Changing Course

The Recovery Process

From a childhood of chronic loss and an adapted adult lifestyle

Abandonment experiences:

Conditional love

Boundaries violated

Family of origin conditions:
- Denial
- Rigid and/or chaotic
- Isolation/disconnection
- Shame

Family of origin rules:
- Don't talk
- Don't trust
- Don't feel

Feelings as a child:
- Afraid, ashamed
- Helpless, powerless
- Angry, guilty
- Lonely, sad

Personality characteristics as adult:
- Dogmatic
- Rigid
- Controlling
- Dependent

Feelings as adult:
- Isolated, lonely
- Unlovable, unworthy
- Shameful, angry, sad

The Four Steps to Freedom

1. Exploring past losses
2. Connecting the past to the present
3. Challenging internalized beliefs
4. Learning new skills

Grieving Past Feelings & Processing Present Feelings

1. Embrace the feeling
2. Identify the source
3. Grieve the pain
4. Express the feeling here and now

Core Recovery Skills

1. Validate self
2. Let go of some control
3. Feel feelings
4. Identify needs
5. Set limits and boundaries

Core Recovery Issues

Pain:
- Abandonment: loss events
- Abandonment: loss conditions
- Shame
- Control
- Fear

Pain Responses:
- Victim stance
- Rage
- Depression
- Addiction
- Compulsion
- Perfectionism
- Procrastination

To a recovering adult lifestyle

Loss attended, not abandoned

Unconditional love

Boundaries maintained

Adult/Family conditions:
- Reality, no denial
- Flexibility
- Interdependence, Connection
- Shame-free

Adult/family rules:
- Okay to talk
- Okay to trust
- Okay to feel

Personality characteristics as adult:
- Open
- Flexible
- Noncontrolling
- Interdependent

Feelings as adult:
- Connected to others
- Loved, worthy
- Shame-free, serenity

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