

Demonstrating the Coping Impulse

Purpose: To illustrate the coping impulse resulting from our defensive inner process.

Directions: In completing this exercise, it is helpful to begin with some recent incident during which you had an overreaction that had the consequence of your feeling shame or low-self esteem. You should expect that reviewing the incident might elicit some discomfort as you examine your response. Since learning about the coping impulse and the inner process will cause discomfort, choose an incident with a level of discomfort you are willing to tolerate. See the specific directions on the Inner Process Worksheet.

INNER PROCESS WORKSHEET -- PART 1

(After completing parts 1A and 1B, turn to the next page)

A. EXTERNAL EVENT -- Describe the specific event or circumstance that bothered you. What actually happened? What was said or done?

B. EXTERNAL RESPONSE -- Describe your specific *actions* in response to the above external event. What did you do or say? What did you want to say, but didn't?

INNER PROCESS WORKSHEET -- PART 2

PERCEPTION: What did you pay particular attention to in the incident?

MEANING: What was your "spin" or interpretation of what had happened?

FEELING: How were you feeling about what was going on here?

FEELING ABOUT FEELING: How did you feel about feeling this way? Was it OK or not?

COPING STYLE: What was your inclination about responding? Blaming? Placating? Intellectual? Irrelevant?

PERMISSION TO TALK: To what extent were you willing to talk about the above to others involved in the event or circumstance? What rule do you have about talking about your reactions?