

Emotional Imprints

Negative childhood experiences (trauma) lead to specific beliefs (I am unlovable), and to find ways of coping. These coping tools can evolve from stealing sips of beer to alcoholism as an adult, or from seeing a playboy magazine to infidelity as an adult.

The evolution in childhood progresses from trauma, to need for relief, to beliefs that stay with us and lead to progressively destructive coping mechanisms.

Trauma Timeline

Trauma can be big “T” such as physical or sexual abuse, parents rage or divorcing, being bullied and ridiculed and small “T”: called names, ignored, unseen, etc... Write out a brief phrase for each area of negative experiences as early as you can remember. Don’t judge or minimize any event regardless of how little it might seem. A push, a look, a negative comment or gesture can be emotionally distressing.

| | Early childhood | Adolescent | Early adult |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Abandoned | | | |
| Physical abuse | | | |
| Sexual abuse | | | |
| Religious abuse | | | |
| Bullied | | | |
| Emotional abuse | | | |
| Divorce | | | |
| Death | | | |
| Prison | | | |
| Genetics (family tree) | | | |

Beliefs / Messages

Born in childhood that still persist

As you reflect on your childhood, what are the most impactful beliefs that you still carry that have an influence on how you think about yourself, and those that have some influence on your behaviors.

| “I am ...” | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Unloveable | | | | | |
| Unworthy | | | | | |
| Can't cope | | | | | |
| Bad | | | | | |
| A disappointment | | | | | |
| Disposable | | | | | |
| On my own | | | | | |
| Others | | | | | |
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | |

Coping

My unhealthy means for finding relief

Rate the ways in which you betrayed yourself, your values / faith / God, spouse, family, workers, church, friends, and describe the most often circumstance or situations. E.g. I lied when I was afraid that I made a mistake or would get yelled at or cause conflict.

| | 1= never 5= very often | Circumstances |
|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Dishonesty (e.g. secrets, lying, half truths) | | |
| Abuse (verbal, physical, neglect) | | |
| Acting out (porn, sex, clubs) | | |
| Escape (isolating, workaholism) | | |
| Alcohol/Drug abuse | | |
| TV/Social Media .. Other | | |
| Neglect | | |
| Other | | |
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |