

## Chapter 3 - Addiction

### **WE MUST DISCOVER WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR INSIDE NOT OUTSIDE OF OURSELVES**

We all have an inner peace we can learn to consciously access.

External rational thought creates external feelings.

Internal conscious thought accesses internal feelings.

### **Spiritual Intelligence Inventory**

1. Addictive people should work primarily to be free of their addiction. True or False?
2. There are many reasons for addiction. True or False?
3. A major cause for addiction is abuse as children. True or False?
4. People become addicts because they are trying to feel good. True or False?
5. When other people let me down, it is their fault if I feel hurt. True or False?
6. The reason some people drink is because being alone makes them feel lonely. True or False?

### **Twelve Step-Spirituality**

The film "City Slickers" starts off with Billy Crystal and a couple of friends running with the bulls in Spain. After a few other madcap yearly experiences, they decide to try the Wild West. They go to a cattle run with Jack Palance as the hardened old cowpoke. In the middle of the film Jack holds up one finger and says, "Everybody is looking for this". Billy Crystal retorts, "Your finger?" "No, everybody is looking for one thing." Billy asks, "What is it?" and Jack replies, "I can't tell you. You must discover it for yourself."

Well, I can you what everyone is looking for -- to feel good. But it won't do them any good unless they discover it for themselves – unless they take it to heart and understand it.

Why do drug addicts stick a needle in their arms risking disease, dependency, and possible loss of life? Because they want to feel good.

Why do people become alcoholics and risk losing their family, marriage, and home? Because they want to feel good.

Why do people overeat to the degree they endanger their health and risk the ridicule of insensitive people? Because they want to feel good.

Why do people fill their lungs with smoke, tearing them up, risking lung cancer, and endangering others they love with secondary smoke? Because they want to feel good.

The word "good" from the olde English "gud" meaning "God"; as in Good Friday which means God's Friday or "goodbye" from the old English "God be with ye." What all people are looking for is to feel God.

The problem is people who want to feel good are looking on the outside rather than on the inside to find the presence of God.

If you have spiritual intelligence, you are working a twelve-step program. And if you are working a twelve-step program, you have spiritual intelligence.

It must be understood that when you are in the peace of God, the steps of this program are a matter of common sense. But if you are not, the steps may seem like nonsense.

The problem is that the world is looking for the wisdom to get the peace. The solution is found in the AA prayer, which asks God to grant the peace (serenity). To get the wisdom." When you get in the peace, the wisdom and understanding will come.

### **Twelve Steps of Applied Spirituality**

**Step 1.** *I admitted that I was powerless over my addiction, (dysfunction, Sin) and that my life had become unmanageable.*

Believing that the event creates the feeling (E =F) is the cause of all addiction, dependency, dysfunctional behavior Sin and psychological problems. This "stinking thinking" causes us to become powerless, out of control and victims.

The addict thinks the event creates the feeling. They think that if they just had one more shot, slice of cake, cigarette, snort, they would feel better. The problem is, the next time they will need more of the drug, alcohol, cigarettes, food etc.

This may be true but the reverse is not true. Recovery starts when they begin to realize that it is possible to be in the peace even if they don't get the external stimulant. Once this fact moves from the head to the heart, from knowledge to understanding, their life starts to become manageable.

**Step 2.** *I began to experience and believe in Gods Inner peace.*

As we begin to understand that God's peace is greater than ourselves, that it can restore us to Life, we learn to access His peace within us.

Recovery is not a bandage. It means a change of our basic nature. Understanding the meaning of an inner peace of God experience not only makes life manageable, but it also changes our nature and restores us to life.

**Step 3.** *I made a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God's Inner power.*

When we consciously focus on accessing the inner peace of God, we find **F**eeeling

Triggers Thought, Which Creates the Event (**F + T = E**).

Millions of people are sincere about wanting to do this, but they just don't know how to do it. It is easy enough to tell a person, "Just turn your life over to God," or "Let go and let God," or "Look inside". The problem is, there is not much of an explanation on how to do it.

You have to know what you are doing in order to make a conscious contact. You have to understand what it means to make the switch from external rational, to internal conscious thought.

It would be good to try it yourself. Right now while you are reading. The Twelve Steps decide to give your life over to God as the highest Power. "Highest" means not only that He is greater, but also that the power of His Presence is not yours. It is a gift.

Some people will point to the group they are in as their "higher power." This can work because the power of the group is greater than the sum of all of its parts, and they must use their conscious internal sensing to experience the presence of the group.

Try sensing the presence of anything or anyone that is around you now. Once you use your conscious thinking to sense the presence of something or someone else, just focus on the essence of your inner peace (but, do not think about it).

Some readers doing this exercise are right now experiencing a sense of the Presence of God's inner peace. Others are not. The only difference between those who are, and those who are not, is that those who are, are using their internal conscious faculty to focus on the inner peace of God, and those who are not, no matter how much they know about spiritual things are just not using their internal consciousness to focus on the presence.

**Step 4.** *I made a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself.*

The critical word here is "made" (past tense). Did you make it through to step 4, or did you go back to the first step?

There were five frogs on a lily pad. Two decided to jump how many were left? The answer is "five", because all they did was decide to do it, but they hadn't done it yet.

Some people have called the first three steps of their program the "Three Step Waltz." They step one-two-three, one-two-three, one-two-three...

The question for us is, did I waltz or did I jump?

We must discover what we are looking for inside ourselves, not outside ourselves.

To keep my counseling license up, I must take continuing education. I spent one whole day in a presentation on drug abuse and dependency. If they were asked, everyone in this presentation would have agreed that addiction is caused by trying to get what we are

looking for outside rather than inside ourselves. Yet this was never mentioned much less any thought given to how to do it.

The definition of a "dependent" is a person who is trying to find what they are looking for outside of themselves rather than inside.

This is the point where we choose to move from the knowledge to the understanding, from the head to the heart, from talking to doing, from reading about to experiencing in.

A nun at a peace rally had a sign that said, "DO IT, DAMN IT!"

**Step 5.** *With inner wisdom and understanding, I admitted to myself and to another human being the exact nature of my wrong.*

It is important to make this confession to another person. If we are to break our denial, we must face everything by being open to at least one person. When we are through, we know what we said, and they know what we said. We know what we didn't say, but they don't know what we didn't say.

As we learn to lead from weakness, we become powerful.

Reflect on this statement: "You do not always have to feel pain every time you think of something that has happened to you." Reflect on this until you see it as truth that you no longer have to shame yourself.

We need to start by getting in the peace and then making our confession. The traditional concept is that we make a confession to get the peace. That is going from "out" to "in".

We must learn to do it the other way, going from "in" to "out". We start with the peace, then make the confession.

People who feel at peace and forgiven can make a much deeper confession than those who are fearful they may not be forgiven.

**Step 6.** *I was entirely ready to have God's peace remove all the defects of my character.*

Accessing the inner peace of God, is the key to eliminating all addiction, dependency, dysfunctional behavior and psychological problems. We no longer have to be victims of our past and what happened to us.

We discover that the "healing is in the feeling." When you get in the feeling of peace, you find healing.

Some people, when they are told that the "healing is in the feeling," want to know what good it will do before doing it. But it is only when they choose to use their conscious faculties and focus on experience the peace of God, do they then understand what good it

will do.

When you are in the peace, you don't have defects. There are no crippled people. The pain is gone. The healing is in the feeling.

**Step 7.** I humbly sought my inner power to remove all of my shortcomings.

Take to heart this truth: When you think of what happened, it would be possible to be in the peace. Then, as you are reflecting on this truth, open yourself up to the presence God's inner peace.

Once we get in the peace we need to learn how to stay in it through practice. There will be times we will feel under attack. Our first move needs to be to get back in the peace before we do anything else. But this does take practice.

**Step 8.** I made a list of all persons who I had harmed and became willing to make amends.

Anger at someone else is caused by pain. We cover the pain with anger and blame. The dependent addict says, "Because you did this to me, I feel hurt. It is your fault, and I can't forgive you." This is a major block in our recovery. Many times people we have harmed are those we blame for hurting us, and we justify our reaction to them by blaming them for our hurt.

Recovery starts again when we rid ourselves of blaming others for our hurt. We can say with true understanding "When I think of the event, I feel the hurt." It is the truth without blaming others for our feelings.

All dysfunctional behavior is caused by insecurity.

For this reason many people believe that the biggest cause of addiction is child abuse. In reality there is only one reason for addiction, and that is "trying to find what we are looking for outside rather than inside ourselves.

Looking outside creates insecurity, which leads to dysfunctional behavior and addiction. We must stop blaming and shaming ourselves and others. This means that we must understand that the "issue is not the issue".

The problem is not the addiction. The addiction is the symptom of wrong thinking. The addict tends to blame everyone else for the way they are feeling. The real reason is in the way they are thinking and the mood they are in. This means we do not have to shame ourselves, but we do need to understand the dynamics to make it right with those we have offended.. It is not an excuse, just an answer to why we did it.

**Step 9.** I made direct amends to people I have harmed whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Take a moment now and consider a time of a painful event. Consider a time when you felt either more or less hurt. If what happened to you was the cause of your hurt, you would feel the same hurt all the time. By freeing yourself from blaming others for your hurt, you will begin to regain a sense of control coming back into your life.

We need to understand the three areas of responsibility boundaries: moral, physical and emotional.

We have a moral responsibility to do the right thing, to be our "brother's keeper", to do what we can.

You don't have to be a "spin doctor" to rationalize things and make them seem to be correct. Like the man who was late for his plane at the airport and urged the cabby to speed all the way. The cabby got him there just in time. The man gave the cabby the exact amount on the meter, but no tip for his effort. Seeing the cabby's look he asked, "Is that correct?" "It's correct", replied the cabby, "but it ain't right." We need to seek the courage to change the things we can change.

We also have a physical responsibility, which is our ability to respond. We can be helpful, but we cannot help anyone. If a person does not want to eat, we cannot eat for them. We need the peace of God to endure the things we cannot change.

We also need to understand emotional responsibility. That means we do not blame others for our feelings. When we do, we lose any sense of boundaries in the other two. Not blaming others enables us to make amends to those we have acted toward in an irresponsible way. We need to seek the wisdom to know the difference between healthy and unhealthy emotions.

**Step 10.** I continue to take personal inventory, and when I am wrong, I promptly admit it.

We recognize that it is thought that creates feelings, not events: **Event Triggers Thought Which Creates Feeling (E + T = F).**

As soon as we accept this, we begin to move from a position of powerlessness to one of inner strength and power.

Applied Spiritual Intelligence<sup>101</sup> is the ability to get into God's peace, once we realize we are out. When we are at peace, we don't spend a lot of time worrying about staying in. The key is catching ourselves when we fall out. Falling out of the peace is like hitting those little lane bumps on the highway. They are there to warn us we are getting off course.

Thinking this way, our anger, guilt, pain can become our friends rather than our enemies. They can be the marks of warning, telling us to remember it is our thoughts, not the actions of others that are producing our feelings.

Then we know that it's time to choose to get back in the peace. We don't have to discourage healthy hurt, anger, guilt, or sadness. But when our emotions begin to become dysfunctional, we need to admit it.

**Step 11.** I sought only conscious contact with the presence of God's inner peace for wisdom and the power to carry it out.

Reflect on the fact that the mood you are in does make a difference. When this becomes obvious you will realize the event cannot be causing the pain. If you do not feel the same pain every time you think of the same event in the same way, then our mood must influence our reaction. It can't be the event. It must be our perspective.

Applied Spiritual Intelligence 201 is learning how consciously to stay inwardly in the peace while outwardly going about our business.

This sounds too simple. We think, "There must be something more," but this is the Mother Lode. If you understand its meaning, it will be the last workshop, Conference, or self-help book you will ever need.

A TV advertisement tells us, "Our search is over, but the adventure has just begun." You no longer are on a journey, you are home. You still learn, still go deeper, still enjoy the moment more, but you are not searching.

Knowing a lot does not guarantee we won't be lost, but it is also true that we do not have to know a lot not to be lost. Knowing how to access our Inner peace is the key to eliminating all dysfunctional behavior and addiction

**Step 12.** Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, I tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all my affairs.

A spiritual awakening occurs when we take to heart the question, "What difference does being in the peace or not being in the peace make while I am going through a difficult time?"

Applied Spiritual Intelligence 301 is to help others get into the peace. You cannot do it unless you yourself are doing it, being in the peace of God.

The main point of these steps is to recognize the difference of what being in or out of the peace can make. When one is in the peace, the steps are common sense. When one is out, they are difficult taskmasters that must be obeyed

Now check your answers and see if you have any change of heart.

### **Response to Spiritual Intelligence Inventory**

1. Addictive people should work primarily to be free of their addiction.

False - Addiction is a symptom not a cause.

2. There are many reasons for addiction.

False - Addiction is caused by trying to find what you are looking for outside rather than inside.

3. A major cause for addiction is abuse as children.

False - Addicts who think their pain comes from abuse rather than thought will always be victims.

4. People become addicts because they are trying to feel good.

True - They are trying to find feeling good externally rather than internally

5. When other people let me down, it is their fault if I feel hurt.

False - Dependent thought creates dependent feeling. Blaming comes when we believe events create feelings.

6. The reason some people drink is because being alone makes them feel lonely

False - Being alone does not cause the feeling of loneliness. It is the way they are thinking