The Two Most Important Relationship Questions
Rationally Evaluating the Issue of Remaining In or Leaving an Alcoholic Relationship

SEGMENT 1: SELF-EVALUATION

INSTRUCTIONS: Take some quiet time to reflect on and answer the 1st most important relationship question below. The same question worded differently would be: “Why would another person want to be in a relationship with me?” Another way to put it would be: “What do I bring to the table (add)? and What do I take away from the table (subtract)?” Be painfully honest. List the Positives and Negatives first, then go back and score each item individually on a scale from 1 to 10, 10 being the most serious or weighty. Add up your total score at the bottom. Which side outweighs the other side?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROS - POSITIVES</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>CONS - NEGATIVES</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(What do I add to this relationship?)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(What do I subtract from this relationship?)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Which column has the highest score?

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SEGMENT 2: EVALUATION OF THE ALCOHOLIC

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask yourself the 2nd most important relationship question below regarding the Alcoholic. Write down the Positives and Negatives, and then score each item individually on a scale from 1 to 10, 10 being the most serious or weighty. Add up your total score at the bottom. Which side outweighs the other side?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROS - POSITIVES</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>CONS - NEGATIVES</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(What does he/she add to this relationship?)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(What does he/she subtract from this relationship?)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Score | Total Score

Which column has the highest score?
EVALUATING YOUR WORKSHEETS

Once you have scored each worksheet above, focus on the first worksheet (you) and note which side has the highest Total Score. Do the positives outweigh the negatives? If not, then you must work on transforming any negatives into positives. You must add more than you subtract, because any time a person takes more from a relationship than he or she gives and refuses to change, the relationship is over. You are the only one who can effect change in you.

Now focus on the second worksheet (the alcoholic) and note which side has the highest Total Score. Do the positives outweigh the negatives, or vice-versa? If the negatives outweigh the positives and the alcoholic is unwilling by word or action to change, then the relationship is over. I’ll say it again: Any time a person takes more from a relationship than he or she gives and is unwilling to change, the relationship is over.

SECTION 3: SHOULD I STAY OR LEAVE THIS RELATIONSHIP?

INSTRUCTIONS: Answer the following questions logically and unemotionally in the light of your responses above. Use a separate sheet of paper if necessary.

1. Why am I still in this relationship?

2. If the alcoholic is in recovery, is he/she making visible and sufficient progress, or do his/her actions belie his/her words?

3. Does the alcoholic take more away from the relationship than he/she gives? If so, do I have compelling reasons to remain with someone who brings so much trouble to my life and my children’s life?

4. If I do have compelling reasons to remain in this relationship, are these reasons truly compelling and relevant, or am I still in denial by refusing to accept “What Is”?

5. In the event that my spouse/partner does not recover fully, what will my life be like in ten years if I stay in this relationship?
6. In the event that my spouse/partner does not recover fully, what will my children’s life be like in ten years if I keep them in this relationship?

7. In the event that my spouse/partner does not recover fully, what will my life be like in ten years if I leave this relationship?

8. In the event that my spouse/partner does not recover fully, what will my children’s life be like in ten years if I remove them from this relationship?

9. Whether my decision is to stay or leave, in the future when I am on my deathbed and reviewing my life, will I wish that I had made a different decision? Or will I have a bad case of the “If Only’s” and “could-have-been’s?”

10. Has the trust in the relationship been betrayed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. How would you rate the level of trust in your relationship on a scale from 1 to 10? (circle one):

   FULL DISTRUST — 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 — FULL TRUST

   (If the trust has been broken and you rated it below 9 on the scale, know this: When the trust has been betrayed—especially grievously betrayed—the relationship is over; it can never be what it once was. Period. When the trust has been betrayed, suspicion rules. And when the only thing left in a relationship is suspicion, the relationship is over. Trust is not a gray area; you either have it or you don’t, and no relationship can be healthy without full trust.)

12. If the trust has been betrayed, ask yourself, “Do I honestly want to go through the rest of my life always wondering and doubting? Do I want to send my children the message that it’s okay to continue in a relationship when the precious trust has been broken?”

13. What advice would you give to your son, daughter, or best friend if they were in your situation?

   NOW, DO THE RIGHT THING!
INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: Temporarily remove yourself emotionally from this process, and approach it from the third person. For example, when choosing core values for this new you, verbalize it by saying, “I want this new person to have this core value.” Take a long, deep breath. Relax. Clear your mind. Now, begin to think about who you would be if you could literally create a new person who looks like you. Ask yourself, “Who do I want this person to be?” To answer this question, ask another question, “What do I call a good person?” The question is not, “What do your parents, family, friends, workmates, and religious leaders think constitutes a good person,” but what do you think does? Perhaps your list will include such virtues as patience, kindness, loyalty, honesty, and reliability, etc. Make a list of the virtues and core values that will go into this new you (see below for examples). Remove all the stops! This is the ideal person; exactly who you would want to be, no holds barred.

STEP 3: After you’ve made your list of core values, define the healthy limits of each core value by creating a “Boundary Clause.” At this point, write the substance of your core value in the first person and present tense. For example, write, “I do not allow other people to...,” instead of “He/She will not allow other people to....” In this way, you “act as if” your core value is already a reality (see Chapter 17 for examples).

STEP 4: Next, establish the characteristics, disposition, and demeanor of the new you using the Characteristics Worksheet below. An example would be, “I am upbeat, cheerful, and positive whether alone or with others.” (See below for examples). Don’t forget to add this new person’s interests and hobbies, objectives, goals, level of self-esteem, career, daily routine, level of fitness, weight, etc.

STEP 5: Establish at least three core values along with boundary clauses today, as well as three personality characteristics. Then, tomorrow, review your list out loud with conviction, and add at least one more. Continue to add core values and characteristics each day religiously until you have exhausted every relevant issue. Then continue to review your Worksheets every day for at least one month.

You must not allow your own “stinkin’ thinkin’” to undermine your new foundation. Do not give into self-doubts. Review your Worksheets every day to reaffirm your conviction!
SAMPLE LIST OF CORE VALUES

- Self-Acceptance
- Self-Responsibility
- Respect for Free Will
- Self-Completeness
- Trueness
- Loyal/Loyalty/Fidelity
- Trust/Trustworthy
- Strong Mental/Emotional Resources
- Unselfish
- Interdependent Relationships
- Honest
- Compassionate
- Dependable/reliable
- Patient
- Unselfish
- Kind
- Loving
- Generous
- Strong
- Self-sufficient/Self-reliant
- Sensitive
- Peaceful/Tranquil/Serene
- Just/Fair
- Impartial/Unprejudiced/Unbiased
- Focused
- Devotion/Devoted
- Courageous
- Honorable
- Disciplined
- Hospitable
- Industrious
- Perseverance
- Organized
- Orderly
- Sincere
- Solving Problems
- Economical
- Independent
- Patriotic
- Freedom Loving
- Can you think of others?

SAMPLE LIST OF CHARACTERISTICS

- Fun
- Positive
- Upbeat
- Cheerful
- Down-to-earth
- Open
- Easy Going
- Smile
- Gait
- Direct
- Assertive
- Grateful
- Persistence
- Moderate
- Cleanliness
- Sense of Humor
- Intelligent
- Spontaneous
- Romantic
- Can you think of others?
## Reinvention Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Page Number:</th>
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### Core Value:
- **Number**
- **Description:**
- **Boundary Clause:**

### Core Value:
- **Number**
- **Description:**
- **Boundary Clause:**

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- **Number**
- **Description:**
- **Boundary Clause:**

### Core Value:
- **Number**
- **Description:**
- **Boundary Clause:**

### Core Value:
- **Number**
- **Description:**
- **Boundary Clause:**

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# Characteristics Worksheet

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<th>Name:</th>
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<th>Page Number:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>
### BOUNDARY VIOLATION/RESPONSE WORKSHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOUNDARY VIOLATION</th>
<th>INITIAL RESPONSE</th>
<th>CALL TO ACTION</th>
<th>FINAL ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“When you…”</td>
<td>“I Feel…”</td>
<td>“Can I ask you to…?”</td>
<td>If this behavior continues, then I will…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(State the behavior)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(This usually means walking away, but can also mean leaving the home, calling the police, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Hurt” • “Embarrassed” • “Angry” • “Frustrated” • “Afraid”</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6.