car or house, get married or get divorced, have a health issue or lose someone you love are all things that can cause you to revisit how you processed your emotions about something from the past or even decisions you made about people, events and the world.

- For example, you find out that someone has been lying to you for 20 years, it would be at that point that you would want (in my view and model) to go back and process your emotions again with the new information. Things now might make sense that didn't make sense in the past 20 years. Plus, now you have the betrayal that you did not know was going on for 20 years.
- There are many instances where this process of going back with the new information or experiences is valuable in my opinion.

Questions for Your Use

- **Please have an emotional vocabulary word sheet handy and use it.**
1. **Write down the emotions that you are feeling using AT LEAST 3 emotions.** You can have any number of feelings, but at least 3. You may have mismatched emotions like I feel happy and sad or I feel angry but relieved.

2. **SAFE PERSON: Does this situation involve a person who is the SAFE person for YOU? Does this situation involve a person who YOU ARE the safe person for? If this situation involved either your safe person or you being the safe person for another, that changes the dynamic. What are you thinking about if this applies or not?** NOTE: If you are unfamiliar with the idea of a safe person, I have a podcast on that topic and you can look at the transcript or listen to the podcast. This is significant when it comes to managing and processing your emotions.

3. **Have you checked yourself for rational thinking? You can look at the list of some of the forms of irrational thinking (cognitive distortions) included in this workbook. Do you think you have any of these common forms of thinking? If so, what are your thoughts?**

4. **As you go through these questions, are you willing to be kind to yourself?**

5. **If it is likely that what you are dealing with is painful or upsetting. Please allow yourself some time to feel your pain in little tiny snippets like 10 minutes at a time. It might be too painful for you to complete all of these questions in one sitting. In that case, do a little bit at a time. If you are in too much pain or too distressed, then you need to ask someone for help. Are you willing to ask someone for help if you need to? Please say more about this...**

6. **CONTEXT: What happened? Make notes about what was said, done, or the event or situation. How did other people act? How were they feeling? Do you know how they were feeling? Do you have all of the facts about this? Are you sure?**

7. **HISTORY: What is the history with this person, people, event, situation? Is there any history? If so, what is the history? Has this happened before? Is it familiar? Has it happened with other people you know? Make any notes about the history that you can.**

8. **Conscious/Unconscious/Subconscious Mind: Does whatever happened violate your beliefs, your values or something that is important to you? Do you think you were triggered, and if so, write down any thoughts that come to mind about it.**

9. **Trauma/Betrayal Blindness: Did someone who was supposed to take care of you or whom you trusted not take care of you? Was this a betrayal of what they should have done for you? Say more...**

10. **Where in your body can you feel these emotions? Are you feeling anything different in your body right now? What are you feeling...**

11. **What do you usually do when you are feeling angry, upset, sad, hurt, bullied or mistreated? What do you typically do? Write it down here...**This is about how you cope with painful emotions currently.

12. **Are there better things that you COULD do when you feel angry, hurt, sad, bullied or mistreated? Please brainstorm other things that you COULD do when you are feeling the painful emotions.** Examples include: going for a walk, talking to a friend, doing a hobby that you enjoy (or finding a hobby), reading a book, watching a show, journaling your feelings, taking a nap. What are things you can do that are better for you than what you usually do? This is about improving your self-soothing and coping strategies for painful situations.

13. **Self-Compassion/Self-Forgiveness: Are you mad or upset with yourself for any reason? If so, Why? Please say more.**

Are you being hard on yourself or beating yourself up? Please say more...

What, if anything, do you need to forgive yourself for?

14. Do you have a trusted friend, family member, teacher, counselor or other person that you feel safe with that you can discuss this with? Who are the people who you could talk to about this if you wanted to?

15. What can you learn from the situation? Is there something that you can learn? If so, what can you learn?

16. You do not have to forgive other people for their actions, behaviors or bad treatment. That is a choice. What you should know is that holding a grudge is not good for your mental or emotional or physical health. Forgiveness is a choice where you receive the benefits for forgiving – not the other person. Are you willing to consider forgiving the other person or people involved or not? Please say more...

17. What conclusions can you come to after having gone through all of the questions in this workbook? Do you need to wait and see if this is a pattern? Is there something that needs to be said or done? If so, what conclusions can be made? What needs to be said or done, if anything?

18. **Sometimes or frequently after we have managed and processed our emotions about a particular event or situation, we will later learn new information that we were not aware of. In that case, please go back and repeat this process with the new information.** If you learned after the fact that the person who was mean, cruel, hurtful or treated you badly was dealing with a parent who had just passed away or some other very hard situation, do you see how that might have clouded their thinking or contributed to how they behaved badly? What are your thoughts about that?

19. **There will be times and this may be one of them (the situation you are dealing with) where people are abusive, cruel, mean, vindictive or treat you badly. You then have a choice in how you respond.** For your mental and emotional wellbeing and health, taking the high road and not stooping to their level is what will help you feel better mentally and emotionally. I am not talking about or suggesting that you allow or tolerate abuse or bad treatment. I am talking about how you respond to abuse or bad treatment. For your own wellbeing and mental health, are you willing to consider taking the high road? What are your thoughts and considerations about taking the high road?

20. **Wait for a period of a day, two or three days or more and then come back to this workbook. Have you noticed any additional feelings? Do you have new thoughts to add to any of the questions? Go back over the questions and see if you have other things to say.**