

# Radical Self- Forgiveness

The Direct Path  
to True Self-Acceptance

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*Author of Radical Forgiveness, more than 100,000 sold*



## INTRODUCTION

Bearing in mind all that we have achieved in evolutionary terms since the time we walked the earth as an ape-like species, you would think we would be feeling pretty good about ourselves in the twenty-first century. Not so, apparently. When Carl Jung and others examined the human psyche in depth, they found that deep down we are all afflicted with a profound and enduring sense of self-loathing.

It has been suggested that this extremely deep-rooted self-hatred comes from our belief that we took it upon ourselves to separate from God — the original sin. At the moment of separation, so the story goes, we believed that God was very angry with us for making the experiment and would one day catch up with us and punish us severely. This created enormous guilt, and the only way to deal with that guilt was to repress it and then, if it started to reappear, project it onto others.

Even if we don't wish to believe this story, and I'm not sure that I do, it still holds largely true that all wars and attacks on those we see as our enemies are nothing more than projections of our own internalized self-hatred. This is true no matter what the cause of it is or was.

These days, we might go even further. We might well say that, because of this self-hatred and, given what we now know about how perilously close we are becoming to making our own planet uninhabitable for ourselves and many other species, we are bent on our own destruction.

The purpose of this book, therefore, is twofold:

**1)** To help you, as an individual, heal that self-hatred within you, using the technologies of Radical Self-Forgiveness and Radical Self-Acceptance. This will result in you feeling a whole lot better about yourself and will significantly raise your vibration.

**2)** To heal this self-hatred within the consciousness of the collective (i.e., all human beings together as one). When this occurs we will stop projecting it out against others in the form of war and other forms of aggression. In that sense, we could also argue that this book is even about creating world peace, saving the planet and transforming humanity.

While we will keep those lofty goals in mind, the main focus of this book is definitely on purpose #1— helping you as an individual dissolve your own self-hatred through the processes of Radical Self-Forgiveness and Radical Self-Acceptance. This makes it a very practical book and will afford you outcomes that will help you live your life with more power and joy.

But, insofar as we know that when one person makes a significant change in their consciousness it causes a big ripple effect throughout the collective, you will be

making a large contribution to the mass healing of the human consciousness and to world peace. You will, in fact, be helping me achieve my mission which is “*To raise the consciousness of the planet through Radical Forgiveness and to create a World of Forgiveness within the foreseeable future.*” You will be doing this by creating what will be, in effect, a form of the “Hundredth Monkey Syndrome.”

*[The idea of the hundredth monkey syndrome comes out of a report by some researchers who were observing the behavior of a group of monkeys who were being fed sweet potatoes. One day, one female monkey reportedly began washing her potato in the sea to rid it of sand and dirt.*

*This was a totally new behavior and had never occurred before, but very soon the other monkeys caught on and began to do the same. What amazed the researchers, however, was that monkeys on other islands who could not have observed this behavior, began to do the same.*

*It seemed as though once a certain number of monkeys (they said 100), had integrated the behavior into their consciousness, it became part of the mass consciousness of all monkeys of that type, no matter where they happened to be.]*

It's all about energy, it seems. Human beings, like all other life forms, are energy beings. Leonard Laskow, MD, in his book, *Healing With Love*, describes our body as a complex collection of interrelating energy fields.

This is just as true for our physical bodies as for our

subtle bodies, which we mostly cannot see but which nevertheless exist.

As individual energy beings, we each carry a certain vibration. The frequency of that vibration is determined by many factors, like our general health, stress levels, worry, anger, fear and other emotions of that nature. But nothing drags our vibration down more than self-hatred.

David Hawkins, MD, PhD, in his book *Power vs. Force*, developed a scale that measured and logged, in rank order, the vibrational frequency created by certain qualities of mind and associated emotions. These are:

<b>Quality</b>	<b>Log</b>	<b>Emotion</b>
Peace	600	Bliss
Joy	540	Serenity
Love	500	Reverence
Reason	400	Understanding
Acceptance	350	Forgiveness
Willingness	310	Optimism
Neutrality	250	Trust
Courage	200	Affirmation
Pride	175	Scorn
Anger	150	Hate
Desire	125	Craving
Fear	100	Anxiety
Grief	75	Regret
Apathy	50	Despair
Guilt	30	Blame
Shame	20	Humiliation

Note that Guilt and Shame are at the very bottom of the list. Imagine how having a lot of one or both would drag your vibration down. No wonder we feel a very strong need to eradicate them from our energy field — the reason you bought this book, in fact.

Conversely, you will notice that Forgiveness and Acceptance are very high on the scale. In fact, they are very close to, if not right at, the point where Hawkins says a shift to a higher level of consciousness begins to occur (350-400). This is the point at which, once the critical mass is reached within the collective and the hundredth monkey syndrome kicks in, we will make the shift from the present fear-based consciousness to the one foretold of based on love and harmony — i.e., the shift from third to fourth dimensional reality.

Hawkins also says that someone who vibrates at around 350-400 will counteract around 200,000 people vibrating below 200, which is where the majority of the world's population ranks at this time. Knowing that this is the kind of contribution you will personally be making gives you a much larger purpose for doing this work than if it were only about your own personal growth.

However, there is an important caveat that has to be made to all this and that is, it will only work if all our Self-Forgiveness and Self-Acceptance work is based on the concept of RADICAL Forgiveness, not on traditional forgiveness. That's because the latter is based on victim consciousness, which is essentially low vibration.

Radical Forgiveness, on the other hand, remains free of

victim consciousness and vibrates higher. The first chapter deals with these distinctions and with other definitions that will help to prevent the confusion that often accompanies discussions in this area.

Meanwhile, I trust you will find this book helpful and freeing, and that it will add a dimension of joy to the rest of your life that otherwise you might not have enjoyed.

Blessings,

Colin

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PART ONE

**A FORGIVENESS  
OVERVIEW**

**1 PROACTIVE FORGIVENESS** It may seem odd to begin a book on forgiveness by writing about preventing the need for it, but a great deal of pain could be avoided if we were able to make a decision not to be upset or take offense in the first place. This is what I mean by proactive forgiveness.

For reasons I will explain later, I disagree with people who see forgiveness as being the result of a purely mental decision to forgive or not to forgive. That makes it far too simplistic. Forgiveness doesn't emanate from the mind as much as from the heart and the spirit.

However, I do think it is fair to say that when something happens we decide whether or not to take on the situation as a victim story based almost entirely on our mental interpretations of what happened. Unwinding these interpretations is an important part of the forgiveness process.

But would it not be better to act proactively and consciously choose in that moment to notice how we are choosing to interpret or perceive the event. What if we were to take a second or two to examine those interpre-

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tations before we choose whether or not to assume a victim's posture and become permanently upset about it.

We would, of course, have to make the decision quite quickly before the initial anger became crystallized into something more permanent like resentment. Anger can be fleeting and can dissipate quickly but resentment feeds on itself and keeps on circling around and around. We relive what made us angry over and over again, thinking about what we should have said or done but didn't. Resentment has us plotting how we can get revenge or making sure the people get punished. Once it sets in, resentment becomes difficult to move and can only be dissolved by forgiveness — and even then only by Radical Forgiveness because traditional forgiveness doesn't have the technology. (See Chapter 2)

I am not saying making the choice not to be upset can be made easily. Our sense of outrage, assuming we choose to see what happened as outrageous, may come from a feeling that some important principle has been violated and that we should feel angry and resentful about it. We feel justified in so doing, otherwise the people who have injured us would be getting away with it, right?

On the other hand, our outrage may be based on totally erroneous information. It may have nothing to do with us at all, or we may feel that it's not really worth getting all worked up about anyway. We all know that stress is bad for our health. Nevertheless, we are still called upon to choose to make it a victim story or not.

From the Self-Forgiveness point of view, I think most people would argue that we should feel guilty if we have done something self-evidently wrong. However, in many cases our guilt is inappropriate and not actually earned. (See Chapter 6.)

So the decision about whether or not we take on guilt is indeed a rational one. Deciding whether one's guilt is appropriate or inappropriate is a very important step in the forgiveness process, whether it be traditional forgiveness or Radical Forgiveness. For this reason a great deal of Chapter 6 is given over to how this decision is made.

As we shall see, the nature of the choice becomes totally different depending on whether we are looking through the lens of traditional forgiveness or Radical Forgiveness. Nevertheless, it remains a choice and, if we were to take offense a lot less often, make fewer snap judgments, lay blame and point fingers less and so on, our lives might be a lot more peaceful. We would also have less forgiveness to do.

### **A Tool for Proactive (Radical) Forgiveness**

This tool is fully outlined in my other book Radical Forgiveness, but it is worth mentioning here because it is designed specifically to save you a trip to "Victimland" when something upsetting happens in the moment.

It is called the "Emerge-n-See, 4 Step Process to Radical Forgiveness. As soon as you notice the situation you say the following four things to yourself under your breath:

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1. Look What I've Created!
  2. I Notice My Feelings and My Judgments But I Love Myself Anyway.
  3. I Am Willing to See the Divine Perfection in this Situation
  4. I Choose to Feel Peace

The underlying rationale behind this tool may be familiar to you if you have already read *Radical Forgiveness*, but if not, it will become clear to you as you progress through this book. The basic idea, however, comes down to the fact that there are no accidents and we are in fact forever creating situations in life designed help our soul grow and learn. This one is probably no exception.

This is simply another interpretation, of course. But when we think in this way it enables us to escape from being a victim and to see that there might be a spiritual purpose for what has just occurred. That helps us move more easily through it feeling much more peaceful than we otherwise would.

However, since this is a book about self-forgiveness, I should make you aware of the possible trap that lurks within that process, especially for people prone to guilt. Such people are likely to say, *"look what I created — what a bad/stupid/ignorant/crazy fool I must be to have made that happen! I feel so guilty now."*

Don't go there. First of all, it wasn't you that created the situation. Your higher self set it up for you. Furthermore, it was done for a good reason, though you will never know what it was. Another way to say it is that

the hand of God was in that situation and He created for your good and the good of others in the situation. Your ego was not involved so you are not entitled to feel guilt. Just decide to feel peace.

### **Victim Consciousness**

To be a victim is to perceive yourself to have been damaged or injured in a particular way by someone else and that, because of them, you are unable to feel peaceful. They are the cause of your unhappiness. This becomes your victim story and resides in you as part of your victim consciousness.

We might say that generalized victim consciousness is a habit of mind in which we are constantly seeing ourselves as being victimized by other people, governments and society in general. Also, that the blame for everything that is not good in our lives lies with everything and everybody “out there,” rather than “in here.” Victim consciousness applied to ourselves, on the other hand, is the perception that “everything is MY fault.”

### **Origins of Victim Consciousness**

I doubt that victim consciousness was part of early tribal culture. Since the tribe’s survival depended on cooperation and mutual dependence, they couldn’t afford to spend their time blaming and shifting responsibility onto each other. Grievances had to be worked through and resolved within the tribal community as and when they arose. They probably used proactive forgiveness.

With the rise of the city state about 15,000 years ago, things changed. Mutual cooperation shifted in favor of

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a concentration of power and authority in the hands of the few over the many. The masses were generally disempowered, exploited and marginalized, so victim consciousness became the predominant way of being. This has continued until today. It's a dog-eat-dog world.

Victim consciousness is fear-based and leads to wars, fighting, greed, jealousy and everything that is opposite to peace and harmony in the world. It is disempowering not only to the victims and the oppressed but also to those who victimize and hold power over others. It is an extremely toxic way of being, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

### **The Need for Forgiveness**

Whereas, prior to the 1990s, few people were interested in forgiveness and considered it applicable only to the most pious or the most angelic of people (those being the only ones with the fortitude to do it), there is now general agreement that we should all try to achieve it if for no other reason that it is good for our health.

For example, it is now generally understood that holding onto resentment can cause serious diseases like cancer and other diseases and conditions of this nature, as well as a host of less serious issues not so life-threatening, but nasty nevertheless. Resentment is now understood to be highly toxic.

Holding onto resentment is also a big energy drain. When you forgive, you retrieve that energy, which then becomes available for creating what you want in the future. You cannot be a powerful manifestor of the life you want if all your energy is invested in the past.

There are many other benefits of choosing to stay free of victim consciousness and we shall explore more of these as we go on through this book.

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**2 TRADITIONAL FORGIVENESS** This is the one we have all been brought up with and continue to view as something that only special people can do because it is so very difficult. And yet, even though most of us would say we know what forgiveness means, the definition is anything but clear.

Webster's Dictionary says that forgiveness is *letting go* of resentment against someone or giving up the desire to punish. But exactly how do you let go? By what method do you *let bygones be bygones*, that being a common colloquial version of the same idea. No one tells you how.

Webster's also gives the word *pardon* as a synonym for forgiveness. But how can one pardon a wrong? It is not in our power to pardon. To imagine that we have the power to pardon is to presume that we can play God.

Others say "forgive and forget," but how can we forget something that happened that remains burned into our memory? In any case, we need to forgive and remember, not forget. That way we learn not to repeat the error.

Robert Enright and the Human Development Study Group (1991) defined it as "Not only a *decision* or a *choice* to abandon one's right to resentment and

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negative judgments, but an imperative to replace those with compassion, generosity and love.”

Well, it's one thing to make a decision at the intellectual level to give up resentment and replace it with compassion, but it's quite another to actually make that happen. Emotions are controlled by the limbic brain, not the neocortex. You cannot mentally decide or choose to feel anything. Compassion is not a choice. You cannot decide to feel compassion any more than you can decide to love someone. It's either there or it's not.

Paul T.P. Wong, PhD, also says: “At the heart of forgiveness is a change of our attitude and our feelings, thoughts and all rightful claims. It is a unilateral decision to abandon grudges and let go of the desire to get even. It is the sincere effort by the injured party to see the aggressor in a new and more positive light.

“Forgiveness also involves a compassionate embrace of our enemies in spite of our natural feelings of bitterness, animosity and fear. It is a voluntary and deliberate act to overlook their flaws and wrongdoings, cancel all their ‘debts’ and start a new chapter. And it is nothing less than a very demanding task.” All very eloquent, but he still offers no methodology.

So, it's not so much the intention to forgive that's the problem. It's the how. No one can really tell us how it might be achieved or how we would recognize it if and when it arrives.

Charles Griswold, Professor of Philosophy at Boston University and the author of a book entitled *Forgiveness*, goes even further. He insists there has to be *reciprocity* between the injured and the injurer. In other words, forgiveness has to be two-way. For it to be true forgiveness, he says, the perpetrator must offer an

apology which has to be accepted. Without some kind of restitution or amends from the perpetrator it does not count as forgiveness, argues Griswold.

Father William Meninger, a Trappist monk at St. Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass, Colorado, says the opposite. He argues that forgiveness is essentially something we do for ourselves, irrespective of whether the perpetrator shows contrition of any kind. It is something that happens internally.

This is a reflection of my own position on this. I would even add that it is the height of arrogance to tell someone that you are forgiving them. They may not even be aware that they have upset you. I see it as nothing more than manipulation and very likely to create a backlash such as a feeling of resentment in that person.

Griswold's definition actually takes the power away from the forgiver by making forgiveness dependent on the perpetrator. That compounds victim consciousness and disempowers the victim. In effect it puts one in the position of having to say, "If it wasn't for you, I could forgive!" or "Because you won't apologize, I can never be free of this pain." And if the person is dead, what then? Is forgiveness then out of the question? Of course not.

To me the confusion arises from mixing up two words — forgiveness and reconciliation. With forgiveness, the only one involved is the forgiver, but with reconciliation, a certain reciprocity is indeed required. Both the injured and the injurer must have an intention to reconcile. Both parties need to recognize that an injury occurred to one or both of them and they should both have a desire to heal the wound and repair the relationship.

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With reconciliation, the victim agrees to give up his anger and need for revenge, while the perpetrator is relieved of his guilt by offering some sort of apology or amends. It is likely that the perpetrator will have done some self-forgiveness work on the situation as well. The agreement to reconcile might include some sort of restitution or even the making of reparations.

Where an estranged couple try to come back together in order to save their marriage, the work they do is more likely to be in the form of reconciliation than of forgiveness — even if one party had done something for which forgiveness was necessary in that instance. But for the relationship to truly come back to a meaningful partnership, it usually requires the give and take that characterizes reconciliation rather than forgiveness.

Forgiveness of self and of the other is often required as part of the reconciliation process, but the reverse is not true. Reconciliation is not a prerequisite for forgiveness.

Besides reconciliation, there are plenty of other concepts that get mixed up with forgiveness that only add to the confusion. Words like pardon, condone, and excuse get used in the context of forgiveness and pollute its meaning, often to the point where it is reduced to nothing more than pseudo forgiveness.

If it's this difficult to get agreement about forgiveness of others, imagine the problems in trying to define forgiveness when applied to ourselves. We will be examining some of these specific self-forgiveness issues in the following chapters.

The arguments go on and on about the nature of forgiveness but the one thing that nearly everyone agrees upon is that traditional forgiveness is extremely difficult and very few people ever manage to achieve it. If any proof of this was needed, other than our own experience of trying to forgive someone, it is that when someone actually does genuinely forgive another person for some serious crime against them, they show up on TV shows like Oprah.

I saw Oprah once listen open-mouthed and speechless when a lady whose son had been murdered, claimed that she had forgiven the murderer and had not only visited him for years on Death Row but had at some time entertained him for dinner in her own house. Oprah just couldn't imagine how that could be possible and said as much. Neither could 99.9% of her audience I would imagine. I have a name for this kind of forgiveness. I call it ***extraordinary forgiveness***. It is extremely rare.

Paul T.P. Wong, PhD, summarizes the overall problem of traditional forgiveness by writing: "Forgiveness inevitably involves the process of inner struggle to let go of all the resentments and painful memories. Often it is a long and difficult process because the old wound can remain sore for many, many years. Forgiveness takes time and a lot of hard work."

I believe the reason it takes so long and is so difficult to achieve is that in traditional forgiveness we are trying to balance two quite opposite and contradictory energies — the desire to forgive and the need to condemn. This is due to the fact that, with traditional forgiveness, both feet remain planted in victim consciousness.

With traditional forgiveness, it is taken for granted that the perpetrator did something 'bad' to the victim and

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that the victim has suffered as a consequence. The need to blame the other person and to hold them responsible remains very strong, notwithstanding the desire to forgive.

It seems to me that, for as long as one feels victimized by what happened, and for most of us it remains self-evident that we were, then in reality forgiveness is all but impossible. It seems clear to me that those two energies cannot be resolved and this accounts for why Oprah was so incredulous about how that lady had apparently overcome that difficulty. I was too. The need to condemn will win out 99.9% of the time.

While we will be looking at some of the logical and existential issues around the idea of self-forgiveness in the coming chapters, I am happy to say that none of these problems of definition or methodology apply to Radical Forgiveness. And since Radical Self-Forgiveness and Self-Acceptance are based on the same principles, they too are similarly free of these most vexing of issues.

An in-depth discussion of the Radical Forgiveness concept will occur in Part Three, more in relation to Self Forgiveness than forgiveness of others, but, for now, a brief description of the features that will serve to distinguish it from traditional forgiveness will suffice.

**3 RADICAL FORGIVENESS** This is completely different to traditional forgiveness in its underlying assumptions and in how quickly and easily positive results are obtained. The features of Radical Forgiveness are as follows:

**a)** It requires no skill or special ability. Anyone can do it, even if they are totally skeptical — it still works. One does not even have to believe in its central idea that *there are no accidents and that our soul has created the circumstances of our lives for our spiritual growth*. All it requires is a willingness to at least be open to that possibility.

**b)** Since it works energetically, it operates outside of the parameters of time and space. Consequently, results are immediate and distance is no factor in terms of the effect it might have energetically on all the people involved, as well as on the actual situation causing the initial upset.

**c)** There is no inherent conflict between the need to condemn and the desire to forgive because, from a spiritual perspective, nothing wrong has happened and

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there is nothing to forgive. There is no condemnation and in reality no forgiveness required. It's a non issue.

**d)** For the reasons given above, Radical Forgiveness sets one free from victim consciousness. From a spiritual perspective, there are no victims and perpetrators — just teachers and learners.

**e)** There is a proven step-by-step methodology inherent in Radical Forgiveness that is absent in traditional forgiveness. It provides tools that give everyone the opportunity to go through one or more Radical Forgiveness processes — at any time, anywhere and for whatever reason.

The tools are simple and easy to use and require no training or special ability. One's intellect is involved peripherally in using the tools but the actual forgiveness does not happen in that part of the mind. With Radical Forgiveness, it is handled by our Spiritual Intelligence, which is the part of us that knows the truth of who we are and is directly connected to Universal Intelligence.

[If Universal Intelligence means God to you, then it's another way of saying — as most religions do — that it is not us who forgives but God. In that sense you could also say that the Radical Forgiveness tools are a particular form of secular prayer. At the same time, though, they work just as well for atheists and secularists because there is no one who is without Spiritual Intelligence. Everyone has that faculty of mind to the same degree.]

**f)** With Radical Forgiveness, the decision to let go, release resentment, feel compassion and all the other

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things people say you should do, is not yours (your Ego's) to take. It happens automatically when you use the tools.

**g)** The tools take you through five stages:

- a) Telling the Story
- b) Feeling the Feelings
- c) Collapsing the Story
- d) Reframing the Story
- e) Integrating the New Story

The first three will be familiar to those doing traditional forgiveness, but it is the last two that mark Radical Forgiveness as being completely different. They spring from a wholly different world view and, in fact, make Radical Forgiveness more than mere forgiveness. To experience it is to see the world quite differently and to open to a whole new way of looking at life. We shall come back to it in greater detail in Part 4.

**4 SELF-FORGIVENESS ISSUES** If you thought there were problems in defining the concept of regular forgiveness (as applied to other people), imagine what difficulties might arise with forgiveness as applied to our ourselves. At least the issue of reciprocity is moot. Or is it?

While it is true that in self-forgiveness we only have one person involved rather than two, that in itself is problematic. The term forgiveness seems to imply that there has to be one who forgives as well as one being forgiven. It requires a subject (*the forgiver*) and an object (*the forgiven*) for it to make sense.

When we are forgiving others, that condition is met, so there's no problem. But not so with self-forgiveness. The one who forgives (subject) and the one being forgiven (object) are one and the same.

Logically, that is a problem. Subject and object can only exist in relationship to each other, so it is impossible for them to be the same thing.

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Who then, when we talk about forgiving ourselves, is doing the forgiving and who is being forgiven? And to whom or to what are we appealing when we ask ourselves for forgiveness?

This is not just an interesting philosophical question. It has much to do with the practicalities of self-forgiveness, for it looks as though, in acting as both the forgiver and the forgiven, we are trying to be prosecutor, judge, jury, witness and defendant all in the same case!

Also, unless we know who is talking to whom inside our heads, it will be difficult to have a reasonable conversation and impossible to find any common ground in the argument. That means we have to come up with a reasonable definition of self.

The moment we begin to attempt a definition of self, what becomes clear is that we are not a singular self at all. We are, in fact, a whole community of selves. And the multitude of selves don't always agree with each other. They may have different agendas, which means that at any moment they will be arguing different and even opposing cases. The internal conflict going on inside our heads can be overwhelming.

We might think of some of them as 'archetypal sub-personalities,' all of which have their own way of being and acting. Our cast might include the critical parent, the professor, the princess, the clown, the snoop, the boss, the damsel-in-distress, the white knight, the snob, and so on. At any appropriate moment, any one of those

archetypal selves can arise and become dominant.

For example, when we are feeling emotionally vulnerable, the joker is likely to come out strongly in our defense. Making a joke is a great way to deflect the perceived attack and to avoid feeling emotions. If we like to take care of others, our white knight will swoop in on any situation where a damsel is in distress. The princess is likely to show up in situations that trigger her subconscious memories of being treated as a princess by her father.

But there are other selves that were born of our need to survive our early upbringing. These are called, 'survival personalities.' This term was coined by Roberto Assagioli, an Italian psychiatrist who, in the early 1900's, founded the spiritually oriented therapeutic system known as Psychosynthesis. (As a modality, Psychosynthesis is very much in line with Radical Forgiveness.) He showed that we have within us not just a singular inner child, as has been popularly represented, but a whole host of sub-personalities.

Most of these sub-personalities were created as a way to manage or survive our primal wounds, or compensate for our perceived deficiencies — the basis of our injured sense of self. Clearly, this has tremendous implications for self-acceptance as well as self forgiveness. More so perhaps.

The woundings that can cause someone to create survival sub-personalities can range from severe physical and sexual abuse to simply not being recognized for who they are. People raised in seemingly

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healthy families can also be deeply wounded simply because love was consistently withheld for some reason or used as a form of discipline. Wounding can be very subtle and imperceptible to people outside the family.

Assagioli showed that in order for these people to get beyond these wounds and to expand into the fullness of their potential, they needed to make an *empathic connection* with each sub-personality. That way each one could reveal itself, be understood and then accepted.

This is very similar to the inner child work that was very popular during the 80s, where it was recognized that whenever we get triggered, we regress to the wounded child within and act from that consciousness, rather from our adult awareness.

What follows in Part Two is my own model of how the self can be understood as more than a simple singularity. While the idea of sub-personalities has the ring of pathology about it, being applicable only to those who have been wounded, the following model can be applied to every human being on the planet.

PART TWO

**THE STRUCTURE  
OF SELF**

**5 A MULTITUDE OF SELVES** As already indicated in the previous chapter, the self is not just one self — rather it is a whole community of selves. Before we can really get on with the business of forgiving ourselves and accepting ourselves, even in the radical sense, we need to get more acquainted with those parts of us that, at various times, lay claim to being ‘the self.’

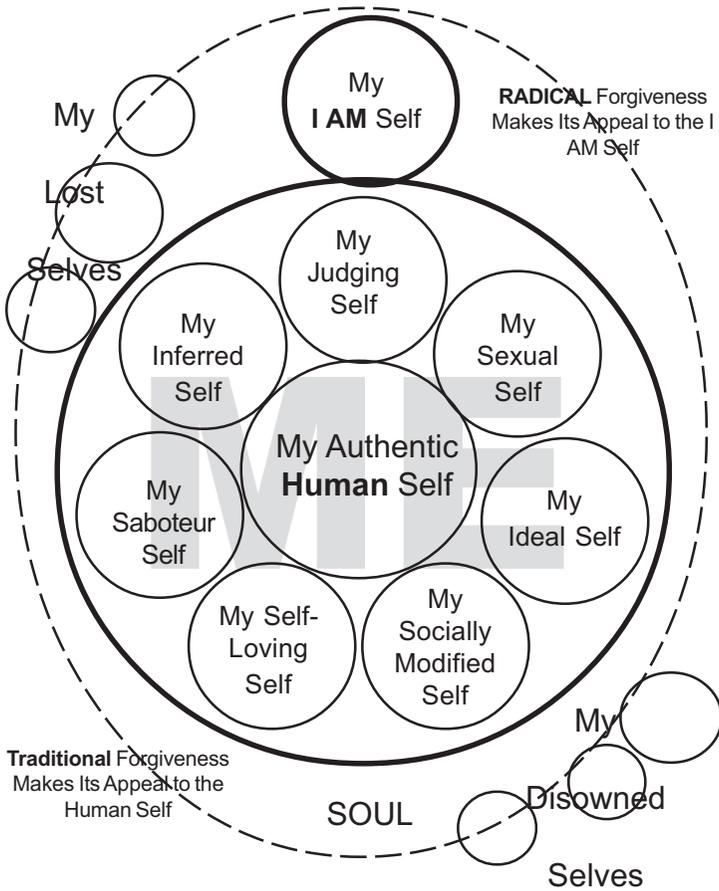
However, there is an important distinction that needs to be made immediately between the spiritual **‘I AM’ Self** and the Human Self that is **‘ME.’** These two are fundamentally different, though intimately connected.

**a) The I AM Self**

This identifies the self that exists above all others and yet remains the one we are probably the least aware of. It is called the ‘Observer’ because it’s the one who observes the ‘I’ who is ‘ME.’ The I AM Self is my spiritual self, or my Higher Self. It might also be understood to be my ‘soul essence.’

Whatever we call it, it’s the self that is still connected to

the Divine, or the All-That-Is. In that sense, it is not really an individual self at all, because in the World of Spirit we are all One, connected to everyone and everything else, including the Divine. It is also the one that knows the truth about there being no right or wrong, good or bad, and does not identify with the content or process of my life in the least. It simply observes and loves me, no matter what.



The I AM Self is the one people often refer to when they say “*I AM a spiritual being having a human experience.*” Actually, I prefer to say that *we are spiritual beings having a spiritual experience in a human body*, since that implies we can be self-conscious during the journey. It also implies that we are here for a purpose.

[I will go into this more in Part 3, but it is my contention that we have been gifted with the chance to expand our sense of oneness by coming to Earth where we can experience the opposite of it — separation. How we actually set our lives up to experience that separation is the subject of Part 4, but it is clear that we need a body and a ‘ME’ self that is fully human.]

**b) The Human Self That Is ME:**

This is my Human Self which differentiates me from all other humans and shows up in the world as ‘ME’ in all my many disguises — i.e., **all** those archetypes and sub-personalities previously mentioned. It is the self that my I AM Self observes and supports. It is the self that totally feels the pain of separation involved in being a spiritual being in a human body and yet remains willing to go through it for the growth potential it affords. This self contains and encompasses many ‘selves,’ including the following:

**i) My Authentic Human Self:** This is the self that expresses my natural beingness as a human being. It is who I am at my core — my basic character — my genetically determined disposition and way of being — both good and bad. It’s my core-personality. Assuming that I do not become dramatically altered by

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traumatic experiences or experience woundings severe enough in early life to cause splitting myself into sub-personalities, I will be more or less this same person all my life.

### *Research Exercise # 1*

## **The Real ME Shows Up As . . .**

*Imagine that you had to describe yourself in detail to someone who has never met you or interacted with you in any way.*

*In a journal or notebook, which is private to you, describe your authentic (real) self in such a way that a person reading it would get a real good feel for your natural way of being, the truth of who you are at the very core of your being, your fundamental character and the essence of who you are in this world.*

*You might check some of the qualities listed below that apply to you, some or most of the time and then use them as the starting points for your written description. You'll probably be surprised at how little you really know yourself.*

#### **I AM**

- introvert
- extrovert
- talkative

#### **NOTES**

- quiet
  
- happy-go-lucky
- melancholy
- intellectual
- emotional
- excitable
- controlling
- strong leader
- supporter
- team oriented
- individualistic
- manipulating
- courageous
- fearful
- seductive
- shy
- nervous
- narcissistic
- analytical
- generous
- grouchy
- stingy
- combative
- curious
- passionate
- dull
- theatrical
- dreamer
- ambitious

- 
- gambler
  - sexy
  - nurturer
  - forgiving
  - blunt
  - competitive
  - indecisive
  - noncommittal
  - practical
  - obedient
  - rebellious
  - distrustful
  - trusting
  - caring
  - inflexible
  - energetic
  - optimistic
  - pessimistic
  - high stamina
  - graceful
  - clumsy
  - judgmental
  - hard working
  - lazy
  - .....
  - .....
  - .....

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**ii) My Inferred Self:** The important distinction here is that, whereas the authentic self is real, the inferred self is a *perceived* self. Even so, it is a self that can have enormous influence over our lives.

My inferred self is a sense of self that is generated in my mind, based on the feedback I get from other people. As I observe how people react towards me, I say to myself:

*“If that’s how they see me and treat me, I must be .....”*

While it is true that there are those who go off alone on extraordinary expeditions to discover from the inside who they are, most of us come to know ourselves through having others mirror back to us who they think we are.

For example, if people tend to avoid me all the time, I might begin to infer that I am not very likeable. If people tend to control me or push me around all the time, I might infer that I am not very strong, or am not much of a leader. If people want to be around me all the time and are constantly laughing at my jokes, I will infer that I must be quite amusing and fun to be around. If women

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tend to flirt with me and come on to me, I might infer that I am sexy.

The real issue here is congruency. If people respond to me in ways that reinforce my own perception of my authentic self, then I will feel validated. On the other hand, if people consistently respond to me in ways that are out of alignment with who I think I really am, I will feel unrecognized and misunderstood. That will lead me to feel confused, unsure about myself and resentful.

We see this happen most strikingly with teenagers transitioning from childhood to adulthood, and it can account for an enormous amount of pain and confusion amongst the young. Since they are in the process of building a self concept during those years, they are constantly monitoring how others are treating them in order to draw inferences about who they are. To add to the confusion, they are likely to be getting very conflicting feedback depending on who they are relating to at the time — parents, peers, teachers, authority figures and so on.

You can only imagine what slaves might have inferred about themselves collectively as well as individually having been consistently treated as property, bought and sold, tortured and abused and treated like dogs by other human beings. History shows that, even after becoming free, peoples who had been enslaved passed on feelings of low self-worth for many generations afterwards.

We can also get a lot of mixed messages from different

people and in different circumstances. We might get very positive messages about ourselves for a while, and then when we mix with a different crowd, we might get the opposite. It can get very confusing.

The point about our inferred self is that it remains constantly in a state of flux, unlike the real self which hardly changes at all. For that reason alone the inferred self has the capacity to cause uncertainty and confusion and it can feed on itself.

The more uncertain we become about ourselves the more sensitive we become to others around us and the more likely we are to try being someone we are not. We become very concerned about what others think about us and we will be forever trying to get approval from everyone around us. We will become very susceptible to having guilt trips laid on us and to being humiliated and shamed.

I have said elsewhere that while knowledge is power, self-knowledge is wisdom. In comparing our inferred self with our real self we gain tremendous self-knowledge. If we find that the two are quite congruent, then that's fine. However, should we find that there is a sufficient disparity between them to be causing confusion, we can begin to work on bringing them together.

This will happen automatically as a result of the work we will be doing later on Radical Self-Forgiveness and Self-Acceptance, but there is one question you can ask of yourself right now. That is:

***What am I projecting out there about myself that is***

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***NOT TRUE but that other people are picking up as being the truth about me?***

*Research Exercise # 2*

## **My (False) Inferred Self . . .**

*Go over this list again and check the ones that you did **NOT** check as being part of your authentic self and yet you would check now as an indication of how people tend to see you:*

I AM NOT THESE,  
THOUGH PEOPLE  
THINK I AM

NOTES

- introvert
- extrovert
- talkative
- quiet
- happy-go-lucky
- melancholy
- intellectual
- emotional
- excitable
- controlling
- strong leader
- supporter
- team oriented

- individualistic
- manipulating
- courageous
- fearful
  
- seductive
- shy
- nervous
- narcissistic
- analytical
- generous
- grouchy
- stingy
- combative
- curious
- passionate
- dull
- theatrical
- dreamer
- ambitious
- gambler
- sexy
- nurturer
- forgiving
- blunt
- competitive
- indecisive
- noncommittal
- practical
- obedient

- 
- rebellious
  - distrustful
  - trusting

- caring
- inflexible
- energetic
- optimistic
- pessimistic
- high stamina
- graceful
- clumsy
- judgmental
- hard working
- lazy
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

*Now, write in your journal a statement that describes how you tend to be seen as a certain kind of person, with the qualities you have checked (both good and bad), that are not an accurate reflection of who you are. Note how it makes you feel that people treat you as if you were those things.*

*Make a statement saying that you own the fact that you must be projecting those qualities out there, even though they are not true.*

This is a very important exercise because, rather than blaming the people 'out there,' you are declaring that you are taking full responsibility for creating the disparity. You are recognizing that people react to you according to what you are putting out energetically. Whatever you are projecting is what comes back to you. So, rather than let it feed on itself and become seriously compounded, you can try to determine what you are projecting and why.

The answer to the above question is almost certain to be that you are projecting some kind of negative belief about yourself that you learned at one time that, even though it goes against the truth of your real self, you made it part of who you are.

For example, suppose your mother had made a rule that you were not allowed to help yourself to cookies from the cookie jar. Then you noticed that your little brother was crying because he was hungry, so you thought raiding the jar for just one cookie to give to him would justify breaking the rule. Your mother then came in and caught you with your hand in the cookie jar. She became enraged and beat you unmercifully for being totally untrustworthy and bad. She beat it into you that you were untrustworthy to such an extent that you came to believe it.

In later life, you would project that out as an energy, and

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people around you would have a nagging doubt about your trustworthiness. Even though they could never quite understand it, the feeling would remain. You might find yourself being passed over for responsible positions at your work, or having security clearances declined for no apparent reason. Boyfriends and girlfriends might doubt your fidelity to a relationship and always be checking up on you.

The good news is that the Radical Self-Forgiveness/Radical Self-Acceptance processes will take care of removing all these old beliefs that create a perception of self that is not true, so people will begin to react to you more in alignment with your true self.

**iii) My Ideal Self:** This is the self I would really like to be. Whereas my inferred self was a perceived self, this is a *fantasy* self. Who I model myself on is often an indication of my ideal self. Film stars, sports personalities, statesmen, media people like Oprah and so on, are examples of people I might model myself on.

This is usually quite harmless and, in our youth anyway, serves to help us develop our sense of identity. However, once again, it is a question of congruency. If your fantasy is one that acts to pull you more towards your real self, or gives you something to aim for that would be in alignment with your true self and your purpose, then it can be seen as a powerful force for self integration.

On the other hand, should the gap between your ideal self and your true authentic self be too wide or the qualities of each be so totally different, that will create dissonance. That in turn will lead to confusion, disap-

pointment and a profound dissatisfaction with self.

In the spirit of self-knowledge being wisdom, it is a good idea to make sure your ideal self and your authentic self are mutually supportive. Look at your role models.

Assuming that there is congruence, the ideal self is great at helping you grow into your full potential. It is the self that is able to hold a vision for yourself in the future and to move you in that direction. It will set goals and, through the Law of Attraction, manifest your dreams. It is a powerful self, but it is one that needs to be monitored to make sure its prodigious energy is properly harnessed for your good.

### *Research Exercise # 3*

## **My Ideal Self . . .**

1. Go over the list of (selected positive) qualities again and check the ones that you already have, and those you would ideally like to have, to be the ideal you. Assume you are totally free to be who you want to be without limitation.

I AM

NOTES

- introvert
- extrovert
- talkative
- quiet
- happy-go-lucky
- intellectual

- 
- emotional \_\_\_\_\_
  - excitable \_\_\_\_\_
  - strong leader \_\_\_\_\_
  - supporter \_\_\_\_\_
  - team oriented \_\_\_\_\_
  - individualistic \_\_\_\_\_
  - courageous \_\_\_\_\_
  
  - seductive \_\_\_\_\_
  - generous \_\_\_\_\_
  - curious \_\_\_\_\_
  - passionate \_\_\_\_\_
  - theatrical \_\_\_\_\_
  - dreamer \_\_\_\_\_
  - ambitious \_\_\_\_\_
  - gambler \_\_\_\_\_
  - sexy \_\_\_\_\_
  - nurturer \_\_\_\_\_
  - forgiving \_\_\_\_\_
  - competitive \_\_\_\_\_
  - practical \_\_\_\_\_
  - rebellious \_\_\_\_\_
  - trusting \_\_\_\_\_
  - caring \_\_\_\_\_
  - energetic \_\_\_\_\_
  - optimistic \_\_\_\_\_
  - high stamina \_\_\_\_\_
  - graceful \_\_\_\_\_

- judgmental
- hard working
- lazy
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- 
- .....

**2.** List some of the people you admire and indicate the main qualities they have that you would wish to have. Check box if he or she is a good role model for you.

PERSON	QUALITIES	ROLE MODEL
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

**3.** Assuming you are not already doing what you consider to be your Divine purpose, write in your journal what you would want to be doing with

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your  
life now if you were totally free to choose.

**4.** Construct a word picture in your journal of your ideal self. Describe your ideal physical self and the kind of mental, emotional and spiritual qualities that you might have and how these might be expressed in how you live life. What kind of disposition would you ideally like to have and what skills and abilities? Push the envelope and

exaggerate to some extent but let it still be YOU. Mention your role models and the ways in which you would like to be like them.

Begin by saying: ***“The way I like to imagine myself being is . . . ”***

**iv) My Socially Modified Self:** This is the self who is NOT really me, but who I may have become in order to be accepted — the person others have wanted me to be. This is the socially constructed self I have become in order to fit in socially or within a family — even though it is not really me.

As members of any group, we agree to give up some aspects of self in order to conform to certain group norms and be accepted. Anyone who was brought up in a severely dysfunctional family is likely to have developed

a highly modified self, formed as a way to survive. But it occurs at all levels of society as well: at school, church, in the media, etc. That's because we are all social animals and are willing to conform to group norms in order to be socially accepted.

But how much of my individual self-expression am I willing to give up in return for the comfort of being part of that group? Suppose I am drawn to be a member of a cult but have to conform to some very strict rules? Suppose I want to be a monk? Am I willing to modify who I am for that?

The answer will depend on a great many factors and might easily be 'Yes' if that is my considered choice. However, my sense is that the answer would need to become 'No' at the point where, in order to conform, you find yourself becoming out of integrity with yourself.

If you are out of integrity with yourself you are living a lie. To be in integrity means to be whole and complete. When you are out of integrity with yourself, your authentic self is impaired. You cannot live that way for very long. Coming back into integrity means reclaiming your true self.

#### *Research Exercise # 4*

***In order to conform and belong, I have adopted or modified (become more or less of) the following:***

- 
- |                                       |                                  |                               |                               |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> introverted  | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> extroverted  | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> talkative    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> quiet        | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> jovial       | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> intellectual | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> feeling      | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excitable    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a leader     | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> supporter    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> courageous   | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fearful      | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> seductive    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> shy          | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> nervous      | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> selfish      | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> analytical   | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> generous     | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> stingy       | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> combative    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> curious      | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> passionate   | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dull         | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> theatrical   | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dreamer      | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ambitious    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> gambler      | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sexy         | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> nurturer     | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> forgiving    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |

- 
- |                                       |                                  |                               |                               |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> blunt        | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> competitive  | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> indecisive   | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> practical    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> obedient     | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rebellious   | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> distrustful  | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> trusting     | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> caring       | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> inflexible   | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> energetic    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> optimistic   | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
|                                       |                                  |                               |                               |                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pessimistic  | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> high stamina | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> graceful     | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> clumsy       | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> judgmental   | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hard working | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lazy         | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> . . . . .    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> . . . . .    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> . . . . .    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> . . . . .    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> . . . . .    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> . . . . .    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> . . . . .    | <input type="checkbox"/> adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> more | <input type="checkbox"/> less | <input type="checkbox"/> rejected |

In the process of creating the socially modified self, the

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chances are that we are going to lose many parts of ourselves. These deserve to be recognized as distinct selves in their own right and I refer to them as our 'lost selves.'

**v) My Lost Selves:** These are the many specific parts of ourselves that we have lost, or traded away, in exchange for acceptance, love, power, money, etc., both as a child and since becoming an adult. They are the parts that we have willingly cast off during the process of creating the socially modified self.

Again, in the interests of self-knowledge, it is worthwhile taking a look at what parts of yourself you might have given away or traded away — and for what. The most common one is *“I traded my integrity and/or self-respect for money/power/status/success.”*

That covers a multitude of things you might have lost or traded away. Here are some other examples:

*“I gave up my normal friendly, gregarious self in order to appease and stay married to a jealous man.”*

*“In order to fit in at work, I have had to leave my fun-loving, creative self at the door and do everything according to the book. As a result, I am no longer the fun-loving, creative person I used to be, even when I am not at work.”*

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*“In order to please my family, I gave up my professional career to have kids, even though my career was my passion. I love my children but have no passion for parenthood. I traded away my passion.”*

*“I used to be a risk-taker and got a real buzz from the excitement, but since I am now responsible for a wife and family, I have to play safe all the time.”*

*“My fulfillment is in being a musician but I have taken a job that gives me steady income but leaves me no time to play my music. I traded my fulfillment and musical creativity for a steady income.”*

## *Research Exercise # 5*

### **My Lost Selves**

The parts of my real self that I have lost by giving them up, or shutting them down, or trading them away for love, money, power, status or something similar, might be my

- sexuality
- humor
- innocence
- integrity
- honesty

- 
- trust
  - curiosity
  - feelings
  - passion
  - my dream
  - ambition
  - risk-taking
  - generosity
  - freedom
  - parenthood
  - happiness
  - peace
  - fulfillment
  - .....
  - .....
  - .....

**WARNING:** As you begin to examine how you might have given up or traded away certain parts of yourself, it is likely that it will bring up feelings of deep sadness, grief and regret. That's OK. Those feelings need to be felt. You might also feel some guilt, which is OK too, except I wouldn't want you to use this to pile a whole load of guilt on top of what you might already be carrying. This applies particularly if you are prone to that and to beating yourself up all the time. All the guilt around this will be dispersed later through the Radical Forgiveness process, so there's no point in magnifying what guilt is already there.

Complete the exercise by finishing this sentence: *"If I had the chance to do it all over*

*again, the one thing I would not trade again  
would be .....* ”

**vi) My Disowned Selves:** These are the parts of myself that I have rejected as unacceptable and have put completely out of sight and out of mind. I have done this through the mechanism of repression. That means I have pushed them so deep down in the sub-conscious mind that I have absolutely no awareness of them.

Repression is not the same as suppression. When you suppress parts yourself, you know they are still there. This would be true of your lost selves. You know they are there but they remain suppressed. Conversely, those parts of yourself that you have disowned and repressed are out of your awareness altogether.

Carl Jung referred to this repressed material as our shadow. Let's look at how these parts of ourselves got denied, rejected and then disowned in the first place.

When we were growing up and looking for approval and love from those around us, most notably our parents, we soon learned which of our attributes won us love and approval and which did not. Out of a sense of survival we selected the most *approved-of* attributes to live from and quickly disowned the others.

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From the acceptable list, we created the socially modified self that we present to the world, and the rest we dumped into our shadow. We have probably added more as life has gone on, but most of our disowned selves were repressed early as a result of being shamed over them.

Having shifted all the 'unapproved of' attributes into our shadow and repressed them, we might think they are safely buried and inactive. They are not. There is energy attached to every one of them, which is both active and reactive. Each attribute has a tendency to want to rise up from the depths of the unconscious to be recognized and accepted.

For that reason, we remain ever fearful of our shadow, and we do everything we can to avoid coming to terms with it. The act of repressing it is an avoidance strategy.

But an even better way to avoid dealing with it is to project it onto someone else. In other words we symbolically take it out of ourselves, project it onto someone or something else *out there* and then convince ourselves that we no longer have it.



How it works is that we first find someone who seems to have a lot of the qualities we hate in ourselves. Then we criticize or judge them unmercifully for having those qualities, unaware, of course, that they are our own. We become angry and self-righteous and will go to great lengths to make the person wrong, and to punish them if possible. With the focus on the ‘bad’ person out there, the need to see what is ‘in here’ is neatly sidestepped and avoided.

This is a powerful defense mechanism. But it has the potential to keep us stuck in self-loathing because it automatically prevents us from recognizing and accepting a large part of ourselves.

Nevertheless, it does offer us a way to retrieve those disowned selves. Once we understand the mechanism of projection and can recognize when we are doing it — i.e., when we are criticizing another and becoming self-righteous about them — we can decide to take back the projection.

The principle being *“If you spot it, you’ve got it,”* we take back the projection by recognizing the person we are judging as someone who has come into our

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lives to mirror what we have disowned, and to give us the opportunity to see it and welcome it back with love and acceptance.

We will look at this again in Part 4 and discuss how this can be done easily and quickly. In the meantime, the following exercise will help you discover some of your disowned selves.

### *Research Exercise # 6*

#### **My Disowned Selves**

It would make no sense, in this instance, to ask you to make a list of your disowned selves, since by definition they are not known to you. You having repressed them; they live not in your conscious mind but in your subconscious mind, almost completely out of your awareness.

Not to worry, though. There is a perfectly good and reliable way to discover what they are by doing a reverse projection exercise. The procedure is as follows:

- 1.** Think of two people you most probably dislike or disapprove of in many ways and, on the next page, make a list of the qualities you see in them that you find objectionable. Try to find about ten things if you can. No need to

mention their names.

They can be people you know personally or personalities you only see on TV or film. They may be dead or alive. The important thing is that you feel very judgmental and critical of them in a number of ways.

PERSON 1

PERSON 2

**2.** Claim each one of these as your disowned parts of yourself that you have denied, repressed and projected onto these two people.

The point here is that if you were to make a list of your disowned selves, every one of the qualities listed above would top the list. That's because the

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principle is, as I have already said, *“If you spot it, you’ve got it.”*

You are seeing in these two people what you despise in yourself and have disowned. In effect you are looking in the mirror.

However, before you throw this book at the wall in disgust, bear in mind that the mirror can trick you. While some may be obvious, with others it may not be a direct correlation. What you see in the other person may only be symbolic or representative of something within you, and it is difficult to know what that might be.

So don’t waste energy trying to figure it out. Just accept that everything that you have listed is representative, either directly or indirectly of your disowned selves and they are showing up to be loved and accepted just the way they are. Do NOT make yourself guilty again for creating them. That just perpetuates the cycle.

**vii) The Saboteur Self:** This is the self that is constantly checking what beliefs, ideas, attitudes, concepts, prejudices and other content exists in the subconscious mind and makes sure that whatever you are doing, thinking or planning matches what is down there. If not, it will sabotage you in every way possible. It will sabotage your relationships, your finances and every other area of your life if what you are doing, thinking or planning is not in accordance with every belief that already exists in your subconscious.

For instance, if, as a consequence of having witnessed an abusive marriage with your parents, you have concluded that marriage is not good, your saboteur self will sabotage every relationship you ever have as soon as the ‘m’ word comes up in the conversation.

It’s the same with money. If you have a belief that money is bad or limited, you will never be rich. Your saboteur will make sure that you never go over a certain level of income. It doesn’t care about your desire to become rich — it’s only concern is with being right.

Once again, though, as with the disowned self, your beliefs, attitudes and prejudices tend to be buried in the subconscious mind and for the most part operate automatically and out of your conscious awareness.

Nevertheless, if you watch how your life is working and observe what is showing up on a consistent basis, you can tell when your saboteur is operating — trying to be right in reference to the thought patterns buried in your subconscious mind.

So, taking the first of our two examples above — the idea that “marriage is for the birds” — your saboteur self will make sure that, no matter how much you think you want to find a partner to marry, it’ll never happen. Everyone you meet will be in some way unavailable. Or it will be someone who is simply

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unable or unwilling to commit to a long term relationship.

If you get to, say, age 40 and this has been your experience, then it doesn't take much to deduce that you have a thought pattern supported by your saboteur self that is strongly antithetical to the idea of marriage.

At that point, you can have a heart-to-heart talk with your saboteur self about making some dramatic changes. But it will have to be done carefully and with sensitivity so it can end up feeling right about any new idea about marriage.

Nowhere is the saboteur more commonly operative than in the area of money. All of us have a financial 'script.' This is something we have learned from an early age and it determines our financial lives all the way through. Our saboteur sees to it that it does.

Haven't you ever wondered why most people continue to earn more or less the same amount of money all their lives? Or asked yourself why some people are magnets for money and others always have to struggle to get by?

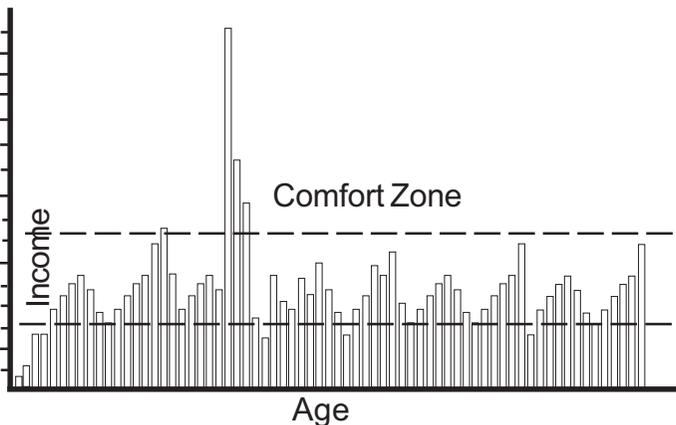
It is not the outer circumstances of our lives that determine how much money we attract but our internally integrated, subconscious financial script. The saboteur self makes sure we stick to it.

Sometimes the saboteur is caught napping — but only once. The evidence for this is that you will often

see in someone's financial year-to-year timeline, a single but dramatic spike where, all of a sudden, the person will have a really good year.

Almost invariably, though, this is followed by a dramatic drop the next year. From then on, the picture will revert to how it was before the spike and remain there for the foreseeable future.

What happened was that the person's financial saboteur had set a comfort zone with regard to money and, so long as he or she didn't go above or below the limits of the comfort zone, all was well. But when that spike hit, the saboteur awoke from its slumber and took action to make sure that it didn't happen again. From then on, it stayed awake.



You should also know that we all have an income 'set-point.' This is a point at the very top end of the comfort zone that sets your income ceiling and ensures it is not exceeded. It is part of your script. However, there is a way that this income set-point

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can be altered and progressively moved upwards. We have developed a software program that will train your set point to allow your income to quadruple in two years. (See Appendix).

When you have a fear of success, which a lot of people do, your saboteur is an expert at making sure success never happens. Fear of success is often formed when a child who is raised in a happy family observes that, as the father becomes increasingly successful at work, he is less and less available to give the kind of loving attention the child is used to. He or she notices that Mother is showing signs of being unhappy about that too, and that the marriage is increasingly stressed as a result of the father being absent all the time due to his success. The child therefore begins to equate success with pain and suffering.

If this were you, your saboteur would, in later life, allow a degree of success up to a certain level (comparable to the level your father was at before his rise to the next level began causing pain). But after that, if you should get a big promotion, it will take action.

Health problems that limit your ability to shine may suddenly occur; you may employ people beneath you who are incompetent; you may quarrel with your colleagues and upset your superiors, make major mistakes and so on. You will be lucky if you survive in that job. None of this will be by accident.

Your saboteur self will most likely always be at odds with your ideal self for all the reasons I have listed above and unfortunately will win most of the battles. It will find all sorts of way to divert you from your dream so you never become the person you most want to be. So try to be aware of it operating in your mind and then put a stop to its subterfuge before it ruins everything.

### *Research Exercise # 7*

#### **My Saboteur Self**

Starting from your early years, up to present time, plot a timeline of your life and see if you can observe patterns of behavior and experiences that might be indicative of some beliefs, and negative thought patterns that might have been running your life and which your saboteur self has been at pains to defend and maintain.

Some of these might be: (Check those you think might apply)

- “Life is inherently a struggle.”*
- “People are inherently bad.”*
- “All men are like my father.”*
- “All women are like my mother.”*

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- "Rich people are crooks."*
  - "I cannot trust any man/woman."*
  - "I cannot trust life."*
  - "I can't trust anyone."*
  - "This is a dog-eat-dog world."*
  - "It's survival of the fittest."*
  - "I will always be discriminated against."*
  - "It is not OK for me to be powerful."*
  - "I am not worthy of anything."*
  
  - "I don't deserve . . ."*
  - "I am a failure."*
  - "I am not good at anything."*
  - "Everything I touch goes bad."*
  - "They just don't appreciate me."*
  - "I am invisible."*
  - "I am never paid well for what I do."*
  - "Even my own mother/father hates me."*
  - "I hate my mother/father."*
  - "I have to be perfect to get approval."*
  - "I have to be right."*
  - "There is never enough . . ."*
  - "To be loved, I have to be who I am not."*
  - "Others' needs are more important than mine."*
  - "I will never amount to anything."*
  - "If I become successful, I will be like my father."*
  - "You have to work hard for money."*
  - "Money does not grow on trees."*
  - "I have to struggle for money."*
  - "There is a shortage of money."*

- “Money is a scarce commodity.”
- “Money represents success.”
- “Money is the root of all evil.”
- “Other things are more important than money.”
- “I should give money away.”
- “Behind every fortune there is a great crime.”
- “Money is power.”
- “Money has power over me.”
- “Money is a good job.”
- “Money is a successful business.”
- “People with money are suspect.”
- .....
- .....

Once you have plotted your timeline, identified your thoughts and beliefs, you will have a good idea of what it is your saboteur is committed to defending.

**viii) The Sexual Self:** This is a very complex self but very interesting nevertheless. It is certainly worth looking at in the interest of self-exploration and self-knowledge. It is also useful in helping us understand how we behave in relationship.

John Kappas, PhD, Founder of the Hypnosis Motivation Institute and author of a number of books on hypnotherapy, developed a model of sexual personality which I find very helpful. On one side of the scale is the self that he describes as *physical sexual*. On the other is a self described as *emotional sexual*.

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The terms *physical sexual* and *emotional sexual* can be misleading. What is being referred to here is how the person *defends* the part of themselves they feel to be most threatened.

The physical sexual is driven by an intense fear of rejection. Feeling vulnerable emotionally he or she defends his/her emotions by putting his/her physical body out front as a form of protection.

The emotional sexual, on the other hand, is driven by a strong fear of intimacy. Feeling vulnerable physically, he or she protects his or her body by putting up a wall of emotion containing such feelings as fear, intense shyness and distrust.

This has all sorts of ramifications for how they each show up in the world. So let me provide a sketch profile of each extreme, so you can determine where on the following scale you might be.

The ideal is to have around a 60/40 bias towards one end or the other. That way you will be more able to understand those with the opposite bias.

100%	50/50	100%
Physical Sexual		Emotional Sexual

## **People With a Physical Sexual Self**

- They are classic extroverts who project their sexuality outwards almost to the point of flaunting it.
- They are very comfortable with their bodies and have a high sex drive. They are ready for sex at a moment's notice and the men can last for hours.
- They wear clothes and jewelry that emphasize and bring attention to their physical body and their sexual attractiveness.
- Image and appearance are very important to them. No matter what they buy, the main consideration is how it makes them look. They go for elegance, style, color, glitz, etc. They would never buy a car on the basis of fuel efficiency over style.
- They crave acceptance and attention because of their fear of rejection, which means everything they do is designed to get approval. They are extremely sensitive to criticism.
- When in conversation with you, they will stand close, lock eyes and scan your face for the least sign of a possible rejection.
- If rejected, rather than withdraw, they will push forward even more, trying to win you over with charm and persuasion. They become very insistent and pushy. They will not take no for an answer, especially from an emotional sexual person of the opposite sex, to whom they are irresistibly attracted. They can be assertive

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and controlling, almost to the point of being obnoxious if they sense rejection.

- They are the life and soul of any party, very popular, and always seem comfortable in social situations. They are never at a loss for something to talk about and small talk comes easy to them.
- They are natural risk-takers in all aspects of their lives, so they are often entrepreneurs and/or indulge in very physical sports, especially team sports.
- They are less concerned about their bodies being hurt than they are about having their feelings crushed.
- All their emotions are experienced physically rather than mentally, and when their feelings are hurt, they feel it as intense pain in their bodies. The pain can be so bad that they can literally be incapacitated by it for long periods of time.
- When a relationship ends, they are devastated and have a very difficult time letting go of it. They take it very personally and feel utterly rejected. They also have a very hard time replacing. It may be many months before they will have another serious relationship, though they will have plenty of sex in the meanwhile. They need it just to feel OK.
- They are hopelessly idealistic about love and relationships and very romantically inclined. Once in a relationship they tend to be loyal and monogamous. At the same time, they are very jealous and possessive.

- They enjoy children and are very strong on family. They put family and/or relationships before career or any other aspect of life. It's their #1 priority.
- They communicate by indirect implication and inferences, relying on the listener to make the correct interpretation. On the other hand, they hear only what is said literally and don't pick up on inferences. You have to tell them explicitly and frequently that you love them. They will not infer that you do just because you are there.

### **People With an Emotional Sexual Self**

- They are the classic introverts and they tend to fold down and withdraw into themselves to protect their feelings of physical vulnerability.
- They are not in the least bit comfortable in their bodies and have a closed, protective bodily stance that says, "don't come close, and don't touch me." Their arms will be in front of them as protection and their feet tend to be turned inwards.
- They dress conservatively to divert attention away from their body and to hide their sexuality. Women will wear high neck dresses or loose clothing to hide their figure. They will wear minimal makeup, if they wear any at all, and will wear sensible shoes. Men will dress conservatively.
- They are not particularly social and have great difficulty making small talk. At parties, they are usually the

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wallflowers. They leave early.

- They feel their feelings inwardly and process them mentally. They seldom express feelings outwardly and do not like to show physical affection in public.
- They do not much like to be touched. Even a light touch quickly turns to irritation. The kind of touch a physical considers affectionate can seem like physical assault to an emotional sexual person.
- They are turned on sexually much more by visual and mental stimuli than by touch. They are not automatically ready for sex like the physical is and need a lot of warming up. Emotional men are not the sexual athletes physical sexual men are. Once they have ejaculated, it is all over, whereas physicals can go on for hours.
- For them, sex is not a high priority, neither is family, children or relationships. Their priority is work and career, followed by their hobby. Relationships come a distant third. They are not very fond of children and they may choose never to marry.
- They often have extramarital affairs and think little of it because they do not equate love with sex as does the physical. They like the mental excitement of an affair.
- When a relationship ends, they get over it in a matter of days and replace easily. They do not take it as a personal rejection of themselves.
- They don't like team sports but they excel at individual sports that require rigorous training and are self-chal-

lenging.

- They lead with their minds in everything, from work, games and even sex. They are analytical, careful and methodical and therefore seldom spontaneous.
- They buy cars not on style and image but on which is the most efficient and best engineered. They will research it to death before they buy.
- If they go into business for themselves, they tend to be accountants, computer programmers, engineers, researchers, and technicians. They like precise, solitary work and are detail oriented. They can be very successful in business.
- They pick up on inferences and subtle implications, but they speak very directly and precisely. They don't waste words and are not physically expressive.

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I can't leave this conversation on the sexual self without explaining how this dynamic plays out in relationships, especially if one or both partners are at the extreme end of the scale.

As you might imagine, initially the opposites attract. A high physical will attract a high emotional and vice versa.

At a party, a high physical male will make a beeline for the retiring little emotional who is in the corner clutching her drink and looking shy and embarrassed. He desper-

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ately wants to rescue her and 'bring her out.' She is initially turned off by him because he's so pushy, but eventually succumbs to his irresistible charm and his 'take charge' attitude.

Communication seems to flow easily between them as well. That's because the physical speaks inferentially to the emotional who easily picks up on subtle implications of what is being said.

Conversely, the emotional speaks directly to the physical who likes direct communication, not inferences. The emotional says little but is a good listener, whereas the physical loves to dominate the conversation and is more than happy to have someone who will just listen. It seems like a match made in heaven.

Not only does the communication seem great, but during the honeymoon period, which lasts about six months, the emotional tends to act like a physical in bed. So everything seems wonderful and the physical is convinced he or she has found a soul mate.

However, at around six months, each one begins reverting to their natural type. As the chemistry that enabled them to let down their defenses for a while begins to fade, so their defenses re-emerge and their primary behavior comes to the fore again.

Consequently, emotionals begin withdrawing emotionally and wanting less sex. Their fear of intimacy and their tendency to avoid it returns. They begin focusing on things that interest them besides the relationship.

This drives the physical crazy because he or she interprets the emotional's behavior as implicit rejection and an indication of their partner falling out of love. That makes him or her even more demanding of love, sex and physical affection, which in turn makes the emotional withdraw even more.

Once both fear responses have kicked in, the situation goes from bad to worse and the relationship is virtually irretrievable. If they stay together it will be the emotional who will control relationship. That's because the physical will sell a large chunk of himself or herself (*see lost selves*) in order to get whatever sex or physical affection the emotional is willing to give.

That's why a lot of strong-looking physical males are controlled by weaker looking wives. A woman who knows how to manipulate that fear of rejection owns him.

You might imagine that the ideal arrangement would be two of the same together. This is not so.

Two physicals together would be in competition with each other and would act like a couple of divas. They would talk at each other in inferences with neither one of them picking up on them. They would be talking over each other and always seeing rejection in every utterance. It would be an intensely sexual liaison but their jealousy and possessiveness would create terrible problems. They would always be fighting. Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton were good examples and this, and look what happened to them.

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Two emotionals together would soon get very bored with each other. Sex would be nonexistent and their communications minimal. Their best chance at survival would be if they were to work together. Otherwise they would be out looking for an affair just to relieve the boredom.

Concluding this discussion on the sexual self, I would ask you to please remember that these are the extremes. Most of us are either predominantly physical or emotional but have enough of the other to balance it out to a greater or lesser degree.

You can probably make a rough assessment of where you are on that scale, sufficient to be able to get a good idea of your sexual self. Again, you will want to check it against your authentic self to ensure there is congruence.

If you wish to go more deeply into this and get a more accurate fix on your sexuality profile, you can download a questionnaire and a scoring chart from our web site, [www.radicalforgiveness.com](http://www.radicalforgiveness.com).

**ix) The Judging Self:** This is the self that is your own worst critic. It is the self that is on your back 24/7, finding fault with you at every turn. It rarely stops criticizing. It is the part of you that shames you and makes you feel guilty about anything and everything it can. It often works in cahoots with your saboteur self with the latter making very good use of the criticisms to keep you down.

The judging self does not care whether the guilt is

appropriate or inappropriate. It will accept associated guilt, projected guilt and any other form of guilt from wherever it might come and it will beat you to death with it.

The main way to combat the judging self is to call it on its judgments. As soon as it tries to give you a guilt trip, you need to ask — am I entitled to this guilt? Is it appropriate or inappropriate guilt? Is it mine or does it belong to someone else? Am I willing to accept it or not? These questions are addressed in the next chapter on 'guilt.'

**x) The Self-Loving Self:** This self, as its name implies, is the one part of the your Human Self that lives in your heart and loves you no matter what. It is not totally unconditionally loving like your I AM Self, which sees no right or wrong in anything that you do, but it is incredibly tolerant of your shortcomings and forgiving of your mistakes.

It has a huge amount of compassion for you and empathizes with whatever you are feeling. It understands you completely at the emotional level. It knows and identifies with your fears, your anxieties, your joys, your dreams, your loves, your disappointments and so on.

This self is your emotional cheerleader and makes itself responsible for keeping your level of self esteem high. It has to do this in direct opposition to the judging self who feels it is his/her obligation to drag it down as far as possible.

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It also knows how to pull together all the other selves in support of your true emotional character. It is therefore the great 'mediator-self.'

This brings us full circle and gives us a way to solve the apparent conundrum we mentioned at the beginning. This was: with traditional self forgiveness there was no distinction made between the forgiver and the forgiven and that, contrary to logic, subject and object were the same. This raised the question of who was forgiving whom?

Well, now we have the solution. It lies in the very fact that there are these various parts of ourselves that have different points of view about what we may have done or become. It is they that provide a subject/object context for any discussion about self-forgiveness and self-acceptance.

The self-loving self (the subject) is the one who forgives whichever other self, archetype or sub-personality within the Human Self (the forgiven), for whatever the judging self accuses it of doing or being. At least that solves our logic problem.

It's still not a perfect solution at the practical level, however, because the argument between the judging self and self-loving self hardly ever gets resolved. The judging self is coming from the mind with logic and persuasion, like any good prosecutor but the self-loving self is coming from the heart. Never the twain shall meet, as they say.

The argument simply continues to go back and forth forever. No wonder then, <sup>78</sup> that traditional forgiveness takes so long and seldom actually occurs other than at some superficial level.

With Radical Self-Forgiveness, there really never was a problem. This was because the appeal for forgiveness on behalf of the Human Self always was made to the I AM Self.

PART THREE

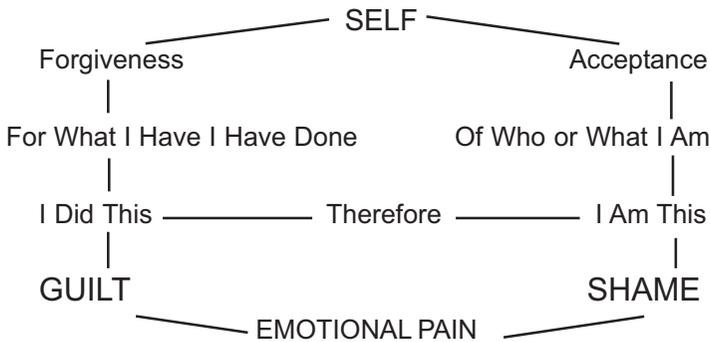
**GUILT AND SHAME**

**6 GUILT** We can define guilt as a feeling of remorse over something that we have done but should not have, or not done but should have. It's about our behavior.

Guilt is different to shame in the sense that shame is remorse, not so much over what we have done, as it is about the kind of person we think we are. Obviously, there is a relationship between them in that our guilt over what we have done might lead to us feeling very bad about ourselves, but making a distinction between guilt and shame does seem to be useful.

It is helpful, for example, in aiding us to distinguish between self-forgiveness and self-acceptance. Self-forgiveness is a process that enables us to release guilt, while self-acceptance is a process that enables us to process our shame.

Graphically, we can show the interrelatedness of the two concepts in the following way:



Though there are obviously strong connections between the two, as indicated by the arrow linking “I did this” to “I am this,” the two are distinct because they end up with two different emotions. The *“I did this, therefore I am this”* loop adds to whatever shame is already there. In the end though, it all adds up to emotional pain — the pain of separation.

### **Guilt is Good**

If we were unable to feel guilt, we would be as crippled as someone who was unable to feel fear. A truly fearless person would never be able to sense or evaluate danger or risk. Someone who is unable to feel guilt would be an amoral sociopath.

One of the ways we evaluate child development is how well developed the child’s sense of moral judgment has become by a certain age. Jean Piaget, the French child psychologist, declared it to be a stage of development that a child must master if he or she is to develop to

maturity

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Part of being human is acknowledging that we have a complex set of agreements about how we should behave towards one another, all other forms of life, our planet and so on. We refer to this as our *code of ethics*.

Ethics makes an appeal to our *principles and values* and to our personal sense of *integrity*. For example, if we declare our belief in a principle like loyalty or fidelity and then act in such a way as to contravene that principle, then we shall be out of integrity.

If we had no ability to feel guilt or shame we would not know whether we were out of integrity or not. Values and principles would mean nothing to us.

Ethics tend to change little over the years, although each culture will have its own code of ethics and order of priority in its values. America's primary value is freedom of the individual at the cost of most other values. Other advanced societies value the common good over the individual.

Neither one is right or wrong. It's a function of how that culture has evolved over a long period of time. In Western civilization, many of our principles that we hold dear go right back to ancient Greek times.

Morals are different from ethics since they don't necessarily reference deeply held principles, but are merely *social* agreements (or disagreements) about what is considered 'right' and what is 'wrong' for today's times. These are referenced according to the

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prevailing *moral code* of the day, much of which is formed not so much by rational thought, as by attitudes, prejudices, habits of mind, peer pressure, media pressure and so on. Morals can change very quickly, especially from one generation to the next.

A good example of how quickly a moral code can change is how homosexuality is regarded now, as opposed to twenty or thirty years ago. Then it was considered to be totally immoral. Leaving aside the religious fervor against it based on biblical texts, it is now regarded, within the U.S. at least, as acceptable. It is a measure of how attitudes have changed that we are now even making it possible for homosexuals to marry.

By the way, there are those who argue that it is impossible to be a moral person without having a religion that gives you your moral code. This may be true for people unable to think for themselves, but for ordinary thinking people, I think this is insulting. I calibrate my moral code based on ethical principles; not on any religious rule given to me by some outside authority. An atheist is equally as capable of being moral and ethical as a religious person.

Where you get your code from is irrelevant. The important thing is to have one. You need it to guide your conscience. And to have a conscience, you need to have a well developed sense of anticipatory guilt. A fully developed conscience is wrought from the personal experience of grappling with principle — not by referencing some kind of rule book.

Anticipatory guilt serves as our *internal* ethical and moral compass and, hopefully, prevents us from going ahead with something that would break an agreement. It is a 'guilt avoidance' system. If we are tempted to act in a way that would be against the legal or moral code of the day, we think about how we would feel about it afterwards. Then, on the basis of how much guilt we think we might feel, we either act or we don't act. Perhaps the guilt would be too much to bear.

The obvious situation where this would come into play is where one is tempted to have sex outside of marriage. The temptation could be great and the anticipation of the pleasure to be had might be enormous, but if one believes in the principles of fidelity and honor, one's anticipatory guilt meter should kick in. It will then be a battle between two conflicting principles — freedom and fidelity to one's partner. How the conflict gets resolved is a matter for one's conscience.

We also have rules (laws) about how people are held accountable for breaking these agreements. These are interpreted and institutionally administered by reference to an agreed *code of justice*.

However, even if no law is broken, if the transgression is considered a serious breach of the moral code, society itself can exact its own form of punishment. That can take the form of subtle or not so subtle discrimination, ostracizing, blocking careers, media condemnation and so on. It can be severe.

Retrospective guilt is the guilt that we feel after we have done something 'wrong.' There's no recovering

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from it — the deed is done, apologies notwithstanding. And in any case, an apology is to help the other person feel better, not to lessen your guilt.

However, we are still in a position to decide whether or not the guilt is earned and whether it is appropriate or inappropriate. As we have seen, the judging self makes no distinction between those two, but if we find our guilt to be inappropriate, we can launch a legitimate challenge to the barrage of criticism coming from the judge. So what is the difference between appropriate and inappropriate guilt?

### **Appropriate Retrospective Guilt**

If I have broken an agreement, I **should** feel guilty. For example, if I got drunk, drove recklessly and killed someone, I am entitled to feel guilty about it. I behaved badly with fatal consequences. My guilt is appropriate. It is rightfully there to be felt. I am entitled to it. It is my way of feeling my responsibility and administering a form of self-justice. My guilt is evidence that I have a well formed conscience. My guilt is my teacher.

### **Inappropriate Retrospective Guilt**

On the other hand, if I was driving safely and a cyclist swerved in front of me, such that I had no way to avoid him or stop, and I killed him, guilt would be inappropriate under such circumstances. I would feel very sad and full of regret, of course. But not guilty. I would not have earned the right to feel guilty. I would not be entitled to it.

I should definitely NOT feel guilty about it and I would tell my Judging Self so. I would need to because,

without doubt, it would have seized the opportunity and would have been shrill in its condemnation of me within seconds of the event, notwithstanding the fact that I was in no way to blame.

Inappropriate guilt then is felt when we blame ourselves for something that we did not consciously choose, had no control over, no responsibility for, and for which we cannot reasonably be held accountable. You often hear people say things like “Yes, but if only I had done this or that....” or “I should have done this...” when clearly there was no apparent reason for them to have foreseen the need to do any such thing prior to the event.

Survivor’s guilt is a form of inappropriate guilt. It occurs when, say, a group of people die in a fire, and the survivor feels guilty for not dying too.

Inferred guilt occurs when we feel guilty by inference. We pick up from others that they think we are to blame and, even though we are innocent, we feel guilty — especially when we are around them. This is a co-dependent’s emotion and it is inappropriate. Nevertheless, it is hard to ignore those inferences, especially when the whole of society is suggesting you are guilty.

Guilt by association arises when you feel guilty for what others connected with you have done. Parents feeling guilty for what their children have done is one example. Again this is co-dependency. (They might be entitled to feel appropriate guilt for not being good parents, however.)

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Don't buy into projected guilt! This is when people feel guilty themselves and, rather than feel it, they project it onto you. They play the blame game and lay a guilt trip on you. Once again, if you are co-dependent, you might fall for it, but it is, of course, inappropriate guilt.

**7 SHAME** Whereas guilt is remorse over something we have done, shame is remorse over who we think we are as human beings. To be shamed is to be made to feel worthless, bad, undeserving, less than, and simply no good. The result of being consistently and severely shamed is a feeling of self-loathing.

As was pointed out in the Introduction, self-loathing is surprisingly common. It can range from a vague feeling of not being quite OK, to severe self-hatred expressed in such extreme ways as self-mutilation and other forms of self-punishment, or even suicide.

Clearly there is a very strong relationship between guilt and shame and much of what I have already written in the preceding pages will have been equally as applicable to shame as to guilt. The Judging Self, for example, is not only shrill in telling you what you have done wrong but will lose no time at all in parsing that into YOU are wrong.

The saboteur self will also be looking for opportunities to create problems for you by defending some of your shame-based, core negative beliefs about yourself,

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such as, “*I am worthless,*” “*I am bad,*” “*I am no good,*” and so on. Beliefs like these then become the basis for new, more complex beliefs, such as:

“I am worthless, so people will never value me or see me as being important or worth listening to.”

“I am bad, so no one will ever want me and I will always be alone.”

“I am no good, so I don’t deserve to have much in life.”

“I am not enough for anyone, so people will always leave me when they find out who I really am.”

### **How Toxic is a Belief Based on Shame?**

Very toxic! In fact, it can even kill you. Psychotherapist, author and researcher, Lawrence LeShan, has spent a lifetime working with cancer patients, studying the mind/body connection in the causation of cancer. In his book, *Cancer as a Turning Point*, he revealed his discovery that the underlying, unconscious belief that was common to virtually every cancer patient he ever worked with was as follows:

*“If I show up as who I am (bad, horrible, ugly, worthless, stupid, etc.) no one will love me; therefore in order to be loved I have to pretend to be someone I am not.”*

You might have noticed that people who get cancer tend to be ‘nice’ people. That’s because they have

spent their lives being people pleasers — always molding themselves according to how others want them to be, always putting themselves last, caretaking, avoiding conflict, and doing whatever is necessary to be accepted. (*O. Carl Simonton, "The Cancer Personality."*)

In other words, they have spent their lives showing up as who they are not in order to get love and approval. They have sold themselves out. But the worst of it is, that in spite of everything, deep down, the belief that "I am unlovable" remains.

Not surprisingly then, way down deep inside them is seething rage and resentment. They are mad at whomever it was that made them feel this way. They are mad at themselves for believing it and selling out, just to get approval. But it is so deeply repressed that they have no idea that it is there and, of course, it never shows.

However, that kind of repressed energy (*in the form of anger, resentment and rage*) has got to come out somewhere, so it eventually shows up as a condition in the physical body. Even if your toxic negative belief doesn't kill you, it will almost certainly cause you to live an impoverished, limited, insecure and perhaps even loveless life.

There are five steps in the process of transforming these core negative beliefs. These are:

1. Discover them
2. Recognize them

- 
3. Evaluate them
  4. Neutralize them
  5. Transform them

Let's look at each one of these in turn:

**Step #1: Discovering The Beliefs**

If you are paying any attention at all to your Judging Self, you may have an awareness of some of them already, playing over and over inside your head every day. It might use code words for the beliefs, but with a little bit of 'listening' to your own Judging Self (you being the Observer in this case), you might begin to uncover the basic negative beliefs that fuel that constant tirade of self-judgment.

For those beliefs that are more deeply buried in the subconscious mind, we might have to do some detective work to find out what they are. That would be difficult but for the fact that your Judging Self and Saboteur Self will always conspire to ensure that all these beliefs are shown to be correct by making sure you act them out in your life as if they were really true. They actually create your reality.

Though this can make life quite miserable for you if left as is, it actually works to your advantage when it comes to discovering what your beliefs are. That's because, as we pointed out in previous chapters, you can infer what your subconscious beliefs are from what is showing up in your life. Life will always mirror for you what your beliefs are, no matter what they are. For example:

Observation: I don't have much of anything in my life.

Likely Belief: *"I am not deserving of, nor worthy of it."*

Observation: I always seem to screw things up.

Likely Belief: *"I can never do it right."*

Observation: I have always had to work hard to survive.

Likely Belief: *"I have to struggle in life."*

Also, through the Law of Attraction, you will attract people into your life who will treat you exactly in accordance with those beliefs. This helps even more in discovering what they are. For example:

Observation: People seem not to notice me.

Likely Belief: *"I am invisible."*

Observation: People don't listen to me.

Likely Belief: *"I have nothing worthwhile to say."*

Observation: People are always trying to change me.

Likely Belief: *"I am not OK the way I am."*

Observation: People seem to ignore me or pass me by.

Likely Belief: *"I am invisible."*

Observation: My relationships never last long.

Likely Belief: *"I am unlovable."*

*Research Exercise #8*

## **My Shame-Based Core Negative Beliefs**

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Take a look at the beliefs listed below and check which ones you think might be buried within you, based on what has turned up in your life.

- I have to be perfect to be loved
- If I show up as me no one will love me
- I have to struggle for everything
  
- I never quite measure up
- I don't deserve love
- Others are more important than me
- I don't matter
- I can never do it right
- I always do it wrong
- I am not worthy of love
- I don't deserve .....
- I'll never make it on my own
- My life has no real value
- I'm always left out of everything
- I can't trust anyone
- I am invisible and hardly ever noticed
- I'm all alone in the world
- I am not worthy of money or riches
- To be loved, I need to be sick
- I'll never be good enough
- I will always be alone
- To be loved I have to not be me
- There is never enough for me
- Something must be wrong with me
- I have to stay in control
- I'll never have enough money
- I'll never be a success
- Bad things always happen to me
- I can't have what I really want
- I'm just not lovable the way I am
- I will always fail at everything

- I have to work hard for everything
  - If I open my heart I'll get hurt
  - I am not likeable
  - I'll never be good enough
  - It's not safe to be me
  - I am a failure
  - I shouldn't even have been born
  - If I tell the truth they will leave
- 
- My feelings are not important
  - I create my own (bad) reality
  - I am spiritually flawed
  - I am not smart enough
  - I am intimidating to others

### **Step #2: *Recognize the Voices from the Past***

Your inner critic and Judging Self didn't just make these beliefs up. They came from somewhere, or, more accurately, from someone. Somebody shamed you into thinking you were what you now believe about yourself.

Whose voice was it that convinced you that you were not OK? Since we can fairly say that most of our beliefs about ourselves are set in our earliest years, it follows that, for most of us at least, it was our parents who were our primary influences in this regard.

By and large, they taught us everything we know about ourselves by what they said, or didn't say — to us or about us; what they did or didn't do — to us and for us; and by how they reacted to us whenever we ventured to express our true nature.

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It is a role that falls naturally upon parents — they have no choice in the matter. *(If you yourself are a parent, you know this for yourself. It is simply thrust upon you).*

Neither do parents have training in, or even in many cases, an awareness of that awesome responsibility that begins to weigh heavily even before the birth. They can do no better than stumble along, doing the best they can with little knowledge, scant experience and the most meager set of tools to assist them in nurturing an emerging human being.

We must remember too that, just like everyone else, most parents are wounded human beings themselves. Like everyone else, they have a tendency to project their pain onto others — most often onto those they love — particularly those they can influence the most and over whom they have power and control — their children.

They also have no choice but to pass on their own values and morals, codes of behavior, skills, attitudes, prejudices, dreams, thought habits and so on to their children. It is impossible not to do that. It's what parents must do.

Taking all this into account, it is hardly surprising that most of us ***inferred*** from the way they carried out this role, that we were somehow not OK. Or that we were flawed in some particular way. Or that we should not expect to be successful, rich, powerful or deserving.

Bear in mind too that research shows that even in what

we might judge as 'nice' homes, children grow up hearing about 20 negative messages about themselves for every one positive message. Add to this the fact that the most frequently used and most damaging form of punishment used by most parents — especially in middle class families — is the prolonged withholding of love, and you begin to understand why so many people feel that they are not lovable.

In the beginning of this section, I said our parents taught us what to think about ourselves. That is not exactly true. Other than those who clearly were cruelly and intentionally shamed by their parent(s), most of us *inferred* from their words and their behavior what kind of a person we were and would become — and for the most part we were dead wrong.

### **Why Our Beliefs Are Almost Always Wrong**

Chapter One in my book, *Radical Forgiveness*, is a true story about how my sister, Jill, came to feel *not enough* by initially inferring from her father that, because he wasn't demonstrative towards her (not bouncing her on his knee, for example), that he did not love her. That was untrue, but that was her perception at the time.

She then extrapolated from that original interpretation of the situation, that if her own father couldn't/wouldn't/didn't love her, then she wasn't enough for him. Therefore, she wouldn't ever be enough for ANY man.

That became her core negative belief. She recreated that story in her life over and over. As her last marriage was about to break up, she was finally able to see how

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her husband was reflecting that belief back to her by treating her as if she was indeed 'not enough.' [To download a shortened version of the complete story, go to [www.radicalforgiveness.com](http://www.radicalforgiveness.com).]

This is typical of how we erroneously infer what kind of a person we are from how people treat us. If we get beaten every day, we conclude that we are deserving of it and must be deeply flawed. We typically carry such a belief to our grave because we fail to see that the man or woman who beat us was deeply wounded and flawed, and that it was not about us. It was about them.

That said, if you feel that you need to do some forgiveness work around your parents for treating you in a bad way and for making you feel less than OK, then by all means use the Radical Forgiveness worksheet for this purpose. You can easily download such a worksheet from the website, [www.radicalforgiveness.com](http://www.radicalforgiveness.com) or do the free online version directly.

### **Step #3: Evaluate the Beliefs**

This step requires some honesty and some courage to face the fact that, while most of the beliefs may well be false, some of what others criticize you for, and even punish you for being, may have an element of truth about them. If that is the case, it is vital that you own them and accept them — even if they are not pretty.

For example, it might be that you were criticized for being lazy, or lacking in ambition, or untidy, or anti-

social, or stingy, or too sensitive, not sporty enough, not smart enough and so on. Maybe you are still being criticized for these things even today.

Well, the fact is, maybe that's just the kind of person you are and were. It's just how you were made.

*(Check back to the list of qualities you recognized as belonging to your Authentic Self and see whether these qualities over which you were shamed were in fact part of your Authentic Self.)*

The important thing to understand, though, is that the problem belongs to the person doing the judging — NOT you. It's not your problem — it's their problem. If they don't like it, you could easily and justifiably tell them to go take a hike!

But in your early years you couldn't say that to your mother or father, older brother or sister, or even your teachers and priests. Besides, you thought they were always right, so you took what they said about you as true and that it was not OK to be the real you.

*Research Exercise #9*

### **True/False Core Negative Beliefs**

Go back over the list of core negative beliefs and select the ones that reflect the underlying judgments made about you by your parents and



### **Step #4: Neutralize the Beliefs**

The only way to neutralize core negative beliefs is to stop giving them energy. One way to do this is to turn it around to where you are able to see what was previously criticized in you in a more positive light.

For example, if you were criticized for being undisciplined, perhaps it could be seen as evidence of your creative mind that likes to think laterally and outside of the box.

By doing this, you take the charge out of the original criticism and thereby neutralize the shame-based belief.

### *Research Exercise #10*

### **Making the Negative Positive**

See which of your core negative beliefs might be recast in a positive light. For each one, attempt a positive interpretation. Here are some examples:

*“I seem untidy because I am not a visual person. I am more kinaesthetic and more tuned in to how I feel. My comfort is what matters to me, not how things look.”*

*“I am not anti-social; I like my own company*

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*and like to choose my company carefully.”*

*“I may look undisciplined and scatty, but in fact that is mistaken for my being creative and able to do lots of things at the same time - it’s multi-tasking and it’s a valuable talent.”*

*“I was told I was a nosey-parker, but I am simply inquisitive and curious about things, which shows a healthy mind.”*

Note the beliefs you feel you could work on recasting in a positive light, either here or in your journal.

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Now, that's the easy part. But suppose what you are being criticized for has no redeeming quality, at least nothing that you can see? Suppose you really are dishonest, mean, or cruel? Could you accept any one of those things about yourself, too? That's more difficult isn't it? Actually it is better left to Step #5, so let's do that.

**Note:** Recasting the negative quality as a positive attribute is not the same thing as making an affirmation. An affirmation is simply a statement, usually in opposition to a negative belief, affirming that you believe the positive, even though you don't. The hope is that if you say it often enough it will override the negative belief. It never does.

Affirmations are very weak because they reside in your conscious mind and are, in effect, just another form of denial. The negative belief that you are trying to eliminate with your affirmation is fully alive in the subconscious mind and is many times more powerful than the affirmation and it never gives way that easily. When the chips are down and the belief gets activated, it will simply brush the affirmation aside.

### **Step #5: Transform the Beliefs**

The only way to fully transform these beliefs is not by trying to eliminate them or modify them, but by accepting them just the way they are. This is not the work of the ego but can only be achieved through the services of that part of our psyche known as our Spiritual Intelligence.

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This is the part of us that knows the truth of who we are, why we have taken on these beliefs and what value they bring to our spiritual growth. It is also the part of us that is connected to Universal Intelligence.

The way we activate our Spiritual Intelligence is by using the worksheets and other tools provided by the Radical Forgiveness technology. In this case, it would be the Radical Self-Acceptance worksheet. It is only by using one of these tools that the transformation can occur. These tools are fully explained in Part Six.

In the meanwhile, to finish this section and to bring it all together, we suggest that you do the following final research exercise.

### *Research Exercise #11*

#### **This is Who I Am**

In your journal or on a separate piece of paper, write a lighthearted but confident description of precisely who you are today, making clear all your attributes — both cool and uncool. You have reclaimed the parts of you that you had previously disowned; accepted the parts of you that you didn't much like and were judged for; retrieved the parts you had given away or traded, and released the parts you had created just to please others. Make it a celebration of your uniqueness and of your new found wholeness.

Make it a statement that says, "Here I am!"

And you might even finish it off with a statement like, "*And if you don't like it, it's your problem.*"

PART FOUR

**THE SELF-FORGIVENESS  
PROCESS**

**8 What I Believe** We have spent the previous hundred pages or so exploring the nature of self and, in particular, how you show up in the world as YOU. The last chapter ended with the invitation that you make a broad proclamation about who you are. Now this chapter invites you to respond to the question, “What do I believe?”

I think this will be helpful because you have probably realized by now that traditional forgiveness and Radical Forgiveness spring from two very different world views. Knowing how your beliefs fit within this discussion will help you to determine whether you are going to stop at traditional self-forgiveness or be willing to push on into Radical Self-Forgiveness and Self-Acceptance.

It is to the latter that the remaining half of this book is devoted, but that doesn't mean that what we have done up to now cannot be used to alleviate any guilt and shame you might have been holding onto. For example, just knowing the difference between appropriate and inappropriate guilt and being aware of the five steps to releasing negative beliefs about yourself will be extremely useful.

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However, I would wish to reassure you that ***the process of Radical Forgiveness does not require that you believe in it.*** This means that you don't have to actually change your world view for it to work. All it requires is your willingness to at least be a tiny bit open to some of the ideas contained in the new paradigm and to see whether or not it works when you use the tools provided. Additionally, it will be interesting to see if your world view changes as a result of doing the work.

The world view that prevails today is based predominantly on a whole set of beliefs formed as a result of our abilities to mediate our experience of the physical world through our five senses and technological extensions of those five senses. We believe what we see, hear, feel, smell and taste.

We refine our beliefs by taking measurements and studying all the phenomena we can and making all sorts of scientific deductions about them and life in general. But we draw the line at the point where objectivity is questioned. Subjective experience — our multisensory awareness of our internal landscape and how that intersects with outer reality — is not given much, if any, consideration.

The other, much older paradigm, which actually runs parallel to, and in many ways includes, the prevailing one, says that there is a lot more to life than our five-sensory reality suggests. We refer to this expanded view of reality as a metaphysical world view.

Generally speaking, this paradigm asks us to look beyond the physical descriptions of reality and to entertain the possibility that reality has a large, unseen spiritual element to it that comes to us in the form of subjective, multisensory experience, and that this element plays a big part in our lives. For some people, this spiritual element is experienced through some form of religion grounded in the idea of there being the one God who gives life to everything.

Christianity has always had its own metaphysical or mystical tradition, especially within the Catholic Church. Jesus was very metaphysical in his teachings. The Kabbalah provides the mystical underpinning of Judaism and the religions of the East have always been very metaphysical in their outlook.

For others of a more secular/spiritual viewpoint, it is experienced as some mysterious power or intelligence that, while it includes us, is greater than our individual selves. Many Europeans, having largely given up on organized religion, are of this mind.

Nevertheless, people of this persuasion and those who see it as God would hold that this spiritual element intervenes in their lives in dramatic ways and cannot be dismissed as mere superstition. The word I prefer to describe that intervention is 'grace,' and as an example of how grace works in our lives there is none better than Radical Forgiveness.

Ann Lamont, in her wonderful book *Grace (Eventually)*, says that there are only two prayers — “help” and “thank you.” Radical Forgiveness is a form of secular

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prayer in which we are simply asking for help in seeing the Divine perfection in the situation and expressing our gratitude for that gift and for the intervention that always seems to follow.

## Research Exercise #12

### **What I Believe**

Take a look at the following world views and give each one a rating between 0 and 100 (a percentage) according to how closely it accords with your own. You will probably find that you identify with elements from more than one, so it would be an interesting exercise to write a composite one, using elements from each, that more accurately describes your own personal world view.

I should stress that none of these are any better than any other, nor is any one of them an impediment to having success with Radical Self-Forgiveness or Radical Self-Acceptance. It is simply offered as another way to learn about your own SELF, in the interest of self-knowledge.

On the other hand, it might show you where you might find some resistance to the ideas that are in the following sections of the book. If you do, simply ignore the ideas that don't fit your paradigm and use the technology anyway, with as much skepticism as you wish. The important

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thing is not to let your ideas get in the way of trying it out to see if it works. It always does.

**Paradigm #1:**

*“ I take a rather scientific/secular/rational view of life. I think that human beings are simply part of the evolutionary spiral and that like every other animal on the planet, we are born; we live; and then we die. Yes, there’s a lot more to it than that, but that’s more or less it in a nutshell. I am not a strong believer in a deity (God), though I wouldn’t go so far as to call myself an atheist. I am not inclined to think there is a reality beyond what I register with my five senses. If there is, I have no real idea what that might be like. I am certainly not in touch with it and wouldn’t know how to talk about it. Until now, forgiveness to me has meant making a conscious decision to let bygones be bygones.”*

0%

**Paradigm #2:**

*“My spirituality and my world view come directly from my religious beliefs. I tend to see the world in terms of a continual struggle between good and evil. I believe that evil does exist and it is my job to stay vigilant and defend against the ever present danger of evil (Satan) coming into my life. God made this world and He made me as well. He remains in heaven but is always watching and judging me harshly for having committed the original sin. When I die, I hope*

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*He will judge me kindly, though, and I will go to heaven. If I don't live a good life I will go to hell. I believe in being kind to others but I believe forgiveness is not ours to bestow. All we can do is ask God (or*

*%) to do it on our behalf. So, in my opinion, forgiveness is prayer and ultimately, should the prayer by answered, it is pure Grace."*

### **Paradigm #3**

*"I am somewhat open to spiritual ideas and find them intellectually interesting, but I wouldn't necessarily call myself a very spiritual person. I am somewhat open to the idea that we come in to learn certain lessons and I do try to interpret life this way, but I don't find it easy in practice. Even though I am quick to blame and see fault in others, I try to entertain the possibility that the person I am upset with is there to teach me something. I know I shouldn't try to figure out what the lesson is, but I am an intellectual person and love to know the how and why of things. I also get it at the intellectual level that the person is providing an opportunity to learn and grow, but I find it hard to really integrate that into my being. So I always struggle with that in real life. Again, I understand at the intellectual level that true forgiveness comes when we realize that everything happens for a reason, but in everyday life find it difficult to put into practice."*

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**Paradigm #4:**

*"I see life as a mystery, not so much to be understood and figured out, but to be experienced as fully as possible. I think the most spiritual people are the ones who exhibit the most humanness. I*

*am very open to the idea that there is more than one reality. There is at least this physical reality that we inhabit bodily every day, but I am also very open to the idea that there is another reality that we cannot see which we might call the spiritual reality. I don't think anyone really knows what that reality is, but when I open my eyes fully and feel into my gut, I sense evidence enough that such a reality exists. And I am comfortable with that. I have my own way of connecting with that reality and expressing my spirituality (e.g. organized religion, being a member of like-minded groups, meditation, retreats, healing, praying, chanting, etc.) and I am happy with this. Forgiveness to me is done by extending compassion to the other person and seeing him or her as an imperfect human being just like me and everyone else."*

**Paradigm #5:**

*"I am a spiritual being having a human experience. By that I mean that I have chosen to come to planet Earth in order to learn lessons and evolve spiritually. This is the school and life*

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*is the curriculum. What happens during my life are my lessons. I have come into the life experience with the desire to fully grasp what oneness is by experiencing the opposite of it — separation. I had made agreements with souls prior to my incarnation that they would do things not so much to me, though it will feel that way while I am in a body, but FOR me. I also enroll others while I'm*

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*here to give me opportunities to learn. They look like my enemies, but I see them as my healing angels. That's how we see forgiveness — that everything that happens invariably occurs for a spiritual purpose and that, while we remain accountable for what we do in the human world, in purely spiritual terms nothing wrong ever happens.”*

**Paradigm #6:** *“I am totally into metaphysics and I see myself as a very spiritual person. One of the ways I see our life on this planet is being on the wheel of Karma, reincarnating over and over, lifetime after lifetime, learning lessons, balancing energies and evolving spiritually until one reaches completion. I am in touch with the spiritual realm and receive guidance from that side of the veil. I have several spirit guides and I talk with angels a lot. I believe that we human beings are all part of the Godhead, our purpose for our life being to assist God in expanding His/ Her consciousness and eventually to co-create Heaven on Earth. As far as forgiveness is concerned, I am certain in my own mind that everything is in perfect Divine order and that there is nothing to forgive. Forgiveness therefore is moot.”*

Now write your own personal world view in your journal to complete this exercise.

**9 The Five Stages** In Chapter 3, I very briefly outlined the features and assumptions of Radical Forgiveness and mentioned that the process itself comprised five stages. Every one of the tools that this technology provides guides a person through these five stages. They are the same for both forgiving others and forgiving self. Let's now examine them in more detail.

**Stage #1. *Telling the Story***

Whether we are a victim or a perpetrator, we will have a story about what happened. All of the pain and suffering will be contained in the story, so having that story heard, witnessed and validated is the first step in creating the space for the forgiveness or the self-forgiveness to occur. *(From this point on, for the sake of clarity, I will refer only to how this process works for self-forgiveness.)*

When telling the story, even if you are telling it to yourself, as in doing a worksheet or the 3-Letter process, *(See Part Six)*, it is important at this point not to overlay the victim/perpetrator story with any spiritual interpretations. You must pretend to know nothing at all about

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Radical Forgiveness at this stage. Nor should you make excuses for yourself or attempt to explain the situation in ways that would tend to justify your actions. You don't even try to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate guilt at this point. All of those things come in later stages.

It is during this stage that you give your Judging Self full reign to rant and rave against you for what it thinks you have done wrong. This is the Judging Self's great moment, so let him/her have it. It needs to be heard and validated, loved and accepted just like any other part of you.

**Stage #2. *Feeling the Feelings***

Every perpetrator story has a bundle of emotion attached to it. Yes, guilt and shame will be the primary feelings, but anger, fear, regret, remorse and a whole lot more emotions like those will be right up there with the guilt and shame. Whatever they are, the important thing is to feel them fully. You cannot heal what you don't feel.

The definition of an emotion is "*a thought attached to a feeling.*" But the pair bond between the thought and the feeling is very tight. You cannot break that bond simply by trying to change the thought alone as in 'talk therapy.'

The feeling component is the part that forms the bond, not the thought. Before it will release the thought and before an alternative thought can be emotionally accepted in its place, the feeling has to be re-experienced. It need not be experienced with the same intensity as originally felt, but it must at least be touched into.

It helps to realize too, that there is no such thing as a negative feeling. Feelings such as guilt, shame, fear, anger, sadness or grief are not negative. They are simply normal human emotions we all feel from time to time to varying degrees.

Labeling them as negative results in us struggling against them, trying to 'think positive,' or denying them. This only leads us to suppress, repress and project them onto others, onto our own bodies, or onto situations. Resistance to any of our human emotions creates serious internal stress and ultimately causes disease.

Another way to resist feelings is to do the **spiritual bypass**. Many people, especially those who think of themselves as spiritual, think that feelings are to be *given over* to Spirit, or meditated away, rather than felt. It also has to be said that many people in the helping professions are also by-passers, addicted to helping others while not dealing with their own pain and avoiding their own feelings.

Having been blessed with the capability to feel our emotions, it is natural that we should want the full experience of them. This means feeling them — not talking about them, analyzing them or labeling them.

When we do not allow ourselves to experience the full range of emotions and suppress them instead, our souls create situations in which we literally are forced to feel them. (Haven't you noticed that people are often given opportunities to feel intense emotions

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just after having prayed for spiritual growth?)

This means that the whole point of creating an upset may simply lie in our soul's desire to provide an opportunity for us to feel emotion. That being the case, simply allowing ourselves to have the feeling might allow the energy to move through us and the so-called problem to disappear immediately. This often happens.

However, not all situations are dissolved that easily. When we have committed a crime regarded as unforgivable, such as sexual abuse, rape, theft, murder, etc., it takes more than just experiencing our emotions to get to the point where we can truly forgive ourselves, radically or otherwise.

**Stage #3: *Collapsing the Story***

Completing this step represents the end of the line as far as traditional forgiveness is concerned. This is because traditional forgiveness makes its appeal to the Human Self and so the process must end at this point. There's no where else to go (Since Radical Self Forgiveness makes its appeal to the I AM Self, it can go further as in Step 4.)

It is in this third step that we ask the Judging Self to give way to the Self-Loving Self. We need it to bring some heart-centered energy to the situation. It's the Self-Loving Self's job at this stage to say to the Judging Self:

*"Yes, but . . . have some compassion for me and try to understand why I did what I did. Yes, I am a flawed human being and I did something wrong, but if those*

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*who are judging me could imagine what it might have been like for them, had they been walking in my shoes at that time, under the same bad conditions and with all the emotional baggage I was carrying, they might not be so judgmental. So, Mr. Judging Self and all those others out there who are criticizing me, do cut me some slack here, please. If you cannot, at least try to imagine me as I once was when I was a tiny baby — innocent, unspoiled, whole, loving and trusting of those around me; a beautiful child of God.”*

Opening our hearts to ourselves in this way and asking others to do the same, helps us to see ourselves as human beings with all our frailties and imperfections and to become open to the possibility of being loved as we are. This is going to help us a great deal, too, in the Radical Self-Acceptance aspect, since this is what is meant by that term — loving ourselves exactly the way we are.

Bringing compassion and empathy to a situation that needs forgiveness also has the effect of reducing the intensity of the other feelings that we have had about our ‘crime,’ such as anger, self-recrimination, shame and so on. It won’t do much about the guilt though, since this is directly related to what we did rather than how we interpreted it.

However, this is also the step where we bring our rational minds to bear on the situation and ask ourselves some straightforward questions, like whether we are entitled to feel guilty. In other words, is our guilt and remorse appropriate or inappropriate? (See Chapter 6.)

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If we find it to be totally inappropriate, then there is nothing more we need to do. Even if we do indeed find that the guilt was appropriate, all we can do from a traditional forgiveness standpoint is exercise our compassion and understanding, make a rational assessment of the situation and then make the decision to forgive ourselves. But that's easier said than done, and unfortunately traditional forgiveness offers little that would help us make such a decision. On the other hand, Radical Self-Forgiveness provides a way that is simple, quick and easy.

**Stage #4: *Reframing the Story***

This step is the Radical Self-Forgiveness step and is the one that takes us beyond traditional forgiveness. That's because it asks us to let go of the idea that something wrong happened.

Remember, the prevailing world view that we all largely subscribe to is still largely that which is anchored in victim consciousness. This paradigm says that life is a game of chance and a matter of fighting for survival in a dog-eat-dog world. That's the context in which we normally place our perpetrator story and it seems self-evidently true. However, this fourth step invites us to consider putting our perpetrator story into a radically different context.

We might illustrate this by referencing the paradigms listed in the previous chapter and picking out the ones which most accurately reflect the different contexts.

For instance, we might say that Paradigm #1 (with some of #2 thrown in for good measure to replace the sentence about not believing in God), represents the prevailing world view, while Paradigm #5 (with some of #3 added for those still skeptical), represents the metaphysical world view that would support a Radical Self-Forgiveness perspective. Let's see how this would work.

**Paradigm #1:**

*"I take a rather scientific/secular/rational view of life. I think that human beings are simply part of the evolutionary spiral and that, like every other animal on the planet, we are born, we live, and then we die. Yes, there's a lot more to it than that, but that's more or less it in a nutshell. I am not a strong believer in a deity (God), though I wouldn't go so far as to call myself an atheist. I am not inclined to think there is a reality beyond what I register with my five senses. If there is, I have no real idea what that might be like. I am certainly not in touch with it and wouldn't know how to talk about it. Until now, forgiveness to me has meant making a conscious decision to let bygones be bygones."*

**Paradigm #5:**

*"I am a spiritual being having a human experience. By that I mean that I have chosen to come to planet Earth in order to learn lessons and evolve spiritually. This is the school and life is the curriculum. What happens during my life are my lessons. I have come into the life experience with the desire to fully grasp what*

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*is the curriculum. What happens during my life are my lessons. I have come into the life experience with the desire to fully grasp what oneness is by experiencing the opposite of it — separation. I had made agreements with souls prior to my incarnation that they would do things not so much to me, though it will feel that way while I am in a body, but FOR me. I also enroll others while I'm*

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*here to give me opportunities to learn. They look like my enemies, but I see them as my healing angels. That's how we see forgiveness — that everything that happens invariably occurs for a spiritual purpose and that, while we remain accountable for what we do in the human world, in purely spiritual terms nothing wrong ever happens.”*

**Paradigm #6:** *“I am totally into metaphysics and I see myself as a very spiritual person. One of the ways I see our life on this planet is being on the wheel of Karma, reincarnating over and over, lifetime after lifetime, learning lessons, balancing energies and evolving spiritually until one reaches completion. I am in touch with the spiritual realm and receive guidance from that side of the veil. I have several spirit guides and I talk with angels a lot. I believe that we human beings are all part of the Godhead, our purpose for our life being to assist God in expanding His/ Her consciousness and eventually to co-create Heaven on Earth. As far as forgiveness is concerned, I am certain in my own mind that everything is in perfect Divine order and that there is nothing to forgive. Forgiveness therefore is moot.”*

Now write your own personal world view in your journal to complete this exercise.

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times are called upon to play the role of perpetrator in order to be of service to others. They need to realize that for every victim, there must be a victimizer.

The reframe can be shown diagrammatically whereby we first show the story 'framed' by all the thoughts, ideas and beliefs contained in Paradigm #1. This represents our normal way of looking at how things happen.

Then we show the story again but this time framed by Paradigm #5. The story itself is not changed.

So what has changed is the meaning and the context of the story, not the story itself. That puts an entirely different light on it and enables us to move beyond merely letting bygones be bygones to allowing that it is possible that nothing wrong happened and there is nothing to forgive.

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Now, it's one thing to get this intellectually; it is quite another to get it deep down in your body, especially if you have a really big perpetrator story to tell. In Part Six you will have the tools that will help you actually make this reframe for yourself, but even so, I want you to get the idea of Radical Forgiveness reframe fully anchored into your body. The best way I know to do this to do this is not to keep hitting you over the head with the concepts but to do it through the power of story.

I have written a fictional story to serve this purpose and it follows in Part Five. I think by the time you have finished reading it, you will have really realized that there are no mistakes and no accidents.

**Step #5: *Integration***

For as long as you have had your victim/perpetrator story it has been alive in every cell of your body. The objective here in this step, then, is to replace the old story with the new (Radical Self-Forgiveness) story, so it gets fully anchored in your body in place of the old one.

That means doing something of a physical nature during the Radical Self-Forgiveness process, so that the body registers the transformation as well as the mind. In some cases it involves doing breathwork, in others it is walking across a circle, in others it is writing, and in all cases it is in using the voice. I will have more to say specifically on each of these when discussing the tools in Part Six.

In the meantime, enjoy the story.

PART FIVE

**SUSAN'S STORY**

## **Susan's Story**

Nothing focuses the mind more than the prospect of imminent death. Susan Phillips lay on her hard bed in the special cell she had been moved to the day before, close to where she was to die by lethal injection the next day. She was to be executed for the cold-blooded murder of her husband, Dan, thirteen years previously. She was acting cool, but her insides were shaking. She was terrified.

It had taken ten long years to go through all the appeals procedures that were her due, but there had never been any doubt about her guilt. She had pled "not guilty by reason of insanity" but her case simply didn't hold water. The jury convicted her unanimously after just four hours of deliberations. She was sentenced to death for first degree murder of her husband.

A woman of slight build, medium height with dark brown hair and eyes to match, showed no emotion at being sentenced to death. She had simply stared ahead, as poised and controlled as she had been all the way through the proceedings. She had the ability to shut off her feelings almost entirely.

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Though she realized that she would probably be executed, there had been a slight glimmer of hope that she might escape this fate by virtue of the fact that a man with whom she had an affair many years ago, when both of them were married, had since become a prominent politician in the state legislature.

For the longest time, he had nurtured an abiding ambition to become Governor and in that ambition lay Susan's only hope. She felt that if he were to become Governor he would have the power to pardon her or at the very least to grant clemency and save her life. Consequently, she was just as much invested in him achieving his goal as he was - perhaps even more so since her life literally depended on it. She fantasized about it every hour of every day; how he would campaign vigorously and eventually win the governorship and then hand down a pardon.

To Susan's great delight he pulled it off and became Governor. She entered her plea through the proper channels and waited. The plea was rejected as were subsequent pleas for clemency. All hope faded. That was three years ago. Since that time, she had been without hope at all and was resigned to her fate. She knew the appeals process was just a formality and that she was doomed.

Many times, as the days went by and the disappointment settled in as a permanent state of mind, Susan had contemplated exposing him. She would write to the press and tell all. But she had thought better of it. All it would do would ruin his life and that of his family but do nothing to save hers, so what would be the

point? It had been a very well kept secret so no one knew about it.

Nothing would be gained by opening that wound. And the last thing he would do after that would be to pardon her.

The Governor never did know how close she came to taking him down. She had given it very serious consideration. And he was lucky, for as later events were to prove, she was quite capable of taking revenge if she felt so inclined.

She had later considered sending him a private letter threatening the exposure in the hope that it would force him to give her a pardon, but she knew it was hopeless. Every bit of mail she either received or sent was opened and scrutinized by the authorities, so what chance would a blackmail letter from an inmate on Death Row to the Governor of the State have of getting through? None whatsoever. And she had no one who could smuggle it out and deliver it.

Susan hadn't had a visit from anyone in the last five years. She had had a few visitations from some of her old friends right at the beginning but they soon fell away.

Had there been doubt about her guilt or innocence and had she held out that she was innocent, it might have been different. Friends might have taken up her cause. But since it was quite clear that she had murdered Dan in cold blood, they had little reason or desire to associate with her - especially with her being on Death Row.

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Susan's brother, Bob, had kept up his visits for a lot longer but even he had stopped coming. Both parents were dead and he was her only relative. He would be present at the execution.

Even though she wasn't close to him, it hurt her that he hadn't bothered to come to see her and talk to her one last time before her execution. It hadn't occurred to her that it would be just too painful for him. She was, after all, his sister. What could he say?

The last time he had visited her, it had been a very tense and awkward meeting. Neither of them knew what to say. She was wallowing in shame but trying to cover it up by being hardnosed and aggressive while he just basically sat there not knowing what he was feeling. It was probably a mixture of anger, regret, sadness and embarrassment but little of it came to the surface. He said very little. There was not much he could say.

The murder had impacted Bob's life to a very significant degree. First of all, Dan was his best friend. For him the murder was a double whammy. Not only did his own sister murder someone, she actually killed his best friend. It was more than he could bear.

Whereas Dan was tall, blonde and athletic, Bob was the opposite. His hair was dark brown like his sister's and he was short and round in stature, with small weasel like eyes.

He and Dan had met at med school and each one considered the other a best friend. Bob had introduced

Dan to Susan, his younger sister, just after they had graduated.

They had intended to start a medical practice together in their home town, but that didn't happen. While Dan did join an existing practice in the town, Bob got married and moved to another state with his new bride. Even so, he and Dan kept in touch and continued their deep friendship in spite of the distance.

But once the murder occurred, the distance didn't insulate him from the inevitable publicity and, of course, it hurt his practice badly. He lived in a small town and everyone gossiped about the case and all sorts of hurtful things were said that were untrue.

His marriage did not survive it either. Not only did he lose the love of his life but his two children too. He became very bitter towards Susan and only visited her out of a sense of obligation. He knew that their parents would expect it of him, even though the murder and the subsequent court case had broken their hearts and, in effect, had killed them.

Outwardly at least, it seemed that Susan's mother took it the worst. She was the first to go. She developed breast cancer and died, aged 65, soon after Susan was sentenced to death. She could never get beyond the denial stage, always refusing to believe that her little Susan could kill someone, especially Dan, her own son-in-law whom she adored. Her father died two years after his wife, not lasting but 10 days after suffering a stroke at age 69. He never regained consciousness.

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At the beginning, Susan's father had seemed on the face of it to be little affected. He probably had to hold it together for his wife who vacillated between hysterical outbursts and periods of total denial. But inside he was hurting badly because as far as he was concerned Susan was his little girl, even if she was in her late forties.

He knew that she had committed the murder and, in his heart, the only way he could survive that was to cut himself off from her, and everyone else, and to refuse to talk about it. He did that well.

He was a very prominent man in the town and well thought of. He was the founding partner of the largest and most prestigious law firm in the area and everyone revered him. He was on the town council and a deacon at the local Methodist church and was very much involved in the social life of the community. He sent his son Bob to med school and his daughter Susan to law school and was extremely proud of them both.

He always talked about them to his friends and colleagues in glowing terms. As far as he was concerned, both married extremely nice people with good families and had good careers going for them. This was exactly how he had always dreamed life would be for him and his family in his later years. Susan was to destroy that dream.

After the sentencing of his daughter, he was in a daze most of the time and lost in his own world. He stopped working altogether. It crippled him emotionally and then

when his wife died soon after, it was too much for him. He went into a very deep depression from which he never recovered.

Susan lay there thinking of all this, running it through her mind. She was well aware that what she had done had effectively killed her parents and ruined her brother's life and she had lived with that guilt for the entire ten years she had been confined to her cell on Death Row. But today, it was more intense than ever and virtually palpable.

It hung over her like a dark ominous cloud and enveloped her totally whenever she closed her eyes, almost choking her. Tomorrow she would pay with her life for all that she had done to hurt those that she loved. In spite of the terror she was feeling about what she was about to face, there was a part of her that felt good about paying the ultimate price for what she had done to hurt them. At least she would be free of the guilt and shame — maybe.

But what if she would be taking it with her to the other side, she thought. "Oh, please God no, that would be awful. That would be my definition of Hell."

The fear gripped her gut even more fiercely than before and she could hardly control her trembling. It was not so much on the outside, though her hands were shaking, but it was her insides that were like Jell-O. It was as if every organ in her body was trembling uncontrollably.

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Susan was 25 when Bob had introduced her to Dan. He was handsome, tall and athletic with a seemingly uncontrollable shock of blonde hair. His blue eyes sparkled with life and he exuded a quiet and gentle confidence in how he handled himself in the company of others. He was a really nice man.

Eventually she fell for him and married him in July of her 28th year. He joined a local medical practice and she, having graduated from law school, joined her father's law firm specializing, ironically in family law.

It was a seemingly ideal marriage, with both people bringing in a lot of income, which soon materialized outwardly as a big expensive house in its own grounds in the best part of town and a couple of high quality, European cars parked outside. They started a family after three years of being married. Susan gave birth to two boys, just two years apart. The eldest was named Jay, and the other Chris.

When their father was murdered, the two of them were taken away by Child and Family Services but Dan's parents were given custody of them soon after. Later, they formally adopted them.

They were eleven and nine respectively at that time, totally confused and crushed by the turn of events, which they were unable to understand. They were devastated to lose not only their father but also their mother.

Now, as young adults, they would be coming to the prison to see their mother die. Would she even recognize them after all these years? She could only remember them as young kids. They had not been allowed to see her since the day she took up residence on Death Row. How would she feel? What did they think of her? Would they ever be able to understand why she took their father's life?

The marriage had become routine and dull. Dan was addicted to his work and spent little time at home. When he was there, he had little to say to Susan of any consequence and she didn't offer much by way of compensation in order to keep the relationship lively. He would be into his medical journals and she into whatever was interesting in the moment.

She wasn't a bad attorney but her heart wasn't in it. She didn't bring it home like those more ambitious than her were prone to do. She did the minimum. She was bored with her work and her marriage.

Such circumstances made it possible, even likely, that Susan would look outside her marriage for stimulation. She found it in Tom, the married politician who was later to become Governor, as previously mentioned. This didn't last more than a few months and no one found out about it. It just petered out with no harm done.

But not so with Jerry. He was to set her on fire and on a course towards self-destruction. Jerry was a computer technician. He came to the house to fix Susan's computer and to set up a network in her home office. This necessitated him being there for several hours for

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a couple of days; enough time for the chemistry that was instantly felt by both he and Susan within moments of him coming to the door, to become physically expressed. They were in bed together on the second day.

Jerry was single, free and a lot younger than Susan. With his dark brown hair cut very short and a pale complexion he wasn't particularly good looking, but he had an energy that was irresistible to her. He was a free spirit and beholden to no one. Sexually, he was everything she had every dreamed of and had never experienced with Dan.

But what started out as a torrid sexual adventure turned into something much more intense. Jerry became totally consumed by Susan and in the coming weeks would not leave her alone. He was there at every opportunity.

Susan very much enjoyed the attention and the sex but was getting worried that they would get caught if they continued seeing each other so often, especially at her own house. She tried to put a stop to it but neither she nor Jerry could bear not seeing each other. It had turned into a powerful love affair had a momentum of its own.

Jerry pleaded with her to come away with him, divorce Dan and marry him. To Susan it sounded like paradise even if it meant losing her kids. She knew Dan would take care of them along with his parents, so the kids wouldn't suffer that much. But there was one big snag, and that was money.

Even though she was basically out of her mind in that her feelings for Jerry were making her think irrationally, she could see that Jerry was never going to amount to much financially and that she would be the one who would have to put bread on the table. She wasn't a good enough attorney to make the kind of money that would support the lifestyle to which she had become accustomed and she was not ready to give that up.

Susan and Jerry had countless arguments about the money issue and it was clearly the one sticking point. It was getting in the way of their blissful happiness - that was how she saw it. Poverty and happiness didn't go together in her mind. Even if she divorced Dan and got half of the assets, the house was mortgaged to the hilt so there was very little equity in it. She wouldn't come out with very much, certainly not enough to sustain her in her relatively extravagant lifestyle.

Slowly an idea formed in her mind. There was a way out. Dan had a life insurance policy that was worth in the region of five million dollars. If he were to die, she would inherit the five million and the rest of the estate. Now that would make it work, she thought.

She caught herself thinking this way and it scared her. She tried to put it out of her mind, but every time it re-entered she would find a way to justify it. In time, it began to seem the right thing to do. Once that decision was made, the only question left was, how could she make it happen?

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It was a measure of how irrational this whole affair had made her that she could even think this way. Even more so, that she made herself believe that she could get away with making it happen.

But this is exactly how she now thought about it, putting out of her mind that it was a completely immoral thing to do. To her, at that time, it was simply a matter of being pragmatic. It would solve her problem and she would be with her beloved Jerry. The two boys would go with Dan's parents. They would do a much better job of raising them anyway, she thought. Susan never did think of herself as much of a mother.

She did not talk to Jerry about her plan. He would have opposed it immediately, of course. He didn't care much about money and certainly wouldn't risk killing someone to get it. In that way he was totally opposite to Susan, but he was so much in love with her that he didn't notice how important it was to her. He certainly didn't know that she was plotting to kill for it.

She scoured the internet, looking for information on poisons that would leave no trace and that would mimic some condition known to medical science sufficient to satisfy a coroner as to the cause of death. Something a doctor might be regularly exposed to, perhaps.

It was amazing to her how much information there was out there, online, freely available, telling how to cause the death of another person without arousing too much suspicion.

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According to the instructions, Susan had put the poison in Dan's food slowly over a period of two weeks. As it had begun to take effect, Dan had become progressively sick, and even as a doctor he couldn't understand why. But having a big professional ego he didn't want to consult another doctor, so he treated himself for what he thought it might be. He was, of course, mistaken. He died within three weeks of Susan administering the first dose.

Though heart failure was officially given as the cause of death, the police were extremely suspicious and they began an investigation. The insurance company also insisted on there being an inquiry into the sudden death of an otherwise healthy man with a policy worth five million dollars.

As an attorney and an intelligent woman, she must have known that she would be the primary suspect, especially since she had so much to gain financially. But somehow she had blinded herself to all that she knew about the law and how it worked. She was in a state of total denial.

Dan and Susan had put on a good front as far as their marriage was concerned so there were few in the community that were ready to say that they had noticed problems between them. Most people thought of them as the model couple and the ideal family. It seemed inconceivable to all that she would want to kill him. But who else would have a motive?

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Suspecting poisoning, the police took away all her kitchen utensils and the contents of her food cupboards and refrigerator but they didn't find anything. She did have the good sense to make sure that she had sterilized everything that had contained the poison and disposed of anything that might have suggested a trace of the terrible stuff.

She had also done her homework well on the internet because, as promised, the poison did not show up in Dan's body during the autopsy. Heart failure seemed to be the legitimate cause of death.

But by now the media had gotten hold of the story and they began the usual 'trial by media.' She was described as "a person of interest" the police wish to talk to, and they kept up the heat. It was they who discovered Susan's liaison with Jerry which, combined with a five million dollar payout on the victim's life, added a lot more juice to the story.

The suspicion that Susan had killed him for his money became so intense that Jerry became extremely worried and demanded that Susan tell him what was going on.

"I did it for us," Susan admitted.

"What did you do?" screamed Jerry.

"Dan wasn't happy and we are. Now we can be together forever."

"What are you talking about?" demanded Jerry.

"It was the only way," replied Susan softly.

"You killed him? Are you out of your mind?"

"It's OK, they won't know. It will blow over. There's no proof. The press will go away soon. I love you Jerry."

"This is crazy!" Jerry spat. "I gotta get out of here!"

"No! Please don't go. It's gonna be OK. Don't leave me alone, Jerry. We have to be together."

Jerry was now clearly in a panic and way beyond being persuaded. All he could see was the possibility of his precious freedom being taken away from him and he could not bear to contemplate that. Even though he was in a very agitated state of mind, he was clear enough to know that he could easily be implicated in the murder and he wanted no part of it. He loved Susan, but not enough to become embroiled in a murder case and be charged as an accessory to the fact. He left hurriedly, making it crystal clear that he was never going to be coming back.

Susan was devastated, of course, but whereas she had been amazingly rational about plotting Dan's demise, and carried it out with hardly any feeling, it was quite the opposite with Jerry. She was full of rage and fury about his abandoning her and the more she thought about it the more she became bent on getting her revenge.

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The way she saw it, he had pursued her relentlessly, even stalked her, and in the end she had risked everything for him, certain of his love. In return he had betrayed her and left her to face the situation all alone just so he could save his own sorry ass. She would make him pay!

Even though she still felt confident that she was going to get away with it, she made up her mind that if she was caught and convicted she would make sure that he didn't stay free for long. "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned," Shakespeare had warned us many centuries before. She would tell the authorities that he was part of it, knew about the plan all along and had supported it.

Susan had covered her tracks well as far as the act of poisoning was concerned and it began to look as though she was going to get away with it. She'd find another way to get even with Jerry, even so. Her love had turned to intense hate.

But, not being a computer expert, she hadn't counted on what might still be on her hard drive as a result of all her research. Even when the police took her computer away, she felt she was covered because she had been careful to delete everything — she thought. But, when the forensic experts examined the hard drive, they found everything that she had ever downloaded from the internet still on it and were able to retrieve it. They soon had the evidence they needed to charge her with first degree murder.

When her case came to court, she tried to implicate Jerry right from the beginning by entering a plea of guilty

by reason of insanity, saying that he had poisoned her mind and brainwashed her into doing it so he would have the money. The jury didn't buy it, but they did buy her false testimony that he knew about it and encouraged her. He got 25 years. She got her revenge.

Jerry lay on his bunk, smoking a cigarette and thinking about Susan. She was going to be executed tomorrow, he thought to himself. Finally that day had come after so many years of anticipation.

Part of him had been wishing her dead since the day he had been incarcerated. The bitterness he had felt at how she had perjured herself in order to frame him had eaten away at him at least for the first few years behind bars. He knew she was a hard-bitten, ruthless woman, but there was still a part of him that loved her.

In recent years, he had even managed to find some compassion for her and was able to comprehend that she was truly not of sound mind when she murdered Dan and in a desperate frame of mind when she testified falsely against him. It was the beginnings of forgiveness within him. But for all that, the loss of his liberty through her betrayal was a very high price to pay and right now he was feeling good that she was about to pay for her crimes with her life.

The execution would mark some kind of ending point. Now it simply would be about him serving his term and getting out. It wouldn't be about her any more. He would be free. She would be dead — in more ways than one.

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He lay there wondering how she might be feeling. Was she scared out of her wits or simply resigned to her fate. Was she remorseful? Was she praying? Did she even believe in God now? She wasn't very religious back then, but it's amazing how people find God when they are about to die, so she might have.

The fact was that Susan was not praying. She didn't know how to pray. She was wishing she did believe in God because she was absolutely terrified and was becoming more so by the minute.

She would have loved to have had something to hang onto and pray to. She had never felt more alone and scared in her life. One more dreadful night to endure, probably sleepless and then — the unthinkable.

Just a few more hours to feel the guilt, the remorse and the regret for killing Dan. She still could not understand how she could even have contemplated doing it. Yes, she was bored, and she wanted Jerry so bad, but Dan was such a nice guy. He didn't deserve to die. And the children didn't deserve to lose their Daddy. "I'm so sorry," she whimpered repeatedly to herself. "I'm so sorry."

As she lay there in the dark going over and over what she had done, she wondered about Jerry. She could imagine him caged. How he would hate it. His freedom meant so much to him. Her heart ached as she thought about how it was she who had put him there. What a hard-hearted bitch I was to do that, she said to herself.

Just as Jerry had begun the process of forgiving her, unbeknownst to her, of course, Susan's hatred for Jerry had abated over the years, too. The love had partially returned and her heart had softened towards him.

She wondered whether he knew she was about to be executed. He probably did. It was in all the papers. Somebody would have told him. Her letter would get to him after she was dead, though, and that's how she had planned it.

*Dear Jerry,*

*By the time you get this, I will be no more. I deserve to die for what I did to Dan and my kids. I am an awful human being and the world is better off without me.*

*I am sorry too for what I did to you and I beg for your forgiveness even though I know I don't deserve it. It was a terrible thing to do to you, but I was hurting so bad and feeling so desperate. I doubt whether you will ever understand.*

*I still love you deeply, Jerry, and have spent all the years here on death row thinking of what might have been. In my dreams we have made love many times, just like old times.*

*Soon you will be free again. Will you remember me, I wonder or will I be blocked out of your mind forever?*

*I am petrified of what is to come, Jerry. I am so alone. The only thing that is sustaining me in these*

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*final hours are my memories of being with you.  
Please don't forget me. I love you.*

*Susan*

Mercifully, in spite of everything that she was feeling, sleep was beginning to overtake her. Her eyes were becoming heavy and her breathing was slowing and becoming more rhythmic. She was drifting into la-la land.

Suddenly, she became aware of an intense light emanating from somewhere above her, as if it was coming from the inside left corner of the cramped cell that had been her home for more than ten years. The light got brighter and very soon became intense.

She didn't know whether she was asleep or not, or whether she was imagining it. It was as if she were having a lucid dream — aware that she was both still asleep and dreaming at the same time.

Even though her eyes stayed closed, she did a reality check and realized that she was still lying on her bed in her cell, remembering that tomorrow she was going to die. This was no alternate reality — it was the same reality she had been living for 10 years.

But the light was something else altogether. This was something she had certainly never experienced before. But what was even more extraordinary was that all her fear and terror had disappeared. All she could feel was a profound sense of peace. It enveloped her like a

down quilt settling around her. It was extremely comforting to her and she felt a cozy warmth suffusing her entire body.

The light shone right through her eyelids, so it was not necessary for her to open her eyes. But was she still dreaming? She wasn't sure. She felt no need whatsoever to open her eyes and that in itself was strange. A few moments passed and then gradually a form took shape within the light. It had a vaguely human form but the light being so bright, she could make out no features or edges to the form. But what she could feel was a deep and overwhelming feeling of unconditional love emanating from this being.

When it spoke to her, it was as if the voice was in her head, and yet it seemed entirely real and undoubtedly coming from the being telepathically.

"Hello Susan. I'm here to help you make your journey to the other side and to ease the way for you."

The voice was smooth and soft, yet to her ear it sounded more male than female.

"Who are you? What are you?" whispered Susan. "Am I just dreaming this or are you real?"

"I've come to you in your dream state but I am real enough," replied the Being. "Had I come while you were in your full waking state, fear would have arisen within you and you would not have allowed yourself to become aware of my presence. That wouldn't have mattered, of course, since we angels do our work unseen most of

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the time, but in your case we wanted to become manifest to you.”

“We? There’s only one of you,” said Susan who, while in prison, had become used to suspecting everything that was said to her and always looking for clues that might indicate a set-up of some kind. She trusted no one.

“I appear as one individual to you right now, but in truth we are a collective. In this form I am representing many souls and many angels, especially the ones who have been working with you.”

“Why are you here?” asked Susan still basking in the warm love that was filling the cell. For ten years she had known nothing but cold temperatures and hard unyielding surfaces. This was like being in heaven to her.

“We see the guilt and pain that you are in as you prepare to make your transition to the other side,” the Being explained. “We wish to alleviate that pain for you.

“Also, since you are being intentionally murdered by a method that will render you unconscious to the death process, something that everyone should have the pleasure of experiencing consciously, we feel it only fair to give you some preparation beforehand. That way you won’t be so shocked and confused when you do get to the other side.”

“But do you do this with everyone?” asked Susan.

“Yes, we do, to a greater or lesser degree. But, like I said earlier, mostly we do it in a way that precludes any awareness by the individual of our preparations. Some people think of it as a premonition of their impending death, but for the most part, people don't know.”

“Then why have you made yourself known to me?” asked Susan. “I'm not religious and have never believed in God. Even now I don't believe in God, even as I face my death. You'd think I'd learn how to pray in my final moments, wouldn't you? But I haven't.”

“It's not necessary in the least,” replied the Being reassuringly. “Everyone is taken care of the same. We make no distinctions. Your beliefs are irrelevant. No one has it right anyway so we don't care what you believe.”

“But there are others in here more worthy than me to be given this chance,” pleaded Susan. “Most of them are actually not guilty of the crimes for which they have been wrongly convicted and are set to die anyway, just because they were given a rotten attorney who didn't give a damn. They are just poor, disadvantaged and badly served by what is laughingly called our justice system. And probably, they believe in Jesus, too. That must count for something!

“But me? I really am guilty — guilty as hell in fact — if you'll pardon my reference to that particular place in your presence. I killed my husband in cold blood. I deserve to feel guilty and I deserve to die. I'm a cold-hearted, selfish bitch and I am not in the least bit worthy to receive your help.”

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“Apparently, someone on this side disagrees with you,” replied the Being. “Someone you know well.”

“Who?”

“Susan, it’s me — Dan.”

Susan was now in complete shock. She still wasn’t sure whether this was all a dream and couldn’t make out whether that voice, which certainly sounded like Dan’s, was in her head or coming from around the Being. Perhaps both. But hearing his voice, assuming it was his, was both disturbing (this was the man she murdered, after all), and strangely reassuring (he was alive?). For a while she simply couldn’t bring herself to even open her mouth, let alone speak.

“I know this must be a shock, Susan,” Dan’s voice continued. “I insisted on it, though, so it’s my fault. I couldn’t bear to see you in such terrible pain. Usually this doesn’t happen until after you die, but I wanted you to have the knowledge going into it, given how you will be so deeply anaesthetized and traumatized by the drugs they are going to pump into you tomorrow.

“You’ll drop your body, of course, but vibrationally speaking, a lot of that garbage will still be in the energy field you come back home with. That would make it hard for you to assimilate the truth that will be revealed to you, as it is to all souls once they cross over. So, I have come with all these other angels to reveal at least some of it to you now. It will make the whole process a lot easier for you.”

“Dan, how come you are not mad at me for murdering you in such a cold-blooded, calculating way?” Susan asked. “I took you away from your children and look how they are suffering now. I did it for such selfish reasons — just to be with Jerry and to have all that insurance money. That’s pretty unforgivable, isn’t it? And yet, all I can feel coming from you and everywhere in this room is love. How can that be?”

“It will all come clear to you in just a short while. But for now, just relax and let your mind clear,” Dan replied. “My angel of incarnation here will explain it all to you when you are ready. OK?”

Susan was still in a lucid dream state lying there very still with her eyes closed but nevertheless acutely aware of everything that was happening. She still wasn’t quite sure if it was a dream or not, but what she was about to hear convinced her that it really was real. There’s no way she could have made it up, not even in a dream.

The Light Being spoke. “Before you incarnated, Susan, I was your Angel of Incarnation, which means I was the one that helped you plan your life. My name is Harley. You and I, along with your soul group, which included Dan here, Jerry, your mother and father and a number of others, planned it down to the smallest detail. And I have to say it has worked out pretty well so far.”

“Wait a minute,” interrupted Susan, “What do you mean you and Dan, Jerry and my parents planned it all? That’s crazy! Why would I plan this horrible an outcome?”

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“It’s true, Susan,” Dan interjected. “I wouldn’t have believed it either when I was on that side of life. As you know, as a doctor and a scientist, I was closed to anything other than scientific reality.

“But as soon as I passed over and got acclimated to the new vibration, I began to realize that my view of life on Earth, while it was true in terms of earthbound reality, was not the truth. It was all an illusion. The truth lay elsewhere.

“I soon came to see that we, as intelligent spiritual beings, deliberately choose to incarnate into human form, sometimes many times over, in order to learn lessons that will help us to evolve spiritually. The idea that we are ‘fallen’ and that God is mad at us, is not true at all, and believe me, there is no hell.”

“Prison is my version of hell,” rejoined Susan.

“I can understand that,” replied Dan.

“It wasn’t long before I was reunited with Harley and those of my soul group who had remained or had incarnated and come back home before me,” Dan continued. “Harley took me through my life review and acquainted me with how everything that had ever happened to me was all part of my plan for the particular incarnation just ended.”

“Including being murdered by me?” quipped Susan who was still in a very skeptical frame of mind about what she was hearing.

"Yes, including being murdered by you," replied Dan without missing a beat. "We agreed upon it way in advance of our incarnation. It was all part of our soul contract."

"Oh, and what about Jerry then? Was he in on the plot too, then?" Susan asked. "If it hadn't been for him, I wouldn't have killed you, Dan. There was no other reason to."

"Of course he was," interjected Harley. "Jerry played a very crucial role in this whole drama. He had his own lessons to learn too, of course, just as we all do when we go down to Planet Earth, and he is fulfilling his soul journey by being incarcerated for 15 years."

"25 years," Susan corrected.

"He gets ten years off for good behavior" replied Harley. "That's how we set it up. Fifteen years was enough to teach him what real freedom was all about."

"Are you saying he chose that?" demanded Susan incredulously. "He chose fifteen years in prison just to learn a lesson?"

Knowing how much Jerry valued his freedom, it was hard for Susan to accept that he had actually chosen it, even though as Dan quickly pointed out, it was his soul that made the choice, not his ego.

"Yes, that was his mission," replied Harley, "to learn that liberty was an inside job. So we put him 'inside' for 15 years!"

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Susan could have sworn she had heard a snigger go around the room at Harley's weak attempt at a joke. She ignored it.

"He needed you to trigger his intense fear of his loss of freedom by first involving him in the murder, and then just when he thought he had ensured his freedom by bolting from the relationship, you turned around and betrayed him. That enabled him to do the prison time he needed to do.

"You, Jerry and Dan worked very carefully on that three way soul contract, believe me. The logistics took a lot of working out and we had to work hard to keep it on track. We actually had to put the jury to sleep for a while at one point during your testimony where you were beginning to sound like you were setting him up in order to get revenge. They were starting to see through your game."

"Now, let's get this straight," said Susan. "Are you also saying that I actually chose to murder my husband, live in this rat hole for ten years or more and end up being executed as a murderer? I chose this in order to learn some kind of lesson?"

Susan was almost hysterical now. It was all too much for her to take in. She, Dan and Jerry planned it all? This is madness, she thought.

"It's true, Honey," said a new voice that Susan recognized as her mother. "It's exactly as Harley says. Dad and I have been here with Dan ever since we both died."

"You too!" cried Susan. "Don't tell me you were part of my soul group as well!"

"We were," answered her father's voice. (She still couldn't see anyone other than the form within the light that she assumed must have been Harley.)

"We were all in this together. And we've done it many times before too. I was your son last time, though you probably won't remember, at least not yet. You will when you do your life review, though.

"This time around it seems we all chose some heavy karma to work through, right? We had to do it though.

"Doing prison time is one of the toughest spiritual assignments there is, but you burn off a lot of karmic points in one lifetime that way. You and Jerry took on a lot and we as your parents suffered incredible grief. Seeing you taken into prison was almost unbearable for us, and it broke our hearts, but that's what we signed up for, of course. Dan had it the easiest, though, right Dan?"

"I did my heavy duty stint last time around," argued Dan in defense. "I was due a free ride this time. I just volunteered to help Susan fulfil her mission, if you remember. Somebody had to be her husband so she would have someone to kill. Once that was done, I could come home. That was the agreement, remember?"

"Oh, and what was I supposed to get out of murdering you and spending the rest of my life in this hell-hole,

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eh?” Susan responded. “Tell me, what lesson was I supposed to learn?”

“Susan, you are not ready to have that revealed to you yet,” said Harley in a comforting voice which calmed her somewhat. “That will become clear when you do your life review when you get to the other side. You and I will meet again then and go through that process. Everything will be revealed then. Actually, you have not quite completed your lesson here, so you still have a bit to go. We cannot reveal it to you, otherwise you wouldn’t get it.”

“What’s the point of all this then?” said Susan. “Dan, Mom, Dad, why have you all come here on this day, of all days?”

“To smooth the way, Honey, just as Dan has said,” her mother replied. “And to take away at least some of the guilt prior to you getting strapped on the gurney and seeing all those faces on the other side of the glass glaring at you and wishing you dead, just so they can get what they call ‘closure.’ Huh! What a crock that is. Revenge is what they are looking for, not closure.” (Obviously Mom was still remembering her human role as Susan’s mother, protecting her offspring.)

“We came to let you know that in reality you did nothing wrong,” her father explained further. “When you look at it all from where we are, no one has ever done anything wrong. It’s all been purposeful and all part of the grand Divine Plan to create Heaven on Earth.”

"Now you really have lost me. My crime is all part of a plan to create Heaven on Earth? What's that about?" Susan demanded to know.

"I'm not going to attempt to explain that to you now, Susan," replied Harley. "All I can tell you right now is that you and every other soul has been part of the great experiment to enable the great Universal Intelligence you call God to create Heaven on Earth. It has been going on since the beginning of time but it's going to come to fruition very soon now."

"OK, so, back to me and my guilt," said Susan. "Are you telling me that I am not really guilty of murder? Is that what you are saying? If so, that's great, but can someone please phone the Warden and have him call off the party that's been arranged in my honor tomorrow? Tell him he can let me go immediately!"

"Susan, it is not that you are not guilty in human terms," Harley explained. "Of course you are. You killed your husband, so you are guilty of the crime of murder. Whatever happens in the World of Humanity is governed by human law, at least on the surface. So the fact is that you committed a murder and you are paying the price.

"Even if someone forgives you, they will still hold that you did the murder — unless of course they use Radical Forgiveness which acknowledges precisely what we are trying to tell you now. And that is there is this other reality, The World of Spirit if you like, where the very act of murder you committed carries a totally different meaning. We see it in the context of it being all

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part of your Divine plan, not only to commit the murder but to be appropriately punished for it by being incarcerated and put to death. And you agreed beforehand to do it that way.

“Another part of the context in which we see the murder is knowing that death is not real,” said Harley. “You can’t actually kill anyone. As souls we are immortal. When we die, we simply shift to a different vibration and continue to exist on a different plane. So at one level, you killed Dan, but at another level you didn’t. You just enabled him to release his body at the time previously agreed. Is that clear?”

“I’m getting there,” Susan replied. “But what about the children? Why do they have to suffer because of what I did?”

“Their souls chose it too, Susan.” Dan interjected. “They are part of the soul group as well. In fact, they are both very old souls with a great deal of wisdom, so their input during the planning sessions was invaluable. They have chosen to experience a lot in this lifetime around compassion and forgiveness. In fact, their first real test begins tomorrow when they watch you die.”

“They hate me, though” said Susan sadly.

“Yes, and they will continue to do so for a long while,” Harley responded. “They will use that hatred and shame to leverage their karmic pain many times over in this lifetime, believe me.

“They will subconsciously create a lot of ‘bad’ situations in their lives that reflect the wound of having experienced their mother kill their father and seeing her executed for it. Each of the situations will present opportunities for them to practice forgiveness, of course, but they won’t do it. They will be too full of anger and judgment and will continue to be mean and cruel towards anyone who in any way subconsciously reminds them of what you did.

“Jay will become a judge and will show very little mercy towards those that come before him — especially female criminals. He will become an alcoholic and eventually fall from grace.

“Chris will go to Africa, to work for a charity, thinking that he is doing ‘good,’ but he too is so full of anger he will project it onto the corrupt authorities that he has to work with as well as his colleagues. Betrayal is what will trigger him and he will see it everywhere. This will get in the way of him doing much good so he’ll become disillusioned and clinically depressed. He will think about suicide, but he won’t do it. Life will be tough on both of them, though.

“But at around forty years of age, right when they are both at the point of breakdown, they will somehow, independently of each other, for they will have been out of contact for years, be introduced to Radical Forgiveness. That will open them up to the possibility that there was Divine purpose in what happened.

“Their Spiritual Intelligence will take it from there and help them awaken to the whole truth of who they are, what kind of journey they are on, and what it means.

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Their lives will change dramatically and soon they will have fully forgiven you. In Radical Forgiveness terms, of course, this means they will have come to the realization that it was all perfect and that you did nothing wrong.”

Susan was having a really hard time taking this in. She just couldn't see her children becoming as Harley was describing. On the other hand, she could see how what she had put them through would create such problems for them in later life.

Susan started to beat herself up again about how she had screwed her kids' lives up, and felt the weight of the guilt associated with that. Harley picked up on her thoughts and feelings immediately.

“Don't go there, Susan,” he said. “No need for any more guilt. The kids are doing their journey just fine, according to their own plans. You've done all the guilt you needed to do, so now is the time to apply Radical Forgiveness to yourself and to see truth. It is time to acknowledge and appreciate your soul's willingness to take on such a difficult lesson as you have.”

Susan felt tears streaming down her cheeks. She hadn't cried for years but lots of wonderful emotions were welling up inside her. She was overcome by a feeling of deep love for herself and a sense of profound self-acceptance for all that she was and had been as a human being.

The tears were tears of joy because, suddenly, it had all made perfect sense to her. Everything had become

crystal clear. All the guilt and pain drained away as she felt the love flowing beneath the situation. Nothing mattered any more. Even the execution seemed like it was nothing. She would go through it with grace and humility.

Suddenly, she was aware that the light was no more and for the first time since she had fallen asleep, she opened her eyes. Nothing. Just the cell walls and the few things she was allowed to have in the cell.

Had it all been just a dream? Had she imagined it all, simply as a way to psychologically prepare for the execution? Was it just a trick of the mind?

All these questions raced through Susan's mind, but it didn't take very long for her to realize that no dream or trick of the mind could have transformed her consciousness to this degree. The sense of peace and tranquility she was feeling was beyond description and could only have come as a gift from the World of Spirit. The feeling of self-love and self-acceptance she was experiencing was beyond anything that she had ever known before, and she recognized it as pure grace. She knew she had experienced true forgiveness — Radical Forgiveness.

She awoke next morning, roused by the guards. They all looked so serious, she thought to herself. She had a hard time suppressing one of those smiles that says, "If only you knew."

They didn't know, of course, but they couldn't help but notice that something was different about Susan. She

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seemed strangely altered in some way. She seemed to be totally at peace. How can someone about to make the “dead man walking” journey feel at peace. The only explanation they had was that perhaps she had found God at the last minute.

The Death Row Chaplain, whose role it is to prepare the offender for the execution once they have been moved from Death Row to ‘Death House,’ also noticed a huge difference in Susan that he found hard to explain.

They day before, he had found her surly, non communicative and resistant to his religious administrations. Even though she was trying to put on a brave face, he knew she was terrified, but she would accept no help from him.

Now he was seeing her bright-eyed, smiling and peaceful. She had quiet knowingness about her and when he spoke to her about God, instead of arguing with him, she just smiled. He could hardly believe the difference. What could have happened?

As was her right, on this her last day, she would be allowed to spend time with any family member who expressed a desire to be with her. Her brother Bob and her two sons, Jay and Chris had made the request.

She knew this was going to be very difficult, even after what had just happened. Though she now knew the truth, her sons still had no other way to see it than she was a cold-blooded killer of their own father. Bob could

only see it the same way — that his sister killed his best friend and she was about to pay the price.

The boys entered the room in fear and trepidation. Not only did they feel close to an emotional breakdown themselves, they were expecting to find their mother a broken, bitter and frightened woman.

Instead they found a woman who looked calm, peaceful and strangely radiant. Susan exhibited a peace that was palpable and it wasn't long before they too began to feel peaceful. Bob felt the same way. For a while nothing was said. Then in a quiet voice, Susan said, "I'm ready. And it's OK. But, believe me, I am so very sorry for all the pain I have caused you. I hope one day you will be able to forgive me." Besides some loving exchanges, little else was said. It seemed as if words were no longer necessary. The three men departed feeling calm but still very confused.

Susan was served her last meal in the late afternoon. Though it is difficult to imagine anyone having an appetite a mere two hours before being executed, Susan ate well and enjoyed the best food she'd had for a very long time. She smiled to herself thinking that serving a "last supper" to someone about to be murdered was rather quaint. However, that didn't stop her enjoying it.

The execution was scheduled for 6:00 pm. Shortly before that time, the four people on Dan's side of the family allowed to witness the killing were led into their viewing room, along with those who had prepared

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them. They included Dan's brother and two sisters, and one of their spouses.

On the other side of the wall, in their own room, sat Chris, Jay and Bob and their preparers. There was no fourth person, but symbolically it might have been Jerry. Although separated by a wall, the two groups could see the window and had a clear view of what was happening on the other side.

Susan was already there, strapped to a gurney. A needle was already in place and a saline solution was being administered. The chaplain was there with her and was in physical contact with her. He would remain in contact with her throughout the whole procedure.

"Finally," said one of the sisters, "we get to see justice done. I'm glad I'm here to see her die. I've been waiting a long time for this."

"She's a cold-blooded killer," said another sister. "Killed Dan for the insurance money just so she could run off with her fancy-man. Poor Dan."

She began weeping and dabbing at her eyes with a handkerchief. "He was so good to her too, and to those kids of hers," she said.

Dan's parents had adopted Jay and Chris and had treated them as their own until they died. But the aunts and uncles had felt no such obligation to keep up the contact. Somehow they identified the boys more with Susan than with Dan and had transferred some of their

anger onto the two boys. Jay and Chris had become the scapegoats.

Susan looked out through the window at those gathered, first at her sons and her brother. She looked at the two boys fully in the eyes and through the glass, mouthed, "I love you." She simply smiled the smile of a mother. There was no agenda attached to it — just love. She smiled at Bob and mouthed the same thing to him.

Then she turned and looked at Dan's family and mouthed, "I'm sorry." That was all. She had already declined her right to make an official last statement.

Dan's family was shocked to see Susan looking so calm and peaceful. She seemed to have no fear of what was to come. She even had the hint of a smile on her face. Her hands were not shaking. It didn't seem normal. Glances were exchanged between the sisters. They frowned. They wanted to see terror in her eyes and they were clearly disappointed.

As the first round of killer drugs were pumped in, remotely of course, from a room nearby, Susan's eyes closed for the last time. The rooms stayed silent. No one spoke. No one moved. The actual killing took approximately eight minutes.

Once she was pronounced dead, both families were led out and escorted to their respective prearranged press conferences. Microphones and cameras were set up and reporters were seated at tables.

As usual, eager reporters asked the victim's family members how they were feeling now that justice had been served and a dangerous killer had been removed from decent society. "Were they able to get closure now and feel able to get on with their lives?"

Strangely enough, though, as much as the reporters tried to get them to talk like victims and paint Susan as the villain, the family seemed not to want to take the bait. In fact they were finding themselves strangely reticent to talk at all, even though Dan's sisters had planned beforehand to spew out a whole load of venom about Susan at the earliest opportunity. But, to their own consternation, they seemed unable to find the words to explain the feelings they did have — mainly because they themselves didn't know exactly what they were feeling.

The reporters were very disappointed as were the producers back in the newsroom, all of whom wanted venom from those people. That alone makes good news. Something must have happened in that room to produce this kind of result, but no one was saying what it was.

In fact, they had seen something in Susan's eyes. As she looked out through that window, just before she closed her eyes for the last time, it seemed as though she was communicating something. Everyone had felt it, no one knew what it was and not one person mentioned it.

After the press conferences they went through their debriefings, and then everyone went their separate ways, back to their ordinary day-to-day lives. But there was not one of them who did not feel that they had been forever changed by the experience. And not one of them knew why.

PART SIX

**THE SF/SA TECHNOLOGY**

**10 THE THREE LETTERS** We have found the three letters to be a very powerful way to help people go through the Five Stages of Radical Forgiveness. The idea is simple, but I will explain it first as if you were writing the letters from the point of view of a victim. Then I will tell you how you would forgive yourself as a perpetrator using this method.

After I have outlined what goes in each letter, I will demonstrate writing the three letters as if Susan had written them. I suggest that when you write each letter you leave one day at least between them, but not more than 48 hours.

**1) Writing from a Victim's Standpoint**

Writing as the one who is injured, you write your first letter to the injurer, telling him, her or it, (*it might be a non-human entity like an institution, government, church or group*), how much you have suffered and been damaged by what they have done, or are doing to you.

You say how you are feeling and you hold back nothing. This is the equivalent of the first two stages — Telling

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the Story and Feeling the Feelings.

The next day, you write another letter to the same person or entity, but this time you write it from more of a heart space. You do your best to have some compassion for them and some understanding of why they did what they did or are still doing to you.

However, you are not letting them off the hook because, even though you are willing to cut them some slack, you are still saying they did, or are doing, something bad. This is the equivalent of stage three, Collapsing the Story. It also remains traditional forgiveness so this second letter would be as far as we could go under that system.

But with Radical Forgiveness we have the luxury of being able to write an additional letter in which you make clear that you have come to see the whole thing differently, and that it is now clear to you that what happened was Divinely planned. You now see that it had to happen that way for a reason, one that has everything to do with your spiritual growth. Also, that the likelihood is that you enrolled this person to come into your life to do this thing not TO you but FOR you.

That means that nothing wrong ever happened and there is nothing to forgive. This is the letter that is the equivalent of the fourth stage, Reframing the Story. This letter will transform the situation immediately because it is the one that will be interpreted by your Spiritual Intelligence as a secular prayer and, as such, it will be acted upon.

Bear in mind that all forgiveness is a fake-it-till-you-

make-it proposition, so it is very likely that you will have to fake some of what might need to go in letter #2. You will almost certainly have to fake what goes in letter #3. It doesn't matter though. Just doing it shows the right intention and that is all your Spiritual Intelligence needs to register for it to become a secular prayer.

**[PLEASE NOTE: YOU MUST NEVER SEND ANY OF THE THREE LETTERS TO THE PERSON YOU ARE FORGIVING. I recommend destroying them after having written the third one.]**

## **2) Writing from a Perpetrator's Standpoint**

As the self-confessed perpetrator of some injury against another person or entity, you write the first letter to yourself, lambasting yourself for what you have done. Guess whose services you will ask for in order to help you write this letter? Of course, your Judging Self. He or she will relish the task and will launch a tirade of criticism against you, trying hard to make you feel as guilty as possible. It will feel as if you are channeling your Judging Self when writing this letter.

(NOTE: You do NOT write this letter to your victim. That can only come later as a Radical Apology letter, but that is a totally different thing. (See Chapter 13.)

In the second letter, you will retire the Judging Self to some degree and switch to channeling your Self-Loving Self. It will provide some counterpoint to your Judging Self's strident criticism by bringing some compassion and understanding to your situation, sufficient at least to reduce the level of guilt and shame within you and for you to feel accepted.

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In the third letter, which is the reframe, you write to your I AM Self, saying how you see that what you did was meant to happen for whatever reason and that you realize that there is nothing for which you need to be forgiven at the spiritual level.

**Example:**  
**Susan's Three Letters to Herself**

**Letter #1:**

*Susan,*

*You are a stupid little fool! What a crazy thing to do! And for such selfish reasons, too. If you wanted Jerry that bad, why didn't you just go with him and take a chance on life? Oh no, that wouldn't do, would it? You had to have money, too, to support your selfish spendthrift ways, didn't you? And you were prepared to kill for them, weren't you? Your own husband no less. How low can you get? You are nothing but scum.*

*How could you be so coldhearted and cruel to even think of killing your wonderful husband? What did he ever do to you that he might deserve that? Nothing. Day after day, you sat there at your computer searching for the information that would help you kill him. That's cold blooded murder, Susan. You can't even say that it was a crime of*

*passion. What a selfish, horrible, heartless bitch you are. Execution is too good for you. They ought to give you what you gave Dan, so you can take three weeks to die in pain and agony like he did. I hate you so bad, I'd do it myself if I could. I'd watch you writhe in pain and agony and take great pleasure in offering you no help at all. You deserve no mercy whatsoever.*

*You were unfaithful to Dan from the start. You screwed that guy who became Governor and, let's be honest, if you had imagined for one moment that it would have helped you save your sorry ass, you would have made it public and ruined his whole life.*

*Admit it - you did think seriously about doing it, but only held off because you knew it would only make it worse for you. And when Jerry came along, you wasted no time at all jumping into bed with him, did you? And you had unprotected sex with him, never mind the risk it might be to Dan. What did you care? It's all about Susan, isn't it? To hell with the others in your life.*

*And how much did you think about those two boys? Hardly at all, right? Never mind that you were prepared to take their father away from them forever by killing the poor guy, and willing to see them traumatized by the whole thing, but you were ready to palm them off to Dan's parents just so you could go away with Jerry and be alone. What kind of a mother are you? No wonder they hate you. How could it be otherwise? You are so loathsome, Susan. And look at how what you did affected your*

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*mother and father. It killed them both in the end, and for sure it broke their hearts. After all they did for you. They were great parents. They loved you and gave you a good start in life, and look what you did with it. Killed your husband and ended up on death row. What a waste of a life. How stupid to think you could get away with it. I hope you rot in hell.*

**Letter #2:**

*Dearest Susan,*

*Oh, what a deluded, love-sick idiot you were to even imagine that killing your husband was the answer to your problem. I can only imagine that you were, in some way, out of your mind — delusional, in fact.*

*No rational, sane person would have done what you did. And yet, a part of me is able to understand it because I know from my own experience that when love hits you very hard, it has a force of its own. It can take you over completely and make you do things that ordinarily you would never think of doing. It's as though you are possessed by something that is not you. I'm sure that was how it was for you, right Susan?*

*I understand you were bored with your marriage and your job. That made you extremely vulnerable to being love-struck by someone like Jerry who was sexually exciting and interesting in so many different ways. He was everything you had been craving for in your life, wasn't he? He offered you freedom,*

*excitement, travel, great sex and more. Once he had your heart, how could you resist? You had no choice but to find a way to escape from your current life so you could run off with him. And in your mind you justified it. To you, it did seem like the only rational choice, didn't it?*

*And, Susan, I know that you would never have gotten used to poverty and insecurity. Even though you were besotted with him, you knew that Jerry potentially offered a lot of both, so I can see that it was a huge problem for you.*

*You've always liked expensive clothes and enjoyed a relatively lavish lifestyle, so I can sympathize with you on that. You have to learn to be poor Susan, and I couldn't see you doing it. Money was very meaningful to you in every way, so I don't see it simply as greed like the media do. For you, it simply was a necessary ingredient in the whole plan, no question about it.*

*But, to kill your own husband for it, Susan? And without regard to your children's feelings and those of your parents and Dan's family?*

*Five million dollars must have been tempting, heaven knows, but, no, I must come back to my original opinion that you could never have done these things had you not been out of your mind. I know you tried an insanity plea in court but you only did that to try to finger Jerry. But I think you should have pushed it for real and made it a strong and authentic plea on your own behalf. Your attorney*

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*could have argued a strong case for it, in my opinion, but they saw through your need for revenge and didn't buy it.*

*The reason I say you should have pled insanity is because I know that you are not a bad person and could not have done it in such a cruel way if you had been yourself. You are not a killer, Susan, especially not a cold blooded, calculating and cruel killer. I didn't think it then and still don't. I think the affair was so tumultuous, it put you over the edge into insanity, albeit for only a few weeks.*

*Love, like you had with Jerry, was enough to make anyone insane. In fact, it was the epitome of madness. How else can you explain how you, as a warm friendly person who has never done anything of that nature before in your entire life, could have murdered your husband in such a calculating way? And it's not as if he were unkind or cruel to you, just boring.*

*But when all is said and done, Susan, you did murder your husband. That is a fact. And you should be punished for it. But I want you to know that I still love you and accept you just the way you are, Susan. I know that you are neither any less, nor any more, of a flawed human being than any of the rest of us out here. You have made some bad mistakes in your life and you are paying a heavy price for them, but who am I to say I wouldn't have done the same thing had I been walking in your shoes. What politician can, in all humility, claim that he or she has the moral right to say that a state*

*sanctioned murder of you is any better than your murder of Dan?*

*Farewell, dear Susan.*

**Letter #3:**

*Dear Susan,*

*I write this now from the perspective of your I AM Self, in the knowledge and comfort that everything that has happened in your life, Susan, has run exactly according to plan and that everyone else in your life, who seemingly was affected by your actions, was getting exactly what they wanted from all the situations, just as you were. It was all perfect.*

*Your ego and your Judging Self did a wonderful job in creating just the right amount of drama to enable you to experience the degree of pain of separation you signed up for. I must say, you left it a bit late, but you made up for it by choosing ten years of isolation on Death Row. It doesn't get more painful than that, does it?*

*Add in the heartache of being separated from the love of your life and that adds up to a lot of spiritual growth for you, my dear Susan. You were so brave and courageous to even consider enduring that much pain.*

*You had the benefit of having the whole plot revealed to you just before your death, as many people do, of course. You learned that your murder*

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*of Dan was a soul agreement made with him before you were born. He agreed to come in just for that purpose — to be murdered by you. That would give a lot of other people, like his own family, an opportunity to feel their own pain of separation and gave you the opening to create the jail experience.*

*Jerry, on the other hand, came for his own reasons, as well as to help you. He had agreed in advance to betray you and you agreed to take his freedom away.*

*Judas and Jesus had a similar agreement. Without Judas, Jesus could not have gone on to give the great lesson he was destined to give, could he? Judas was perhaps the only soul willing to cause the death of the most beloved person ever to walk the face of the earth. It takes a great deal of love to play the role of a villain, Susan, and you did it really well.*

*It should now be clear to you that everything was, and still is, in Divine Order and that no mistakes were ever made. Your life has unfolded in a perfect manner and everything that you did, and however you behaved and no matter what kind of person you became, it was exactly as it should have been. Nothing wrong ever happened and there was never anyone, or anything, to forgive.*

*God bless you, dearest Susan.*

**11 SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE** I mentioned in Chapter Nine that all the tools of Radical Forgiveness, including writing the three letters, take us through five distinct stages. But that's not the total story, by any means. They do a whole lot more than just help us organize our thoughts.

When I first created a Radical Forgiveness worksheet, that's exactly how I thought of it — something that would help me get clarity about what it was I was trying to forgive, and so on. I had no idea that it had the power to activate a part of me that I really did not know existed — my Spiritual Intelligence.

In fact, you will find no reference to the term Spiritual Intelligence in my lead book, *Radical Forgiveness, Making Room for the Miracle*, written in 1997 and revised in the 2002 as a second edition. The term doesn't actually appear until I wrote another book called *Spiritual Intelligence at Work* in 2004. After that, it became central to my themes of both Radical Forgiveness and Radical Manifestation.

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It's not that I hadn't realized very soon after writing my first book that the worksheet was an instrument that moved spiritual energy. I knew it once I saw how it worked immediately to change people's lives. Not only did it change the life of the person using it, it changed a great deal of what was causing the problems in that person's life in the first place, in ways that were simply amazing. I soon came to understand that, in effect, the worksheet was a form of prayer.

But since at that time I was taking a modified form of Radical Forgiveness into the corporate world as an alternative approach to conflict resolution and prevention, I wanted a way to explain the power that lay behind these tools that was secular in its language and therefore, not threatening to management. They were, and still are, terrified of the word 'spiritual' and scared of anything that smacks of religion.

The term Spiritual Intelligence was less threatening because it could be regarded as a natural follow-on from mental intelligence and emotional intelligence. In that way, it simply became a regular faculty of mind like the other two. That, in effect, decoupled it from any particular form of spirituality or religion

So, my use of the term Spiritual Intelligence began as a matter of expediency. But the more I have used it and developed it as a concept, the more I like it. It fits perfectly with the way I think about Radical Forgiveness as being a kind of secular prayer.

At first blush, the term 'secular prayer' seems to be an oxymoron, since the Radical Forgiveness technology

does not require the person using it to have a belief in God. This would seem to preclude it from being a form of prayer since to whom does one pray if not to God?

But to say that a belief in God is not necessary doesn't mean that people need not have a belief in some kind of power greater than themselves, that will become active in their life at the spiritual level if asked to do so. That much at least is required, even if they conceive of that power as being nothing more than their own Higher Self.

There is no requirement, however, that people should know what that power is or how it operates. They should certainly have no obligation to accept anyone else's view on such topics. Since they need have no definition attached to it other than their own personal ideas of what it might be, it can legitimately be thought of as being a secular/metaphysical notion, assuming one chooses to see it that way.

And yet, while the notion of secular prayer decouples it from any particular religious or spiritual belief system, it is also true that people who do have an existing belief system find it easy to make the Radical Forgiveness system fit appropriately to it. It is extremely flexible in this regard. People simply use whatever notion of a Higher Power is right for them.

That said, the only thing required of a person doing the work is a willingness to be open to the possibility that, no matter how he or she thinks of it, this power can be accessed and used for good in his or her life simply by asking for its help. This can be done through ordinary

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prayer, of course, but my point is that, when we make such requests using the tools of Radical Forgiveness, and to a power other than the God as defined by specific religions, it is still prayer, albeit of a more secular nature. And the effect is the same. The only difference is in how we ask.

It also seems reasonable to me to assume that because prayers are answered and we see dramatic results when we use the worksheets, that we are still very much connected to the Divine in some way.

No matter how we choose to conceive of this connection, the term Spiritual Intelligence gives us a way to think about how the connection is maintained and how communication with our Higher Power is facilitated.

When we agreed to incarnate in order to further our soul's evolution by taking on certain prearranged lessons, we fully understood the need for us to forget about the world we had just come from, and to have what I call spiritual amnesia. Otherwise, we would not play the game of life as intended.

However, our Spiritual Intelligence is a part of our psyche that is not subject to spiritual amnesia. It has always known the truth of who we are and knows the Divine plan for our life. It also remains in direct communication with Universal Intelligence, a name I personally like to give to that Higher Power we were discussing above.

Our Spiritual Intelligence works with the Ego in creating the circumstances of our lives, whether they be those

that were decided on prior to incarnation or those that became adopted opportunistically along the way. Our Ego guide works with our Spiritual Intelligence to convince us that life, as we understand it, is real and that the way it has to be lived is by trying to control as many aspects of it as possible. To this end, it tells us to strive to get as much money as possible, become successful and accumulate as much material wealth as we can.

It tells us that the world is a dangerous place, that you can't trust people and it's a dog-eat-dog world. It tells us life is a game of chance, has no real meaning and is chaotic. And the main thing is that, in relation to how we live our lives, we should always be operating out of fear.

All this is entirely purposeful, in the spiritual sense, in that it will help to provide the opportunities for us to experience the pain of separation. This is actually the basic lesson we have all come in to learn — the nature of oneness. Let me explain this.

Marshall McLuhan once famously said: *"The last one to discover water is likely to be the fish."* By that he meant that if you are totally immersed in a particular environment, you will be unaware of it, so the only way to appreciate it is to experience the opposite of it. For example, you cannot appreciate what darkness is until you have experienced light.

So, in order to fully appreciate being in a state of oneness with the All That Is, we have come into the human experience and this world of duality, in order to experi-

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ence the opposite of it — separation. Then, when the amount of separation we agreed to go through has been experienced, we get the signal from our Spiritual Intelligence to begin awakening to the truth that this is our soul's journey, and everything we have been experiencing has had a purpose to it. Also, because we wanted to experience separation, not just as an idea but as a feeling, we needed a body.

The goal of the Ego, then, working through our Spiritual Intelligence, is to slowly and methodically get us through all the lessons we signed up for as perfect ways to experience separation — e.g., betrayal, rejection, abandonment, abuse, rape, war, genocide, racial discrimination and so on.

But it is also the job of the Ego to arrange it so that the last piece of drama we create takes us into a kind of breakdown phase. That breakdown experience is the signal for our Spiritual Intelligence to begin whispering to us things like:

*“Could there be something else going on that you can't see or have direct understanding of?”*

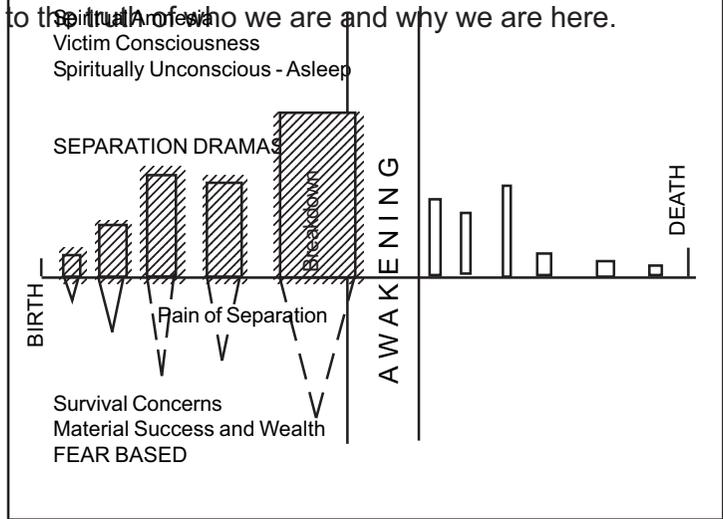
*“Might there be a reason why this keeps happening to you over and over again?”*

*“Could there possibly be some deeper meaning behind what is happening?”*

At the same time, it will guide us into places where we'll find ourselves being led to a particular book or some experience that might begin our awakening. Perhaps

we'll happen to meet someone who will say something that resonates something within us, or we'll find ourselves going to a Radical Forgiveness workshop.

Whatever it is that moves us, the purpose is to go through this awakening period, which may last for many years, so we get to a point where we begin to awaken

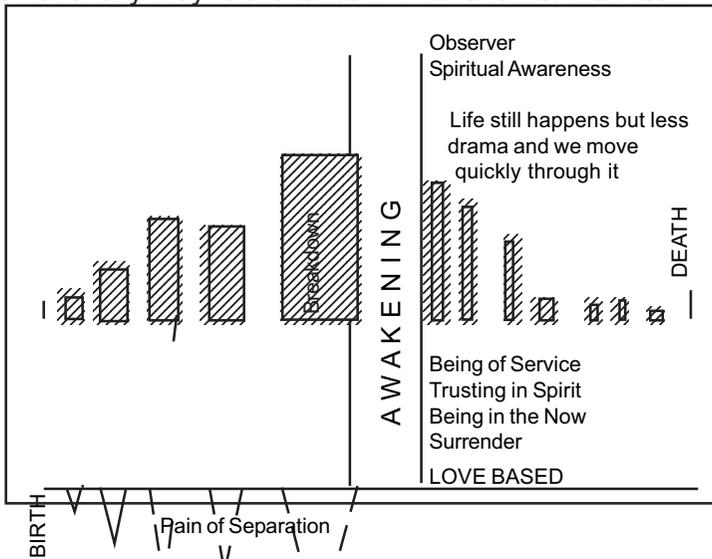


**[Note:** It is my contention that you would not be reading this book if you were not already either at that point of awakening or already in, or through it. If you were still in the first phase your Ego would have kept books like this out of your reach. Or if you had bought it, it would have remained unread until such time as your Higher Self said, “OK, time to read that book and begin waking up.”]

What we have noticed is that once people reach the

awakening stage, their world views tend to change. Instead of a fixed materialistic/scientific point of view, they adopt one which is more metaphysical and open-ended.

Their priorities begin to shift as well, tending to become more socially and environmentally aware and they begin to see their purpose in life as being of service to others and to the world. They adopt an attitude of trust and a willingness to surrender to what life brings, and emotionally they relate to life with love rather than fear.



Now, if we were looking at Susan's timeline, we would understand that her breakdown drama was her incarceration and her impending execution. The 'satori' event that jump-started her awakening was having an angelic figure appear to her in her cell. ('Satori' is the Japanese word for 'enlightenment.')

She needed an accelerated awakening for obvious reasons, assuming at least that she needed to have an awakening before making her transition. This is not always the case.

But since she did die immediately upon having awakened, we would see no back-end to her timeline, like there is in the above diagram. It would end right at the point of awakening. (A lot of people actually do get their awakening on their deathbed, moments before dying.)

In the diagram above we see that life goes on and 'stuff' continues to happen as normal. But the difference is that, after the awakening, we don't create so many dramas, and those that do occur we move through quickly and have only a short emotional reaction to them. Peace comes much more quickly than before and life gets easier.

Once we have reached the awakening stage, that must mean that the dramas we created in the first half of life, in order to feel the pain of separation, are done with. That includes all the instances where we acted as a perpetrator as well as those where we were the victim. They can be disposed of through the use of Radical Forgiveness and Radical Self-Forgiveness. For those where the pain of separation was internal, as in having feelings of self-hatred caused by negative beliefs about ourselves, we can use Radical Self-Acceptance.

The two worksheets that comprise the backbone of the Radical Self-Forgiveness and Self-Acceptance technology follow in the next three chapters. Learn how to use them.

## **12 THE RADICAL SELF-FORGIVENESS**

**WORKSHEET** This chapter is complete in itself in that you could use what is written here as instructions for using the down-loadable Radical Self-Forgiveness Worksheet available from the web site, [www.radicalforgiveness.com](http://www.radicalforgiveness.com). Or, you could simply make some responses to what follows in your journal or on a separate piece of paper.

However, it is primarily intended to be preparation for your use of the online Self-Forgiveness Worksheet that is also available for your use on our web site. This is a tool which we think you will want to use over and over again as things crop up, so I am including this information here so you will be very familiar with it when you first log on.

The Radical Self-Forgiveness Worksheet is designed to help you work through and transform any guilt or self-recrimination about something that you might have done or not done, but should have.

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*(Note: It may seem silly, but the process becomes much more powerful if you speak everything out loud – that is, everything the worksheet gives you, plus what you write in. A lot of energy is actually stuck in the throat chakra, so speaking it out really helps to move the energy. This is equally true when you are doing it online as when you are writing responses in your journal.)*

**Box 1. What I have done or failed to do is .....**

The first step always in any Radical Forgiveness process is to tell the story, in this case, what you are wanting to forgive yourself for. And, please, make a complete admission for what you have done. Make no excuses for yourself at this point and do NOT overlay it with any spiritual or psychological interpretation or reasoning. *(That will come later.)* Be as brutally honest as you can be. Don't hold back. Write as much as you wish, there is no space limitation on this section.

**Box 2. What I hear my Judging Self saying to me about it is .....**

Imagine yourself now as your critical, judging self. Really be the critic within and write in the box all the things you need to say. Confront yourself. Be as nasty, vindictive and vengeful as you want to be. Again, don't hold back and don't limit yourself, as far as judgments are concerned, about how you feel about yourself. Allow yourself the full range of feelings and expression here.

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**Box 3. The way I FEEL about myself with regard to this situation or in general is** [Circle as many as you wish.]

**a) Towards myself, I feel:** rejecting, dismissive, angry, distant, sarcastic, frustrated, critical, irritated, skeptical, ashamed, weak, sad, hurtful, hostile, angry, hateful, jealous, vengeful, rageful, apathetic, isolated, inferior, stupid, remorseful, lonely, depressed, ashamed, guilty, suicidal.

**b) As I look at my life, I feel:** apathetic, isolated, inferior, stupid, remorseful, tired, bored, lonely, depressed, ashamed, guilty, suicidal.

**In general, I feel:** bewildered, discouraged, insignificant, inadequate, hopeless, embarrassed, overwhelmed, confused, helpless, submissive, insecure, anxious,

**Place the following three emotions in rank order, 1-3, 1 being the most predominant in you right now**

**GUILT**     **ANGER**     **FEAR**

Give each one a rating on a scale of 1-10, 1 being very little and 10 being full-blast raw emotion.

**GUILT**     **ANGER**     **FEAR**

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It is vitally important that you allow yourself to feel your feelings. Do not censor them or *stuff* them. Remember, we came into the physical realm to experience emotion — the essence of being human. All emotions are good, except when we suppress them. Stuffing emotion creates potentially harmful energy blocks in our bodies. These blocks often become cancerous tumors.

**Box 4. I lovingly recognize and accept my feelings and judge them no more.**

Accept	Willing	Open	Skeptical	Unwilling

This important step provides you with an opportunity to allow yourself some freedom from the belief that feelings like anger, shame, guilt, fear, jealousy, envy or even sadness are bad and should be denied. No matter what they are, you need to feel your emotions in exactly the way they occur for you, for they are an expression of your true self. Your soul wants you to feel them fully. Know they are perfect and quit judging yourself for having them.

- **SELF ESTEEM:** On a scale of 1-10 (1 being extremely low and 10 being very high) my self esteem is \_\_\_\_\_ .

**Box 5. I own my feelings. Since emotions are thoughts (or beliefs) attached to a feeling, my feelings are a reflection of how I see (judge) myself in relation to the situation.**

This statement reminds us that our emotions are our own and they provide us with good feedback about our beliefs.

When we allow ourselves to feel, recognize, accept and love our feelings unconditionally as coming from the parts of ourselves that need to be heard, it helps us to become merciful and loving towards those parts, even if we don't understand where they come from or what part of us is speaking at any particular moment. *(It could be the inner critic, the wimp, the professor, the parent, or any one of a great number of the sub-personalities that live within us.)*

**Box 6. I feel guilty:** On a scale of 1-10 (1 being very low and 10 very high) my guilt level is around \_\_\_\_\_.

Notwithstanding the idea that everything is in Divine order, we must realize and accept, that as a consequence of our choice to be human, we will be given the opportunity to experience, along with all the other emotions, **guilt**. It's all part of the Divine Plan.

Equally, it is part of the plan that we learn to be aware of, and be connected to, our feelings and to be discerning over the subtle differences in their meaning. With guilt, we need to be able to discern the difference, for example, between what we are *entitled* to feel guilty about and that which we are not. In other words, to know the difference between appropriate and inappropriate guilt. Being able to

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discern this will save us a lot of confusion and pain, for most guilt is of the inappropriate variety.

**My guilt over what happened is either:**

(a) Appropriate (b) Inappropriate (c) Mixed

*(Please explain how you see this distinction applying to your particular situation.)*

**APPROPRIATE GUILT**

When we have breached ethical and moral boundaries, broken laws, and or committed acts which, by common agreement, are *wrong*, we are entitled to feel guilt. It is appropriate.

For example, if I got drunk, drove recklessly and killed someone, I am entitled to feel guilty about it.

**INAPPROPRIATE GUILT**

On the other hand, if I was driving safely and a cyclist swerved in front of me, such that I had no way to avoid him or stop, and I killed him, guilt would be inappropriate. Sadness and deep regret? Yes, of course. But not guilt. I would not have earned the right to feel guilty. I would not be entitled to it.

Inappropriate guilt, therefore, is felt when we blame ourselves for something that we did not consciously choose, had no control over, no responsibility for and for which we cannot reasonably be held accountable.

Accept	Willing	Open	Skeptical	Unwilling

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**Box 7. Even though I don't know why or how, I now see that my soul has created this situation in order that I learn and grow.**

This is probably the most important statement on the worksheet. It reinforces the notion that thoughts, feelings and beliefs create our experiences and that we order our reality in such a way as to support our spiritual growth. When we open ourselves to this truth, the problem almost always disappears. That's because there are no problems, only misperceptions.

The importance of this step comes in its ability to help you feel your way out of the victim/perpetrator mode into the possibility that everything that happened or is happening, is or was purposeful. It acknowledges that the Divine essence within, the knowing part of yourself, your soul — whatever you want to call it, has set the situation up for you so you can learn, grow and heal a misperception or a false belief.

**This step also creates self-empowerment.**

Once we realize we have created a situation, we have the power to change it. We can choose to see ourselves as the villain in the situation, or we can choose to see that we have given ourselves (*and the others involved, if any*), an opportunity to learn and to grow and to then choose to have our lives be the way we want them to be.

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The statement also challenges us to accept the possibility that the situation may be purposeful and to let go of the need to know how or why.

This is where most intellectually-inclined people have the greatest difficulty. They want *proof* before they believe anything. Therefore, they make knowing *why* a condition for accepting the situation as a healing opportunity.

This is a dead-end trap since to ask how and why things happen as they do is to ask to know the Mind of God. At the level we are now in our spiritual development we cannot possibly know the Mind of God. We must therefore give up our need to know why (*which is a victim's question anyway*), and surrender to the idea that God does not make mistakes and therefore everything is in Divine order.

**Box 8. I am willing to see that my mission or 'soul contract' included my doing this thing for whatever reason.**

Accept	Willing	Open	Skeptical	Unwilling

A soul contract is an agreement that we made with other souls, prior to coming into the human experience, to carry out certain pre-planned missions — to balance karmic energies, to heal group pain, to raise consciousness around some

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issue, etc. Who could possibly know what the mission really was? We just need to be open to the possibility that the situation we have guilt around might have involved a soul contract and, if there are others involved in the situation, they may well have been the other souls with whom the contract was struck.

Accept    Willing    Skeptical    Unwilling

**Box 9. I now realize that nothing I, or anyone else has done or is doing is right or wrong. I drop all judgment.**


This step goes against everything that we have ever been taught about being able to distinguish between right and wrong, good and evil. After all, the whole world gets divided up along those lines. Yes, we know that the World of Humanity is really just an illusion, but that doesn't alter the fact that the human experiences demand that we make these particular distinctions in our daily lives *[as in the discussion on appropriate and inappropriate guilt]*.

What helps us with this step is realizing that we are only affirming that there is no right or wrong, good or bad when seeing things from the spiritual big picture standpoint — from the perspective of the World of Divine Truth. From there we are able to get beyond the evidence of our senses and

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minds and see Divine purpose and meaning in everything.

Once we are able to see that, then we can understand that there is no right or wrong. It just is. There are truly no victims or perpetrators. We are all healing angels for each other, dedicated to each other's spiritual growth.

People experience this step differently in the process of Radical Self-Forgiveness than they do when forgiving others. They find it less of a stretch to imagine that their being victimized is/was perfect in the sense that it was all part of the Divine plan, than to accept that in their hurting someone else, there was also perfection.

In Radical Self-Forgiveness then, we seem to have to bring more effort to bear in allowing this to be equally true. If there are no victims, there can be no perpetrators.

**Box 10. I release the need to blame myself and to be right, and I am WILLING to see the perfection in what is — just the way it is.**

Accept	Willing	Open	Skeptical	Unwilling

This step confronts you with the perfection in the situation and tests your willingness to see this perfection.

While it never will be easy to see the perfection, or good, in something bad that we have done, we can

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be *willing* to see the perfection in the situation, be *willing* to drop the judgment and be *willing to drop the need to be right*.

While it may always be difficult to recognize that, for instance, in abuse situations, that both the abuser and the abused somehow created their situation so that each could learn a lesson at the soul level, and that possibly their mission was to transform the situation on behalf of all abused people, we can nevertheless be *willing* to entertain this thought.

Obviously, the closer we are to a situation, the more difficult it becomes to see its perfection, but seeing the perfection does not mean understanding it. We cannot know the reasons why things happen as they do; we must simply have faith that they are happening perfectly and for the highest good of all.

**Box 11. Even though I may not know why or how, I now realize that I have been receiving exactly what I wanted and had subconsciously chosen and, (if there are others involved), we were doing a healing dance with and for each other.**

Accept	Willing	Open	Skeptical	Unwilling

This statement serves as yet another reminder of how we can instantly become aware of our subconscious beliefs if we look at what shows up in

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our lives. What we have at any particular point in time truly *is what we want*. We have, at the soul level, chosen our situations and experiences, and our choices are not wrong. And this is true for all parties involved in the drama. Remember, there are no villains or victims, just players. Each person in the situation is getting exactly what they want. Everyone is engaged in a healing dance.

**Box 12. I honor myself for being willing to play a part in someone else's healing and bless them for being willing to play a part in my healing.**

Accept	Willing	Open	Skeptical	Unwilling

**Box 13. I release from my consciousness all judgments of: (As in Box 3.)**

Accept	Willing	Open	Skeptical	Unwilling

This enables you to affirm that you release the feelings that you had noted in Box 3.

Releasing emotions and corresponding thoughts serves an important role in the forgiveness process. As long as those thoughts remain operative, they continue lending energy to our old belief systems, which created the reality we now are trying to transform. Affirming that we release both the feeling and the thoughts attached to them begins the healing process.

The emotions about your situation may come back time and time again, and you can make that okay, too. Just be willing to feel them and then release them, at least for the moment, so the light of awareness can shine through you and allow you to see the misperception. Then, once again, you can choose to see the situation differently.

**Box 15. I honor my own willingness to see my misperceptions and bless myself for gifting myself an opportunity to practice Radical Self-Forgiveness.**


This is another opportunity to feel gratitude and appreciation for yourself for being willing to heal and grow through this process.

**Box 15. THE REFRAME: I now realize that what I was experiencing (my perpetrator/victim story) was a precise reflection of my human perception of the situation. I now understand that I can change this 'reality' by simply being willing to see the spiritual perfection in the situation. For example.....**  
 (Attempt a Radical Forgiveness reframe.)

This may simply be a general statement indicating that you just know everything is perfect, or specific to your situation if you can actually see what the gift is. *(Note: Often you cannot.)*

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If you are not able to see a new interpretation which is specific to your situation, that's not a problem. The Radical Forgiveness reframe might simply be expressed in a very general way, such as: *"What happened was simply the unfoldment of a Divine plan and that it was called forth by my own Higher Self, and those of the others involved, (if any) for my/our spiritual growth and that we were doing a healing dance with each other so, in truth, nothing wrong ever happened."* Writing something like that would be perfectly adequate. On the other hand, if you did have some insights into how it all worked out in a perfect sense, that would be fine too.

What would NOT be helpful would be to write an interpretation based on assumptions rooted in the World of Humanity, like giving reasons why it happened or making excuses. You might be exchanging one false story for another or even shifting into pseudo forgiveness.

A new interpretation of your situation should allow you to feel its perfection from the spiritual standpoint, and become open to the gift it offers you. Your reframe should offer a way of looking at your situation that reveals the hand of God, or Divine Intelligence, working for you and showing you how much It loves you.

***My Reframe is:***

**Note:** It may take completing many worksheets on the same issue to feel the perfection. Be absolutely

truthful with yourself, and always work from your feelings. There are no right answers, no goals, no grades, and no end products here. The value lies in the process, in doing the work. Let whatever comes be perfect, and resist the urge to edit and evaluate what you write. You cannot do it wrong.

**Box 16. I completely forgive myself** (your name) \_\_\_\_\_ and accept myself as a loving, generous, creative being. I release all need to hold onto negative emotions and ideas of low self-worth. I withdraw my energy from the past and release all barriers against the love and abundance that I know I have already. I create my thoughts, my feelings and my life and I am empowered to be myself again, to unconditionally love and support myself, just the way I am, in all my magnificence.

The importance of this affirmation cannot be overemphasized. Say it out loud, and let yourself feel it. Let the words resonate within you.

If you notice yourself in resistance to believing this to be true about you, be willing to go through the resistance, knowing that on the other side lies peace and joy. Be willing also to feel any pain, depression, chaos and confusion that might occur while you are going through it.

**Box 17. “I now SURRENDER to the Higher Power I think of as \_\_\_\_\_, and trust in the knowledge that this situation will continue to unfold**

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perfectly and in accordance with Divine guidance and spiritual law. I acknowledge my oneness and feel myself totally reconnected with my Source. I am restored to my true nature, which is LOVE. I close my eyes in order to feel the love that flows in my life and to feel the joy that comes when the love is felt and expressed.”

This represents the final step in the Radical Self-Forgiveness process. However, it is *not* your step to take. You affirm that you are willing to experience it and turn the remainder of the process over to a Higher Power. Ask that the healing be completed by Divine Grace and that you be restored to your true nature, which is Love, and reconnected to your Source which is also Love.

This final step offers you the opportunity to drop the words, the thoughts and the concepts and to actually *feel* the love. The bottom line is — only love exists. If you can truly tap into that love, you are home free. You need do nothing else. So, take a few minutes to meditate on this statement, and be open to feeling the love. You may have to try this exercise many times before you feel it, but one day, just when you least expect it, the love and the joy will envelop you.

**Box 18. A note to anyone that I hurt or negatively affected in some way.**

“Having done this worksheet I now realize that there was a Divine Order to what happened. However, from the perspective of being in this physical world of pain

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and suffering, I nevertheless choose to make a Radical Apology, to make amends and ask for your forgiveness. My Radical Apology is as follows: (See Chapter 13 for a definition of a Radical Apology).

**Box 19. A Note to Myself:**

You began the Radical Self-Forgiveness Worksheet by blaming yourself for something or feeling ashamed of some part of you. Your energy probably has shifted since you began, even if the shift occurred only a moment or two ago. How do you feel about the situation now? What would you like to say to yourself? Allow yourself to write without conscious thought, if possible, and do not judge your words. Let them surprise even you. (Resist the temptation to go back to self-blame again.)

Maybe, as you acknowledge, accept and love yourself unconditionally just the way you are, you will be able to release the perception of yourself as less than perfect. Perhaps you can accept that how you show up in the world represents the only way you can be. That is how Spirit has willed you to be.

After you have written the note, say the following out loud:

**“I completely forgive you, (your name) \_\_\_\_\_ ,**  
for I now realize that you did nothing wrong and that

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everything is in Divine order. I acknowledge, accept and love you unconditionally just the way you are.”

Remember, all forgiveness starts as a lie. You begin the process without forgiveness in your heart, and *you fake-it-until-you-make-it*. So, honor yourself for doing it and yet be gentle with yourself, and let the forgiveness process take as long as you need. Be patient with yourself. Acknowledge yourself for the courage it takes simply to attempt this Self-Forgiveness Worksheet, for you truly face your demons in the process. Doing this work takes enormous courage, willingness and faith.

When you have written the note to yourself, read this out loud: ***“I recognize that I, (name), am a spiritual being having a human experience and I love and support myself in every aspect of my humanness.”***

• **SELF ESTEEM CHECK** On a scale of 1-10 (1 being low and 10 being very high, my self esteem is

\_\_\_\_\_

• **FEELINGS CHECK** On a scale of 1-10, 1 being very little and 10 being full-blast, raw emotion, how much of each are you feeling now?

**GUILT**

**ANGER**

**FEAR**

This is the end of the worksheet

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**13 MAKING AN APOLOGY** Whenever we have done something wrong and have caused harm or stress to another person or group of people, our natural impulse is to apologize. If the damage or injury done to the other party was severe enough, the apology might need to be extended to include some kind of atonement or amends process that represents a sincere attempt to make up for the hurt and pain inflicted. It may even call for some kind of restitution of previous conditions or reimbursement for what was lost. Financial reparations might even be called for as a form of compensation.

Whatever it was that requires such responses, we expect an apology to be calibrated to somehow *fit the crime*. In other words, it should be seen and felt to be appropriate and, hopefully, close to being sufficient to begin relieving the injured party's pain and anguish over what happened. The principle of fairness comes into play here, together with a sense of justice, compassion and human caring.

So, an ordinary apology recognizes that a person was

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in some way damaged because of something we intentionally did that was wrong. It is a direct communication to the aggrieved party that we are in sorrow, guilt and regret that the event occurred and we wish that the party knows this.

It may also be an appeal for forgiveness, although this may turn the apology into a form of manipulation if we are not careful. Our apology becomes conditional on us getting the forgiveness and it becomes about us rather than the injured party. We apologize because we want to feel better.

We should note that in an ordinary apology there is no hint of there being an underlying spiritual purpose in what took place. That means that victim consciousness (old paradigm) is fully supported by this kind of apology. On the face of it then, it would seem to be incompatible with the Radical Self-Forgiveness concept.

If we were living in a fully awakened world, where everyone was aware of the spiritual purpose behind everything, there would be no need for an apology, in the normal sense of the word, since nothing wrong ever happened. But we are not there yet, not by a long way, so apologies are still appropriate.

However, when we as individuals begin to awaken to the nature of the soul's journey and the Divine purpose within everything, we make a subtle shift in how we make an apology. It's not that we say or do anything much differently than before. It's how we hold it that's different. Let's call this a Radical Apology.

### **The Radical Apology**

A Radical Apology recognizes in just the same way as, in human terms, someone got hurt and that it is something to be truly sorrowful and perhaps even *appropriately* guilty about. We also accept full responsibility for what happened in human and worldly terms and are willing to be accountable for what we have done.

At the same time, however, we are open to the possibility that some higher purpose was being served and it had to happen that way for some reason. We are, in effect, seeing the situation from the perspective of both the World of Spirit and the World of Humanity at the same time — doublethink.

But we keep this to ourselves. We do NOT communicate this as part of our apology. It would seriously dilute it in the eyes of the receiver, even if he or she had the same metaphysical understanding as you on this point. It would sound like an attempt to mitigate their pain and your guilt. You would appear to be using spirituality as a way to avoid accountability and responsibility — a spiritual bypass, in fact.

However, the effect that you're holding this perspective will have, even though you say nothing about it, is that it will raise your own vibration. (Remember, raw guilt and shame are very low vibration. Willingness to be open to seeing the perfection is high vibration.)

The injured party will feel this at some level and connect with it energetically. This has the effect of releasing the low vibration energy tied up in the situation itself, thus

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enabling a healing to occur more rapidly than with an ordinary apology. It will also result in a general raising of consciousness such that, in the future, there will be less need for similar things to occur.

The sorrow and regret that is implied in any genuine apology is just as real with the Radical Apology as with the ordinary apology. But in your own mind, the sorrow is not so much because it happened, but that the person, a human being, was hurt or damaged. If nothing else, it opens the energy up for Radical Forgiveness to enter into play — especially for the victim. Therefore, a Radical Apology is a bridge to Radical Forgiveness and reconciliation.

Another benefit of making a Radical Apology is that it is a step towards clearing one's shadow. Simply by bringing forth some rather unsavory part of ourselves in committing this 'crime' against someone, which we might otherwise have kept buried, we find love and acceptance for that aspect within our own shadow. This is because, in making the Radical Apology, we actually forgive ourselves.

The same is true for groups, corporations, religious organizations, governments and even countries. They all have their own shadows, many of them that currently remain in need of healing. America, for example has the issue of slavery, the Native American holocaust, continuing racial discrimination and injustice, and in fact, a whole host of things for which it carries a huge amount of guilt and shame. Most of this shadow material the U.S. still does not wish to look at and for the most part remains in denial about.

There was a very weak apology made to Native Americans a few years ago, not by the government itself, but by a department of government which just happened to be headed by a Native American at the time. It meant little.

On July 30, 2008, the House of Representative actually passed a motion apologizing to African Americans, more than 140 years after slavery was abolished, for the “fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality and inhumanity of slavery and Jim Crow segregation.” It hardly got a mention in the news and I doubt that many people even noticed. It certainly wasn’t an apology to fit the enormity of that terrible crime against the black race.

In 2008, Australia also took a major step in saying a heartfelt, genuine and very public “Sorry” to the Aboriginal population of that country for the atrocities that they suffered at the hands of the white English immigrants. This was the result of an extended grass roots campaign by the Australian people themselves, who wanted to clear their own collective shadow by having their government apologize in a meaningful way to the Aboriginals.

While I am not aware of any apology coming out of Russia for the holocaust that Stalin unleashed, in which he systematically murdered 12 million people, Germany has done everything possible to apologize to the Jewish people for that particular holocaust. They have built memorials and museums that take pains not to gloss over what happened. They have owned their crime

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against humanity and have made restitution for it.

As a result, I believe, the Germans have cleared a huge piece from their collective shadow in a way that England and America have yet to do.

(I believe that Saddam Hussein presented America with a mirror so it could see its own shadow in him — but they missed seeing the reflection and therefore missed the healing opportunity. The U.S. chose to throw bombs at Saddam (and therefore itself), instead. The result is even more collective shame. (This idea is fully developed in my book, *A Radical Incarnation — Yours!*)

The interesting thing about this is that a country's shadow material can be healed by individuals doing the self-forgiveness work on behalf of the country. It works holographically. When one person raises their vibration, it raises the vibration of the whole.

Once you recognize that your country's shadow is your shadow too, you do Radical Self-Forgiveness worksheets as if you were the country itself. You can also make a Radical Apology to groups that your country has injured. Doing these things will shift the energy and move the overall energy in the general direction of healing.

So, we don't have to wait for our governments to act. We can make it happen ourselves. You can make up your own apology, but here's one that I wrote for my Healing America page on my website:

### **A Blanket Statement of Radical Apology**

“Even though I know that everything was, is and always will be in Divine order, I/America am nevertheless now willing to make a blanket statement of Radical Apology to everyone and everything that I/ America have caused to be hurt or damaged in any way. I do this in the knowledge and comfort that this will begin the process of clearing my/America’s shadow and, hopefully, healing the pain of those I/ America have hurt. In particular, on behalf of all Americans, I put forth sincere Radical Apologies to...

- African Americans
- American Indians
- Hispanics
- Chinese Americans
- Japanese Americans
- Other races \_\_\_\_\_
- Women
- Americans wrongly incarcerated and/or executed
- American citizens subjected to witch-hunts
- The people of Nagasaki and Hiroshima
- The people of Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq
- The people of other countries we have hurt by ‘meddling’ in their affairs

You can make your own list or add something to this list that you feel strongly about. For another country, you would obviously create your own list.

***Should we apologize for what was done by our ancestors?***

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It is true, of course, that we are not directly responsible for what our ancestors did, and that what they did cannot be undone. This is given most often as the reason why we should not apologize now for slavery, but it is a very weak argument and denies the facts.

It has recently been shown, by research carried out in one of the Scandinavian countries, that unresolved emotional pain gets handed down through the generations in our genes.

The fact is that we are all carrying our ancestors' pain. If our forebears were the victimized party, we carry their hurt and anger — and continue to pass it on to our own children. If we are the descendants of the perpetrators, we carry their guilt and shame. That gets passed on, too. We are ALL in pain and will continue to be so until we decide to forgive ourselves and each other.

There is no question that these unresolved issues get acted out with each generation and will continue to be so until we decide to clear it. It's up to us.

So, Yes, of course we should apologize on behalf of our ancestors and be generous in spirit to the descendants of those who were hurt and who still carry that pain. The Radical Apology is the first step in that healing process and it needs to be taken in every case. Any crime left hanging without an appropriate apology is a crime continued.

## **14 THE RADICAL SELF-ACCEPTANCE**

**WORKSHEET** Much of the work in the area of self-acceptance you will already have covered, assuming you have done the exercises in Part Two. However, this chapter is instructional for the online Radical Self-Acceptance Worksheet on our website, that you will use whenever you feel your inner critic beginning to pull you down and you are starting to feel bad about yourself.

It also is another way to keep on exposing those parts of your shadow that you have denied, repressed and projected onto other people. When you recognize them as such, you can begin to love and accept them. But how will you recognize them?

Actually, it is very simple because people will be mirroring them back to you. You might recall the principle “If you spot it, you’ve got it.” It means you only get upset when someone resonates some shadow material within you that you have denied, repressed and projected onto them. So, whatever you find objectionable in someone else is what you hate in yourself, but which is also crying out to be loved and accepted.

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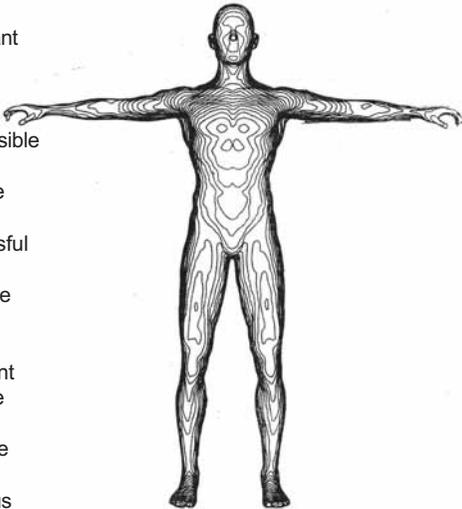
The beginning of the worksheet is a reminder of how we split ourselves into two parts - one side containing attributes we have learned are acceptable, the other side containing those that were not. That is our shadow side and it is largely shame-based. We were told that we were those things, we bought in and then buried it.

Then it asks you to look at what part of your shadow is being resonated at this time and by whom, and what it is that you are seeing out there that might be representing what is within you. The rest is self explanatory.

## The Radical Self-Acceptance Worksheet

### 1. Image \_\_\_\_\_ versus \_\_\_\_\_ Shadow

Nice  
Compliant  
Friendly  
Quiet  
Reliable  
Responsible  
Giving  
Sensible  
Smart  
Successful  
Slim  
Attractive  
Funny  
Sexy  
Confident  
Sociable  
Gentle  
Sensitive  
Brave  
Integrous  
Talented



Nasty  
Rebellious  
Unfriendly  
Crass  
Uncaring  
Selfish  
Cowardly  
Unreliable  
Needy  
Manipulative  
Liar & a Cheat  
Mean  
Cruel  
Sexual  
Greedy  
Stupid  
Dumb  
A Failure  
Ugly  
Fat  
Boring

**2. What I am finding or have recently found objectionable in someone that could easily be a part of my shadow that is crying out to be loved and accepted is:**

Write in the box whatever it is that is upsetting you about the other person and then see if you can possibly recognize that quality somewhere within yourself. Then affirm that you love and accept that part of you.

**3. Even though no one is mirroring this at the moment, I am feeling hateful towards myself. What I seem to hate most about myself right now is:**

This is an alternative to #2. Write in the box what seems to be showing up as the part of you that you loathe, assuming you can identify it. If you cannot, just write in that you don't know what it is.

**4. On a scale of 1-10, (1 being very low and 10 being very high), my self-esteem is 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10. (Circle one.)**

**5. I lovingly recognize and accept my feelings and judge them no more.**

Accept	Willing	Open	Skeptical	Unwilling

**6. I own my feelings. No-one can make me feel anything. My feelings are a reflection of how I see the situation.**

Accept	Willing	Open	Skeptical	Unwilling

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**7. I now realize that the shadow attributes that are being resonated within me, even if I don't know what they are, are nothing more than stories I was shamed into believing were true. It is these that have caused me to feel bad about myself. I now completely reject those stories and restore love to myself.**

Accept	Willing	Open	Skeptical	Unwilling

It is not necessary to know what shadow material is being activated. Even if someone is mirroring something to you, it is not always easy to see what the match is between their behavior and your shadow material. So, unless it is obvious, don't waste energy trying to figure it out.

**8. I now lovingly release all judgments and negative feelings about myself and totally accept myself just the way I am in all my (*absolutely perfect*) imperfection. In particular, I release the following:**

Write the same things in this box as you wrote in Box #3. Remember, all forgiveness is fake-it-till-you-make-it, so don't worry if you don't feel self-loving at this moment. The work is happening, even so. Please note the reference to the perfection of your imperfection. If we were not imperfect we would not be human and we would not be of service to others who need us to be imperfect for them.

**9. I realize that there are people I might be tempted**

**to hold responsible for shaming me into believing these stories and teaching me that I was less than perfect. As they come to mind, I resolve to do as many Radical Forgiveness worksheets as necessary to forgive them for doing this. (List them.)**

This could be an extremely important part of your process. As mentioned previously, it is usually our parents who, unintentionally for the most part anyway, shame us into thinking ill of ourselves. Use the online Radical Forgiveness worksheet to clear this energy. If you have some serious issues with your parents, you might want to do the 21 Day Program for Forgiving Your Parents. You'll find it on our website.

**10. I would now realistically describe myself, with all my strengths and weaknesses, as follows:**

Make a strong positive claim about who you are, including attributes that are considered unacceptable (shadow stuff) and those that are acceptable. Then state your acceptance of who you are, just the way you are. This is the same exercise as on Page \_\_\_\_.

**11. Read the following statement out aloud:**

"I completely forgive myself, (your name) \_\_\_\_\_, and accept myself as a loving, generous, creative being. I release all need to hold onto negative emotions and ideas of low self-worth. I withdraw my energy from the past and release all barriers against the love and abundance that I know

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I have already. I create my thoughts, my feelings and my life and I am empowered to be myself again, to unconditionally love and support myself, just the way I am, in all my magnificence.”

**12. Read the following statement out aloud:**

“I now surrender to the Higher Power I think of as \_\_\_\_\_, and trust in the knowledge that this situation will continue to unfold perfectly and in accordance with Divine guidance and spiritual law. I acknowledge my oneness and feel myself totally reconnected with my Source. I am restored to my true nature, which is LOVE. I close my eyes in order to feel the love that flows in my life and to feel the joy that comes when the love is felt and expressed.”

**13. A Note to Myself:**

Write some sort of loving statement to yourself saying something like how much you appreciate yourself and honor yourself for doing the worksheet. Then finish by reading what you wrote plus the following statement:

“I completely accept you just the way you are, for I now realize that you have always been perfect and that there was never anything wrong with you. I acknowledge, accept and love you unconditionally just the way you are. I recognize that I am a spiritual being having a spiritual experience in a human body, and I love and support myself in every aspect of my humanness.”

**14. On a scale of 1-10, having done this worksheet, my self-esteem now is: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10**

This is the end of the worksheet.

PART SEVEN

**FORGIVING MYSELF FOR . . .**

## **15 FORGIVING MYSELF FOR CREATING MONEY ISSUES**

We have already seen that life in general and people in particular, will always mirror back to us our beliefs, attitudes, prejudices, preferences and whatever else resides down there in the subconscious mind. And yet, nothing reflects our subconscious programming more clearly than money.

If we accept the idea that we create our own reality with our thoughts and beliefs, then it follows that our financial situation is not a function of external forces, but of how we think and feel about money. This must also mean that if we change our consciousness around money, our financial situation will follow suit. Unfortunately, while that is true, it is easier said than done. Our attitudes around money are very hard to change.

We are strongly scripted from a very early age to see money a certain way, and that programming is extremely resistant to change. That's why most people go through life never varying a great deal with regard to income and wealth. We are very tightly programmed to stay within our money comfort zone and, as we saw earlier, our saboteur self will do everything it can to make sure that we do. That's why, when people sud-

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denly get a lot of money, they often lose it very quickly.

The answer to this problem lies, not in trying to reprogram the subconscious mind which is almost impossible anyway, nor in making overtures to our saboteur self, but in using our Spiritual Intelligence to go around the subconscious mind altogether. We can do that by using the Radical Self-Forgiveness process.

Since that process takes us right through to the reframe, it enables us to slip easily into the new paradigm that says that money has no meaning other than that which we give it; that there is no shortage of it; that you can attract it to you whenever you want, and so on. That should be enough to allow your Spiritual Intelligence to remove all the blocks to your solving whatever money situation you might have.

My suggestion is to use the Three Letter Process. In the first letter, you tell your money story as it is occurring for you at the moment. In the second letter, you make some excuses for yourself and find all sort of reasons why you are having the problems (old paradigm), what beliefs might be getting in the way, and so on. Then, in the third letter you give expression to the idea that there is no shortage of money (new paradigm), and that you can attract the amount of money you need to dissolve what, until now, you thought was a real problem. Let me demonstrate how this might run.

Let's assume that I am a middle-aged man who has been used to earning around \$75,000 a year but about

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a year ago had been promoted and had my salary raised to \$95,000. However, about six months after that, I lost my job and have been unable to replace it. I have a mortgage and many outgoings that used to take most of my salary so I had hardly saved anything. I have been living on my credit cards since then and have run up a debt of \$60,000. Here's my first letter:

**Letter #1:**

“What a damn fool you have been. If only you had saved some money in case something like this happened. You just spent every bit of money every month without giving a thought to the future. Now look at you. You don't even have enough money to keep things like the car repaired so you can drive to interviews. You are headed towards bankruptcy and you know it. The credit cards are maxed out and all you can manage is to make the minimum payment. You know that will never be sufficient to get you out of debt in a hundred years. You are \$60,000 in debt and you can see no way out. Yes, you are feeling desperate, scared and ashamed. Why wouldn't you?”

So that's the first letter explaining the current situation. The situation seems pretty dire, doesn't it? The second letter might go something like this:

**Letter #2:**

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“You know, you could fairly say that this has happened through no fault of your own. The firm got taken over and, despite the fact the previous lot had just promoted you, the new people had different ideas about how the place should be run. So they let you go. And it’s not surprising that you can’t get a job, given the economic conditions that pertain right now.

But you might have seen this coming though. And you might have put some money away by for a rainy day like this. But you were an optimist and always looked on the bright side and had fun while you could. I always liked that about you.

But I guess you’re now beginning to realize that there’s more to this than meets the eye. Getting a big raise like that went to your head, didn’t it? After all, you’d never had a raise of \$20,000 before.

It took you out of your comfort zone, that’s what it did. And, as a result, you sabotaged yourself by losing your job. You were already pretty close to your top limit of your comfort zone at \$75,000, so when you suddenly jumped to \$95,000 you freaked out.

You also didn’t factor in that your parents taught you a lot of negative things around money that made you leery of having a lot of it. Your mother always said that people with money were nearly always crooked and likely to cheat you out of what you had, and you believed her. You didn’t want to be thought of as untrustworthy.

Your father was a working class guy who worked for a weekly wage and never thought he should or could get beyond his station in life, and hated people who did. He looked down on people who became 'management,' regarding them as traitors to their class.

He would have been very disapproving of your rise up the corporate ladder, especially since this last raise definitely bumped you up to junior management level. You spent your whole life trying to get his approval, didn't you? The thought of his strong disapproval around this promotion was too much for you, so you bolted.

Also, because you wanted your father's approval and never got it, you have never felt worthy of much, have you? You probably felt that you didn't deserve that job either.

Oh well, I guess you are at the mercy of events as they occur now, and that the best you can hope for is a lucky break and a job offer. But you should look for something that pays no more than \$75,000. Bankruptcy may be your only option."

So, what this letter represents is my coming to understand why this has happened and what kind of programming lay behind my fear of earning more than \$75,000 a year and why I lost the job once I got promoted. I am still in victimland about it, but at least now, I am taking some responsibility for having a hand in creating the situation.

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Now let's go to the third letter, which is the Radical Self-Forgiveness reframe letter.

**Letter #3:**

“Having come into this incarnation with the intention of creating opportunities to feel separation, you have done a wonderful job with this one. There's nothing like money issues to create separation.

Even though money has no inherent value or meaning, and there is absolutely no shortage of it, people tend to experience being separated from their money as extremely painful. And the more money they have, the more painful it is. Just the fear of losing it is bad enough, let alone actually being separated from it.

So money is a wonderful substance to help us feel our feelings, learn and grow. People say they love money but really they hate it because it brings them so much fear of loss.

You have also become separated from your work and all that you thought of as stable in your life has evaporated. You are, therefore, now in a wonderful position to learn humility, which is what you wanted to learn in this lifetime. If you go through bankruptcy, that will be humbling experience for sure, so you will get a tremendous amount of value out of that.

You are also getting into that position where you

have no choice but to surrender so, again, you have an opportunity to learn that lesson. There's so much to be gained in this whole experience. I'm so glad you were able to do a Radical Forgiveness worksheet on both your mother and your father for teaching you negative things about money. By doing those worksheets you realized how they were actually serving you by giving you the programming that would set you up for this experience. Without them, you wouldn't have been able to have it. I know that you are feeling a lot of gratitude for them having done this for you.

What you are going through right now is probably the first stage of your awakening process. As this progresses, you will begin to understand that you can have as much money as you need, when you want it, and for whatever purpose. You will also learn that there are no victims or perpetrators and the Universe is a place of total abundance.

Let me assure you that the Universe is ready to shower its abundance upon you when you are ready to receive it, but you must first ask your Spiritual Intelligence to begin working with the Law of Attraction to bring it to you. I therefore suggest that you say the following proclamations out aloud:

*1. "I now see myself as being in a heightened state of openness to receive money and to have this situation resolved in the most perfect way for all concerned."*

*2. "I now realize that I am someone who can,*

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*through the Law of Attraction, attract into my life everything that I need.”*

**3.** *“I now turn this over to my own Spiritual Intelligence and surrender to Spirit in the knowledge and comfort that all is well, and that what I saw as a problem was purely a misperception on my part. I have already resolved it by recognizing that I am abundantly supplied at all times. I now recognize that any idea of shortage or lack that I was holding onto has no validity or power whatsoever, and I give it none.”*

**4.** *“I now realize that money was not the issue. I have no issues around money. Whatever the real issue was, I have handed it over to Spirit and have an unshakable trust that Spirit will take care of it for me. Thank you.”*

**“And So It Is!”**

This is the end of the worksheet

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It is our experience that when you use this kind of technology to break open a situation like this, magic happens. A job offer may simply come out of nowhere, or a business opportunity could suddenly arise that would change everything. Maybe bankruptcy does occur but out of that experience comes a completely new and financially rewarding life. You just never know. The process is more potent than anyone can imagine and even though we have been using it for years, we are still amazed at the results.

## **16 FORGIVING MYSELF FOR BEING OVERWEIGHT**

This issue is the cause of much self-loathing, shame and guilt for a lot of people. Even though it applies to the minority within the population, albeit a large one, I feel it deserves its own chapter.

Having said that, I am addressing this mainly to people who are significantly overweight rather than people who feel they just need to lose a few pounds. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that it is extremely difficult to find anyone who is happy with their body. Let's explore this a little further.

I pointed out earlier that it is possible that we have come into this life experience in order to experience separation, and all that goes with that, as a way to develop a deeper awareness of Oneness. Also, in order to play the game, so to speak, we agreed to have spiritual amnesia. In other words, we would have no remembrance of the spiritual world from which we came. So, to us humans, the separation seems very real and, for the most part, very unpleasant. Not surprisingly, we try to avoid it.

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We also agreed to experience separation, not just as a physical and mental phenomenon, but as an emotional event. And for that, a body was essential. Why?

Well, the definition of an emotion is *a thought attached to a feeling*. If you don't have a body to provide the feeling element, you have only a thought. That would negate the entire experience, since the whole point was to be able to carry the feeling of separation over to the possibility of being able to *feel* Oneness. That means, the extent to which we won't allow ourselves to experience life through our feelings, is the extent to which we are denying our purpose for being here.

Now here's where it gets interesting, though. If the body is our vehicle for taking us into and through the deep pain of separation, is it any wonder that we hate it for precisely that reason? Isn't it possible that part of us might remember what it is like not to be encumbered with a body? Isn't it possible that we might have some resentment about having to carry this burden?

If so, doesn't it make sense that we might project all our guilt and rage about being separate and in pain onto our body? After all, having taken on a body as a symbol of separation, it follows that the body must also symbolize the intense pain that inevitably accompanies the sense of separation.

In this world of separation that we have created and live in, one of the ways to stay stuck there is to consistently blame, justify, deny and project the pain of having to endure separation onto something else. We do this in one of two ways. We either project it onto someone or

something else or we turn it back and project it onto our own body. Because we are so identified with our bodies, the hatred we feel towards our bodies becomes generalized as self-hatred.

In order to feel the pain of separation even more intensely within ourselves, we attract circumstances that will damage our bodies and wound us emotionally. Sexual abuse is one such example and excess weight is often a clue that it has occurred. Even if the mind has blocked it out, the body remembers and piles on the fat as a layer of protection against real or imagined future sexual attack.

What better way to ward off physical advances than to make ourselves decidedly unattractive. What better way to become sexually unattractive than to be obese?

However, once we have reached the stage of awakening and therefore no longer need to keep leveraging that pain, we can let go of the fear, knowing that we are safe and will not attract that experience any more. At that point, the weight should come off.

We noticed that this was occurring when people released stories of that nature at the *Miracles* workshop. They reported significant weight loss a few weeks afterwards. This became the basis of our Radical Weight Loss Program, the tag-line of which is *"The only things you have to give up in this program are the stories that caused you to gain weight in the first place."*

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Obviously, if you were abused in some way by someone, then doing some Radical Forgiveness worksheets on the person would be a sensible thing to do. I would definitely recommend that. I would even go so far as to say that if the abuse was severe you might want to do a workshop.

However, from a Radical Self-Forgiveness point of view, there might be several things you need to forgive yourself for. For example:

1. Attracting that circumstance into your life in the first place. By doing this, you are, in effect, taking responsibility for having a hand in creating the situation, knowing that there are no accidents and your soul creates such circumstance for good reason. However, since you might already be prone to guilt, you may have tendency to turn this against yourself and make yourself wrong for creating it. Doing a Radical Self-Forgiveness worksheet on this would be a way to guard against this.
2. Thinking that it was your fault. When children are abused sexually, they often think they must have caused it in some way. This is compounded when, having summoned up the courage to tell their parent, they are not believed or get chastised even more. A Radical Self-Forgiveness worksheet would help to dispel that thought. (A Radical Forgiveness worksheet on the parent would also be helpful.)
3. Feeling guilty for any pleasure derived from the experience. Even though deep down a child knows

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it is wrong, stimulation of the genitals can still feel good. Nevertheless, conflict and guilt for feeling pleasure is usually the result. Since the body is made to feel pleasure, it is inappropriate guilt, so the worksheet should deal with that quickly enough.

4. For projecting your fear onto your body and packing on the weight. The focus here would be, firstly, on forgiving yourself for misunderstanding that the fat was serving a very important function, and, secondly, for not realizing that adding fat to wherever on your body you were feeling vulnerable was, in fact, a self-loving thing to do.

Besides protecting against intimacy or sexual attack, there are many other reasons for being overweight and often much too difficult to figure out. That doesn't matter though, because all we need to know is that the body is crying out for some unconditional love. What is required now then, is to switch from Radical Self-Forgiveness to Radical Self-Acceptance, and to use the Radical Self-Acceptance worksheet to send love and acceptance into our bodies, especially those parts of ourselves we have, up to now, hated the most.

## **17 FORGIVING MYSELF FOR MY ILL HEALTH**

Whenever we hurt ourselves, develop pain, disease or malfunction in some part of our body, we tend to project anger into that part. We do this for more or less the very same reasons I gave in the previous chapter. When our own body lets us down, we feel victimized by it.

But again, we are faced with that same question we had right at the beginning of this book. Who is being victimized by whom here? Is our body really separate from who we are? Even if we say that we are not JUST our bodies, can we honestly say that our bodies are not an integral part of our human selves?

Might it not be more helpful to think of the body as just another aspect of self, just like the Judging Self, the Ideal Self, the Inferred Self and all the others? Could it be that our victimization experience is simply the result of our body-self being attacked by the Judging Self, and the Ideal Self, both of whom say that you shouldn't be unhealthy and that ill health means you are failure?

What if we were able to see ill health as a self-created opportunity to feel separation within ourselves, just as

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we have said other forms of inner conflict are purposeful in this way? Isn't that how we quieten the Judging Self?

Wouldn't that also mean we might be more likely to release it once we had reached our goal for the amount of separation agreed to for this lifetime? Wouldn't we be more able to release ill health through the application of Love and Radical Self-Forgiveness to our own body-self if we saw it this way? Once we have awakened, wouldn't we have less need to even create it?

Gregg Braden, in his book, *The God Code*, presents a very strong scientific case for God (as variously defined), being contained in our DNA. If this is true then, even when diseased, our body cannot be other than perfect. In other words, as with everything about us, there is always perfection in our imperfection. And, in whatever form that imperfection shows itself, it is given to us, or chosen by us, as a way to grow and learn.

Robert Schwartz, in his book *Courageous Souls*, shows quite conclusively that people choose to have certain physical and mental afflictions during their lifetimes in order to learn certain lessons. He verified this hypothesis by giving an outline of all his interviewees stories to (a) a psychic, (b) a medium, and (c) a channel.

These three types of seer each independently gave a very similar account for each person studied. Being able to see beyond the veil to the spiritual world, all three were able, in their own way, to describe a pre-incarnation conversation with each of the subject's

respective soul groups. The discussion centered on what each would choose to have for their life. The others would assist them by causing whatever circumstances they had chosen to come about in some way.

The idea that the body has a consciousness of its own, that might be considered a self-within-the-self, is strongly suggested by Michael Talbot, in his book *The Holographic Universe*. He recounts how he was having trouble with his spleen and began doing visualizations and other exercises in order to heal it. It wasn't working, so during a meditation he mentally scolded his spleen for not cooperating.

A few days later he visited a natural healer who was also a psychic. She was scanning his body and stopped over his spleen and said. "Your spleen is very upset about something — have you been yelling at your spleen?" When he admitted it, she became very cross with him.

"You mustn't do that," she said. "Your spleen thought it was doing the right thing by being ill, but when you scolded it, it got very confused. You should never be angry at your internal organs. Send them only loving messages."

This does seem to indicate that the body has a self that is intelligent and yet is still a part of who we are. That gives us three possible ways of applying forgiveness to our bodies in order to support them. These are:

1. Treat the afflicted body part as if it were independently intelligent and have a conversation with it.

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One way to do this, which is very effective, is to do what is known as Voice Dialogue. This technique was developed by psychotherapists, Hal and Sidra Stone as a way to dialogue with one's own sub-personalities.

The idea is that you sit in a chair with an empty chair opposite you, or by the side of you. You mentally place whatever part of yourself you want to dialogue with in the empty chair. Let's take the example of the spleen. With your eyes closed, you might ask your spleen what is going on? You then immediately shift to the other chair and give an answer as if you were the spleen. You then simply keep this going back and forth, always shifting to the other chair each time you speak as either your authentic human self or as your spleen. You keep your eyes closed the whole time.

This has the effect of externalizing the part of the body that is afflicted, making genuine dialogue possible in a way that would be precluded if you tried to do it inside your head. You will be very surprised what you learn from your body part by doing this.

**2.** Do a Radical Forgiveness process on it. Having externalized in the way described in 1 above, you are now able to use a Radical Forgiveness worksheet to forgive it for causing you pain. This is because you now have a forgiver (your authentic human self) and a forgiven (your body part).

**3.** Do a Radical Self-Forgiveness process in which you apply forgiveness to yourself for creating the health problem in the first place. This can be a Radical Self-Forgiveness Worksheet, or the Three Letters Process.

**IN CONCLUSION** I gave the two examples in the previous section to show how we can apply the Radical Self-For-giveness technology and the Radical Self-Acceptance technology to any situation about which we tend to be self-critical, or for which we blame ourselves.

I could have gone on writing chapter after chapter in the same vein, giving other examples, such as, forgiving myself for:

Not Having a Life Partner  
For Being Unable to Have Children  
Marrying the Wrong Person  
Missing the Opportunity to . . . .  
Not Having the Courage to . . . .

But it would have been a waste of paper because the prescription would be the same in every case — ***use the technology***. It really is that simple.

You might recall that in the beginning section of the book I made the point that Radical Forgiveness differs from traditional forgiveness in that it is quick, simple, easy to

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do and a simple step-by-step process. This is no less true for Radical Self-Forgiveness and Self-Acceptance.

Your willingness to do the worksheets with a relatively open mind is all that it takes. Your Spiritual Intelligence takes care of it from there.

All the principles and everything needed to activate your Spiritual Intelligence are imbedded in the worksheets. That's why we consider those to be the primary tools in the tool box.

The Three Letter Process is a little more challenging since you have to put into the letters more or less the same stuff as in the worksheets, but in your own language and style. But here again, I want to assure you that your willingness to do the three letters is 99% of what is required. What you actually write is only a tiny part of it. After all, even if your writing skills are not great, the Universe gets your intention.

I also strongly recommend that you avail yourself of another tool that is incredibly helpful in preventing you dropping back into your old habit of beating yourself up as soon as something occurs. It is called The 13 Steps to Radical Self-Forgiveness.

I have not included this tool in the book because it is one that needs to be listened to rather than read. It is therefore only available on a CD. I even decided against writing out the 13 steps and including it in the book just as information. That's because I felt that doing so would reduce the value of the experience, especially if read prior to hearing the audio for the first time.

Naturally, as with all the tools, The 13 Steps to Radical Self-Forgiveness takes you through the five stages — telling the story; feeling the feelings; collapsing the story; reframing the story and integrating the new story. However, it does so in a very novel way.

It invites you to go over the story in your mind and to give yourself permission to feel the feelings attached to the story. Then you simply respond to the 13 questions that I ask you by saying, “Yes.” (You say “Yes,” even if you would rather say “No.” It’s a fake-it-till-you-make-it deal, remember?) You should also say “Yes,” out aloud because this is what helps you integrate the new story into your physical body. (Stage Five.)

This is not a hypnotic process, nor a mind-altering process, so it is safe to do it in the car. It does not require you to have your eyes closed, though if you are doing it in a place where it is safe to close your eyes, you might find it marginally more powerful.

The 13 Steps to Radical Self-Forgiveness CD is a tool to have by you at all times to use, more or less, on a daily basis as situations arise. The CD is available from our website, [www.radicalforgiveness](http://www.radicalforgiveness).

I hope you have found the practical exercises enlightening and that, in discovering you are an amalgam of many selves, you have come to know those parts of yourself better. I hope too, that you can now love them just the way they are, no matter what.

Finally, my wish for you is that you realize deep down that your I AM Self loves and supports you exactly as you are

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and recognizes you as the unique and wonderful human being that you are. I do, too.

I would like to finish the book with some words that are not my own, but I feel are fitting for the ending. I do not know who authored them, but I give thanks to the person who did.

### **The YOU That Is Special**

*In all the world there is nobody like you. Since the beginning of time, there has never been another person like you. Nobody has your smile. Nobody has your eyes, your nose, your hair, your hands, your voice. You are special.*

*No one sees things just as you do, In all of time there has been no one who laughs like you, no one who cries like you. And what makes you laugh and cry, will never provoke identical laughter and tears from anybody else, ever.*

*You are the only one in all creation with your set of natural abilities. There will always be somebody who is better at one of the things you are good at, but no one in the Universe can reach the quality of your combination of talents, ideas, natural abilities and spiritual abilities.*

*Through all of eternity, no one will every look, talk, walk, think, or do exactly like you. You are special. You are. And, as in all rarity, there is great value. Because of your great rare value, you need not attempt to imitate others. You should accept - celebrate*

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*- your differences and even those parts of yourself that you judge to be not OK.*

*You are special. Continue to realize it's not an accident that you are who you are. Continue to see that you were created to serve a very special purpose. Out of all the billions of applicants for that mission, only you qualified. You were the one with the best combination of what it takes. That just as surely as every snow flake that falls has a perfect design and no two designs are the same, so no two people are the same.*

*Ask that you continue to be guided in fulfilling your Divine Plan. Trust the process and let it unfold in perfect sequence and perfect order. Be grateful and happy.*

