

Workbook Chapter Twenty-Three Surrender

Self-Assessment Tools:

A Declaration of Unconditional Surrender

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This is a powerful self-healing tool that will totally transform your life and your relationships, if you are able to use it on a regular basis. This is an internal process and you will have to use all your inner resources to use it effectively. You are actually talking to your higher self or your God within, if you will, when you are doing this exercise. Here are the steps in unconditional surrender.

1. Say to yourself, "I am sorry."

- a. This is a confession of your contribution to the creation of any problems or conflicts because you got "triggered" by an unhealed developmental trauma. This may require you to do some inner "shadow" work to find your actual contributions.
- b. It also includes a willingness to accept the information from yourself or others about how your unfinished past learning experiences have contributed to the creation any conflict or problems you are currently having. You can ask for feedback from others if you don't know, or you can listen to and accept your own inner truth.
- c. This also requires you to have empathy for yourself and others who are still caught up in any shame-based beliefs as the result of any past unfinished learning experiences

2. Say to yourself, "Please forgive me."

- a. This involves letting go of any guilt or shame you may feel about having contributed to the creation of any problem or conflict you have in your life because of an unfinished learning experience.

There need not be any guilt or shame for discovering how your past unfinished learning experiences contributed to the problem. Remember that your natural learning style is to figure out how and why these hidden and unfinished learning experiences still are showing up. It is the first step in finishing them.

b. The word "forgive" means to "give back," so there are two parts to forgiveness. First, you have to give back to yourself the truth about who are and not what you were told growing up. Second, It means giving back to whomever gave you the illusions that you believed as the truth about who you are. You now know it belongs to them or even goes beyond them to some unknown source where it all began.

Send it back to others not with anger or blame, but with love and compassion to wherever it came from so it can be now transformed into light. Remember those that told you the lies also were suffering from some of the same shame-based beliefs that you were and you need to have compassion for their plight as well. You can tell yourself and any other people that you are no longer willing to carry the burdens that these shame-based beliefs and unfinished learning experiences that have caused you to repeat them.

3). ***Say to yourself, "Thank you."***

a. Thank yourself for freeing yourself from the illusions of separateness that your unfinished learning experiences have caused you to believe. Realize that you were trapped and feeling alone. Remember that the truth is that *we are all one*.

b. Thank others for being willing to let go of their illusions of separateness caused by their unfinished learning experiences and for accepting your apology in Step #2 above.

c. Acknowledge the common struggle that we all face as human beings in healing our developmental traumas and commit yourself to being more aware of any shame-based beliefs caused by your past unfinished learning experiences that still keep you feeling separate from others and asking others to do the same.

4). ***Say to yourself, "I love you."***

a. Declare your love for yourself for who you really are. Do this by acknowledging all your good qualities and all the efforts you have made to finish your past unfinished learning experiences and to be a life-giving person with empathy, compassion and love for yourself and others.

b. Acknowledge all the good things you see in others that you previously did not see in them as the result of your shame-based beliefs.

c. Pledge to discover new ways each day to love yourself and others more for who you really are and who they really are. Repeat this process any time you get triggered and find yourself shaming yourself or others for your problems or conflicts or when you again feel separate in some important way from others.

Learning this skill will keep you from getting into unresolvable conflicts and from getting triggered by the memories of your past unfinished learning experiences. It will allow you to engage in meaningful debates or discussions where you have to hold your ground. You no longer will have to be intimidated by others, who will say or do things that previously would trigger you and cause you to lose focus in your interactions.

Case Example

Linda came to Colorado for two weeks of intensive therapy with us, after trying 15 years of many other forms of therapy. She had attended a workshop I gave in her home area several months earlier. In that workshop, Linda had a breakthrough experience that encouraged her to do further work with us.

Linda's case turned out to be one of the most bizarre I had worked with. The oldest child of very wealthy parents, she grew up in an environment that from the outside appeared to be quite normal, even ideal.

Her parents, however, were some of the most abusive people I have ever heard of. As a result, Linda had developed many counter-dependent behaviors. Her mother fit the co-dependent behavior prototype perfectly: powerless, highly passive, and totally dominated by her tyrant husband. He had the classic counter-dependent narcissistic symptoms: egotistic, judgmental, perfectionistic, and highly demanding. Linda compared her childhood with these parents to growing up in a concentration camp.

In the beginning of her treatment, I devoted several hours of therapy time to helping her reconstruct the pieces of her trauma drama. I examined the dynamics of her

parents' relationship; her role in keeping the relationship between the two of them in some form of homeostasis; the unconscious psychic agreements she had with each of them; the values, beliefs, assumptions, and expectations that she had used to structure her life experiences; the recurring patterns in her list of betrayals; and the original developmental traumas that had scripted her life.

Because of the extreme abuse she experienced throughout her childhood, I knew that her core developmental trauma must have been quite severe. I explored with her the circumstances of her birth. She knew that her mother had been drugged and unconscious and that at one point in the birth process there were difficulties that put Linda's life in peril. The attending physician, who managed to pull her out with forceps, caught her by her right arm as she was delivered. She also believed that the physician held her upside down and spanked her bottom to get her breathing. With this information, we were able to begin piecing together with Linda the elements of her life trauma drama.

I could see how Linda's birth became a metaphor for her life. Linda's mother continued to play the passive, unconscious role she had played in her birth by "*blinking out*" whenever Linda was being harmed. Her father, an attorney, picked up the role of the abusive physician. Together her parents recreated Linda's birth trauma. Linda always experienced her childhood as though her life was constantly in danger.

In the privacy of their upper-class home, they subjected Linda to sophisticated psychological and spiritual torture using the game called "*Court-room.*" Linda was kept under constant surveillance like a prisoner. Any time she violated the smallest rule (and there were many), Linda was brought before her parents. Here they described to Linda the nature and severity of her transgression in terms that left her feeling like a criminal.

Her father, who played the prosecutor, presented the case against her. He would often call Linda's mother as a witness to testify against her. She was taken before the judge (again her father) where she was always found guilty. Then she would receive her "*sentence.*" When she was small

it was often a spanking, but as she grew older it was mostly humiliation, shame, degradation, discounting, and name-calling.

In one instance at the age of three, she got scared in the middle of the night and went into her parents' bedroom and awakened her father. He was so angry with her that he marched her down the hall to the bathroom, made her stand in front of the open toilet, pulled down her underpants, and then spanked her bare bottom.

The force of the angry march down the hall while she was half asleep, the sight and smell of the open toilet, and the humiliation of having to stand half-naked while her father spanked her so terrorized her that the incident left a permanent scar in Linda's psyche.

The trauma of Linda's birth and other similar early childhood developmental traumas created the theme for her life: "*I'm constantly on trial for my life.*" This theme was woven through various relationships, job situations, and even appeared in an experience with a well-known doctor when she conferred with him about psychiatric treatment. Over the years, Linda had accumulated a large file full of old letters, journal writings, newspaper clippings, and other materials that she used to document the terror of her childhood. Thinking that we were going to judge her, she used this file as a resource to support her "*case for the defense.*" When she would get scared she would pull clippings or various pieces of information she had saved from it during her therapy work with us to help her prove her innocence to us and to herself over and over again.

The point when she was able to see clearly the core developmental trauma and the overlaying experiences of her life was enlightening for Linda. A flash of comprehension seemed to move through her as she understood for the first time the whole picture of her life. This seemed to shock her into a state of clarity.

As I discussed the aspects of her developmental trauma drama, Janae suggested that she might have become bonded to her drama, attaching to it as she might a doll or blanket as children often do when there is a deficiency in early parenting. This suggestion startled her, and we could see her shift internally as she reflected on this

possibility. I suggested that this might have been a survival mechanism for her while she was small, because there was nothing else that was safe for her to bond with. In the present time, she now had safe people with whom she could bond and begin to get her needs met. I explored with her the old reality of "*I'm constantly on trial for my life*" to see how much of it was true in present time. She admitted that she realized that was no longer a child, no longer was she living anywhere close to her parents, and that in reality her life was no longer in high danger.

Just speaking this truth released some of the tension in her body as we sat together. Then we led her step-by-step through the "*Completion Process with Your Parents*" exercise, designed to help clients understand and complete any unfinished business with their parents.

By the time the two weeks of therapy were over, I could see a dramatic change in Linda's appearance and behavior. She appeared lighter, softer, and gentler. She radiated an incredible loving energy. She also spoke gently and acted more centered. The angry, agitated woman who came for therapy two weeks earlier had been transformed.

After Linda's return home, she kept us posted with progress reports that were a continual affirmation of her life change. In one letter three months later Linda wrote, "*My healing has held up. My body is very peaceful. I have reduced my sleeping needs from eight to five hours and wake up feeling rested. All this healing is a gift, a blessing and a miracle.*"

In other exuberant letters, she described the joy she was finding in burning and throwing out the many boxes and stacks of "*defense materials*" that she had collected for so long. The process of letting go of her developmental trauma drama was a joyful and healing one for Linda.

