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Emotional Sobriety

The idea of Emotional Sobriety (ES) was almost fully formed while I was attending a Riso-Hudson week at Stroudsburg Pennsylvania in September of 1994. Since then, my time has been spent in finding a simple way of presenting concepts of ES's complexity. The long delay has more to do with the built-in uncertainties of my 5/6 personality I suspect. Recently, while on the phone with Jack Labanauskas, he mentioned for the third time that I should write about what I have been doing. Jack has prevailed and here is what I have discovered over the decades during this personal trek that took me through some difficulties and into "finding my own bliss", as Joseph Campbell puts it.

Emotional Sobriety is a product of the marriage of two systems that otherwise stand alone without the need of one another the Twelve Steps of AA and the Enneagram. Like mixing copper and zinc to produce brass, ES is an alloy of two solid philosophical systems. I hope ES will be worthy of its mettle of the elemental substances it is derived from.

It is impossible to understand the relationship between the Enneagram and the Steps of AA without some basic knowledge of the function of each component. In this article I will assume the Enneagram is understood by all of you and treat that component in a perfunctory fashion.

For our purposes the Enneagram explains the nine fundamental ways in which humans approach life. To use an AA terminology it describes how each personality often ends up in the “bondage of self” – how we become hobbled by our characteristic habits.

It is likely that many of you need a quick course in AA-101 to understand the meaning and the function of the Steps of AA. Here is how they appear in their most basic form as found at the beginning of the AA publication, [The Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions](#).

The Steps of AA

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to *sanity*.
3. *Made a decision to turn our will and our lives to the care of God as we understood Him.*
4. *Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*
5. *Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.*
6. *Were entirely ready for God to remove all these defects of character.*
7. *Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.*
8. *Made a list of all the persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.*
9. *Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*
10. *Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.*
11. *Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out.*
12. *Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

It is impossible to get a full understanding of these Steps with this cursory look but there will be a better feel of them as we continue. One further remark about these Steps: As we can readily see they are replete with references to a Higher Power. Emotional Sobriety is a purely practical system that concerns itself with what contributions an individual can make toward his or her personal recovery process. What contributions a Higher Power makes is outside the purview of this system. Because of this omission the Steps as we use them take on a different look and feel immediately. Here is what they are like when dealing with them in a purely pragmatic way. I have written a small book titled The Steps To Emotional Sobriety that elaborates on the sense of these changes.

The 12 Steps To Emotional Sobriety

Step 1. No changes – alcohol is a major contributing factor to the problem in our lives.

Step 2. Is about facing the insanity of living a life of irresponsible absences. My craziness was real in that during the time I had been drinking I acted in truly stupid and irresponsible ways. But ultimately Step 2 is about finding a new HOPE for the future.

Step 3. There was a way out of this insanity and our part was to stop making fools of ourselves by letting go of the fears that were always building up. I remember thinking that I had to get off the throne and stop trying to control everything and that it really did not matter who wanted to sit there as long as it was not me.

Step 4. No change – take an inventory.

Step 5. No change – share the newfound information with another to make sure that the exaggerations were faced and understood.

Step 6. Got ready for God to remove our shortcomings is changed to the need for an in depth Personal search. This is where the Steps take a turn in Emotional Sobriety. We do not ask God to remove our shortcomings but take that job on for ourselves as a continuation of the work done in the two previous steps. The purpose here is to develop an in depth understanding of what has gone wrong in the past and learn how to assume the responsibility for our actions from now on, allowing for the maturation

process that we had sidestepped in the past to resume.

Step 7. Changed from "Asked God to remove our shortcomings" to learning how to do this for ourselves. Without becoming aware of what it is that we are doing wrong it is impossible to understand what is happening in our lives and thereby learn how to handle ourselves in the future.

Emotional balance is a consequence of attaining maturity.

Step 8. Became willing to make amends. Now, because we see our shortcomings more clearly, we see our neighbor more clearly and the dynamics of making amends takes on a very different feel. Our fellow humans who now seem equally frail are much more approachable and each problem is set on a more common ground and is more clearly understood.

Step 9. "Made amends" means we were guilty as opposed to being human. Recruited our fellow man in a reconciliation is an objective as opposed to a task - a true change of attitude, this.

Step 10. Is still about taking inventories, only now there is an added dimension of also making an inventory of the future in preparation of how will we do life from now on.

Step 11. The old definition was beyond my ability, but is now a springboard to better things now that my spirit is re-awakened

Step 12 Had the superficial look of some sort of Utopia and now we merely allow ourselves to be free of unrealistic demands, as contributing members of the human race. Helping others is no longer a task but a built-in component of living well

The Enneagram

I am humbled by the depth of knowledge that this audience brings to the modest use of the Enneagram in this effort and I will try to refrain from preaching to the choir. The Enneagram is used in its simplest form in this system. What it contributes is a picture of each of us as individuals with our graces and glitches. Any author (or version) is up to the task, but for my purpose the Riso-Hudson Continuum, with its descriptions of each Type in exposé form of nine levels, gave me a fixed structure that was universal enough to use with the worldly Steps of AA.

In 1985, when I attended my first Helen Palmer Enneagram lecture in Boston I knew that the Enneagram was one of the pieces of the puzzle I was putting together as my own self-help program, but when I attended the Phase 1 R/H training in Pennsylvania the pieces took on a usable shape. Today I still add to the size and shape of my puzzle but the skeletal parts are solidly in place because of the Steps and that Continuum.

Uniting the Steps and the Enneagram

The attraction that the Steps and the Enneagram have for each other is fairly obvious. When I mention what I am doing to people who are familiar with both systems the reaction is usually, "What a good idea!"

AA is a philosophical system designed primarily to help debilitated people recover from their devastation by inching their way back to health following a proscribed series of suggestions, called the Steps. The surprising part of this is that the Steps do not stop helping after they restore the addict to previous health. Once the process of self-help is in motion the Steps keep pressing us on well beyond the point of recovery - first into establishing a new outlook, and ultimately into a satisfying new way of life. What they do not do is the important task of Emotional Sobriety. They do not tell us how to accomplish these Steps. Instructions are useless in this Step Book. If for instance it would suggest that one should be less aggressive the mild people who are also reading this suggestion would be ill advised ...etc.

This is also the situation with the Enneagram. The Enneagram, especially the Continuum, cannot suggest directions since this would be in conflict with their purpose of describing our nature as opposed to adjusting it. The Enneagram and the Steps need one another in a unified form such as ES.

The Chart

The Emotional Sobriety chart lays out ES in 6 Phases encompassing the AA Steps, and how the steps relate to personality behavior along the R/H Continuum. ES is the functional part of the chart in that it coordinates and integrates the pertinent information into a unified process.

Keeping this chart at hand while addressing the following text will help in understanding the process. It visually connects the efforts one is currently involved in to the three counterparts of the system. (The Step, the R/H level that is being searched and the ES Plateau and specific attitude, with which we are involved.

Emotional Sobriety

The following is a chart that lays out the entire system of Emotional Sobriety on a single sheet. It is a layout of the program for those who start from the viewpoint of being a fully addicted person. None of us are free of habitual characteristics that block our growth but unless the habits have become hard-core addictions they can be approached with less strenuous measures. (A second chart designed to deal with personal growth, where there is no onset of addictive behavior, called Emotional Balance, is a companion system to ES.)

However, many addictive habits, other than alcoholism, are easily overlooked. There are Twelve Step meetings for a number of such disorders already in place. Overeaters Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous are well known, but there are now meetings for gamblers and oversexed people and the steps are now adapted for use by dysfunctional families. AA claims to have given permission to use the 12 Steps ideology to well past a hundred organizations. The all-encompassing definition I have chosen for addiction is “What one does instead of doing life,” – where; doing life means participating in a full time personal and intimate sharing of life on a daily basis. Some who devote their existence to their career or to amassing wealth or power and such qualify as being addicted under this new definition. The point of becoming Emotionally Sober is being able to cope well in life as opposed to manipulating it.

The system of Emotional Sobriety is designed to help the addicted find recovery and personal growth through the use of The Twelve Steps of AA and the Enneagram. In actuality its use is consistent with other self-help or psychological approaches, which can be introduced at various points during the process. For instance, materials from SMART Recovery and from Jack Trimpe's Small Book are very helpful in the Recovery, Intermediate, and Transition Phases of Emotional Recovery. Books on meditation on maturity and personal growth also broaden the scope of ES.

An explanation of
Emotional Sobriety Chart
(See enclosed color chart)

THE COLUMNS - Made up of 6 columns

COLUMN 1 – The Plateaus

The extreme left hand column is concerned with three Plateaus of temperamental dispositions of human beings. These are labeled: High-functioning, Normal-functioning, and Low-functioning. We use the term functioning to reflect the ways in which we might observe how individuals behave in these basic psychological states. Riso/Hudson use the terms: Healthy; Normal; and Un-healthy, to describe these conditions. Other Enneagram authors try not to copy one another by using different wording but the sense is the same. The AA Steps never make direct reference to these states.

COLUMN 2 & 3 – The Riso-Hudson Continuum

These next two columns deal with how the Riso/Hudson Enneagram Continuum fits into the system of Emotional Sobriety. Column 2 names each of the nine levels (Level of Liberation, etc.) Indicating the attitude reached at each Level, and Column 3 refers to the number that Riso has assigned to the Level. There are ten of these charts used in Emotional Sobriety. The one that appears here is a Generic Chart that deals with the description of the Level itself - the general pose, or attitude

all of us assume at that Level. (This Generic chart, or chart in common, will play an important role in every one's recovery later on.) There are nine other charts, one for each Personality Type not here included.

|COLUMN 4 – Emotional Sobriety

Emotional Sobriety is made up of 5 Phases. The background colors of yellow, orange, blue, green, and gray, have been used to isolate the five Phases. The charts are designed around these 5 Phases and show the emotional disposition and the psychological problems that are in play during each transition. By charting the Riso/Hudson Levels to the left, Emotional Sobriety in the center and the AA Steps to the right of this central column, it becomes evident at a glance that the three systems speak a different language but that their end results are mutually consistent. The contribution that Emotional Sobriety makes is to explain how the information comes together. All recovery systems, and there are many, are basically saying the same thing and could easily be introduced into the Emotional Sobriety system to further clarify the path through ES.

COLUMNS 5 & 6 – The AA Steps

Column 6 deals with the role the Twelve Steps of AA play in Emotional Sobriety. Column 5 refers to the number of the particular step involved.

THE ROWS

Made up of 9 rows

The Emotional Sobriety Charts are made up of 9 rows to accommodate Riso's Nine Levels of the Continuum. The lowest reaches of the Continuum are beyond the scope of self-help systems but are here included to show the full range of human emotions. The charts read from the bottom up to signify working our way up, for some of us literally from an unbearable life, and again for some of us, into a life at peace.

The Low-functioning Plateau

Riso/Hudson (R/H) defines all the rows within the Low-functioning Plateau as Levels in which we are emotionally unhealthy and act destructively toward others or ourselves in different ways. One of the very important contributions of R/H was to point out how very much alike we are in fundamental ways despite our characteristic differences. At Level 8, for instance our thinking is *delusional* no matter how our personality manifests this. The manner of expressing our lapses might differ greatly but all of these expressions are based in delusional thinking. At these unhealthy Levels all of us are incapable of regaining our footing without outside support. We can only react *compulsively* to the trying conditions with which we are faced. The problems that we live with on a day-by-day basis are so overwhelming and constant that there is no energy left with which to consider the psychological implications of what is going on around us. Someone has to come and rescue us from the despair that we

are locked into. Human intervention is necessary to bring us back to reality. Reestablishing trust in one other person is the first link to breaking the nine kinds of fear that keep us in isolation. Recovery from an addiction of any sort is impossible without this human bonding that reestablishes human communication. Self-help programs are incapable of helping until some basic human trust has been re-established. At these Low-functioning Levels we have lost the ability to cope. Coping in this sense has little to do with the ability to function physically or to earn a living it is about feeling comfortable among our peers. It is societal in nature. AA's Steps are beyond the reach of anyone who is still struggling with the fears that Low-functioning individuals face. Relapsing to the comfort of isolation for self-protection is a common event early on while battling an addiction, especially those addictions that have a physical component. Their fears demand their full attention for some time and relapse is part of the recovery process.

The Normal-functioning Plateau

This plateau involves itself with Riso's Levels 6, 5, and 4, and the first seven Steps of AA. This is the state in which the great majority of us function most of the time. The range of behavior is quite broad. It begins when we leave the Low-functional Plateau while our behavior is still partly **disconnected** and ends at the threshold of the High-functioning Plateau at the onset of significant emotional stability. The predominant attitude

throughout this Plateau is characterized as **adversarial** by ES and typically identified with the expression, “Yeah BUT!”

The High-functioning Plateau

This Plateau involves The Riso-Hudson Levels 3, 2, and 1, and the AA Steps 8 through 12. It is a rather rarefied atmosphere in which our ego has been tamed (or better yet, has become part of our fully integrated personality) and where we are functioning as our true selves. By the time we reach this Plateau we are no longer battling addiction. We are now focusing on the way we are reacting to life and to the purpose of our lives. We are directed at the fulfillment of personal goals most often with a strong sense of community. The dominant attitude at this point is the direct opposite of the one that prevailed at the Low-functioning Plateau. Where there was no ability to focus on anything outside of oneself, there is now strong sense of belonging.

The Phases of Emotional Recovery

The Pre-recovery Phase

Although pre-recovery is not considered a part of the system of Emotional Sobriety it may help us to understand the emotional damage that has taken place in a person that has succumbed to addiction, and the problems that such an individual faces in returning to better times.

In this unhealthy realm, the *Low-functioning Plateau*, we deal with people who are in so much emotional turmoil that they are unable to see beyond their own problems. All of their energy is devoted to survival. In the case of low-bottom addicts this means that their everyday existence centers almost solely on three things: getting the means to get their drug of choice; deciding on where this will take place; and lastly, with whom to do the deed. Everything else in their lives is a *problem* they must deal with; the job, the rent, privacy, those nosy do-gooder relatives and maybe the law. There are others who are included at this level of functioning, individuals who might function rather well in certain areas; such as athletics, financial endeavors, or in service areas, may also have a social problem of not being able to cope with life. Others with addictive behaviors such as over-workers, over-eaters, militaristic people, religious zealots, over-workers, over-many-things of a thousand kinds that can pre-occupy us outside the norm of human behavior. Whatever one does that will free them from “*doing life.*”

Low-functioning individuals are not able to absorb written or oral suggestions that they need to heed in order to get past their problems. They have no bootstraps with which to pull themselves out of the hell they're in. They have to be pulled out by a very objective loved one or more likely, a professional counselor who will re-establish a trusting relationship to society. This basic re-connection to others outside the normal realm, no matter how slight, is enough to establish an initial entry into a self-help program. Even if the connection is tenuous at first this re-entry into society is enough to begin the process of recovery. ES classifies that as a psychic change – a willingness to re-enter society.

Low functioning people resemble children in some way. They must always depend on the goodwill of others to make their life complete. Mature people have three basic realms in which they must excel before they are capable of handling life without supervision. They must develop their talents at being able to support themselves; they must develop some social skills in order to feel comfortable in their society; and they must mature for life to be challenging and meaningful in personal ways. Omit any one of these and the person is not skilled at handling life and remains a burden on someone or society. With addicted people it is usually the social factor that is wanting. If one is incapable of functioning on an equal basis with others for physical or mental reasons they can still reach their potential if they are given a leg-up. With addiction the problem can be

addressed only after the addiction is under control. It then becomes a matter of developing a true sense of self.

The following are examples of what each of the nine types might be like in pre-recovery – what the intervening counselor might deal with.

The Feeling Types

Type 2. The Helper is enraged and manipulative...

Type 3 The Motivator is duplicitous and unprincipled ...

Type 4 The Individualist is resentful and depressed ...

The Thinking Types

Type 5 The Thinker arranges facts to fit into pet theories...

Type 6 The Loyalist becomes dependent...

Type 7 The Enthusiast is recklessly impulsive...

The Instinctive Types

Type 8 The Leader is ruthlessly reaching...

Type 9 The Peacemaker becomes ineffectual...

Type 1 The Reformer becomes obsessive...

Until these problems are addressed the individual is often incapable of concentrating on the proceedings at a self-help meeting. The usual procedure is to introduce a seriously incapacitated individual to meetings by having someone attend meetings with her or him for a time. From this point they are encouraged to begin the emotional growth process.

The Normal-functioning Plateau

An overview

Most of us live here in the Normal-functioning Plateau. What is missing within its boundaries is, knowing who we are. Having a true sense of self is the rite of passage to becoming a High-functioning person. Although there is a wide range of emotional capacity within the limits of this Plateau a good overview can be expressed with the words “Yeah, but!”

R/H terms it as a time of “Interpersonal control.” It is a region where the person is not sure of him/herself. Everyone is groping to get a better angle than the other person. Those who are just coming out of the Low-functioning Plateau where they were dealing with a **compulsive** attitude are still **resisting** the outer world and remain **reactive** to suggestions with some **compulsiveness** for a while. This is a condition that AA is well equipped to identify. AA is prepared with hundreds of substitute aphorisms to replace the clipped language of the people that have been damaged. Somehow “Don’t drink and go to meetings” replaces “Go f... yourself” after a week of two, but the attitude is still close to being volatile and can *revert to kind* for short or long periods depending on the individual. At the upper end of this Plateau we no longer argue with one another because we have developed self-confidence that no longer needs to be **defended**. That is what is missing in this intermediate Plateau, self-confidence. There is an uncertainty in the air generating a reach to imagined proof because both

sides are without true convictions – it is a constant sophomoric debate (simultaneously going on all over the world) about what is really important in life that reaches to minutia to achieve a passing sense of superiority.

The Recovery Phase

The Recovery Phase begins when the person faces the reality that there indeed is a problem and that there is a need for change. A person fresh from the pangs of addiction is not disposed to listening just yet. Sometimes the most that we can expect is for him or her to tolerate our attentiveness. Others will thrive on the extended civilities that have been missing for years. As we will see there is a mix of reactions, all of which are rooted in the individual's personality and the degree of pain involved. **Recovery** is simultaneously a relief and disruptive.

Thankfully not all of us reach the depths of full addiction where there is no longer time for reflection; where everything is dealt with **compulsively** out of self-protection. However, those who come from an atmosphere of isolation, the busy social setting of an AA meeting would surely seem like a beehive of intrusive snoops and is often too radical a change. Some care must be taken in giving the right kind of support that will ease the individual into a recovery program. Through the insight of the Enneagram it is now possible to predict what approach an individual will react to best.

Although ES has bundled the first three AA Steps there is still a progression to them. For our purpose we think of them as bringing us back to life but the AA view is careful about taking them in smaller increments. Here is the message they have imparted on ES.

In Step 1, AA makes clear, and we agree, that this is the only Step that has to be accepted entirely without exceptions or restrictions. In short it read, "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable." There must be no doubt left that *the presence of alcohol, or substance, or habit, plays a contributing role in our inability to have a satisfactory way of life.*

In Step 2, AA asserts that there is a way out of this dilemma. It reads "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." To Emotional Sobriety this suggests that there is some insanity associated with addiction, or even with near addiction, or even the beginnings of addiction. Insanity in this case might be looked upon as, anything we do that is contrary to our own benefit. This kind of negative behavior is set in place at an early point when we are preparing to become addicted. Although we are dealing with full addiction at this time it may be informative to some who are reading this who might be on their way to an addiction. Step 2 does not deal with the insanity but deals with the recognition of its presence in the world of addiction. This is best expressed in one of those aphorisms heard at meetings, "I did not get into trouble every time I was drinking, but every time I got into trouble I had been

drinking.” The insanity is not always there but when it appears, it is always accompanies the addictive behavior. In some of the less obvious forms of addiction the misbehavior may not be as obvious as it is with alcoholic antics but it is a matter of having repeatedly bad outcomes. For instance, over-workers seldom have time for family functions. In other words the habit trumps.

Step 2, is a rallying point for our determination to change. Those who laugh off the retelling of past bad behavior as humorous antics or as good times will fail to see the need for change, while those who are belittled by these remembrances will be bolstered by the promise inherent in this very important Step. This Step is about both the realization of how debilitated we really are and equally about the realization that there is a way back for us. This was the most important single thing I retained from my first reading of the steps in AA’s Big Book. Incapacitated, as I was, the feeling of hope came through. Over the years I have noticed that those who did not receive the HOPE that this Step generates would have to come back here to find it. Working on any of the following Steps, trying to improve oneself is almost worthless if one does not have the confidence that it will work.

In Step 3, AA says, “Made a decision to turn our will and our lives to the care of God as we understand Him.” To us this Step deals with the strong **reactive** thinking that we are left with from a **compulsiveness** that

lingers. In this new situation the instinct toward **rebellion** is not as strong but we are still **reactive** to suggestions. At first the **reactions** might come in bursts but with time they tone down to a **defensive** posture. The process takes a year or longer depending on the individual. (It took me five.) This period is filled with moments of stress left over from years of self-abuse and general criticism from all quarters, but it is an especially difficult to overcome the lingering feelings of the self-deprecation that have built-up over the years. It is a time of reflection during which we need to learn to reign-in our doubts until we feel a sense of our old self, returning. It is called the Recovery Phase to reflect the restoration of a prior self. It is a reinstating of the old self, when a calm returns and the presence of others is comforting again. When others no longer cause a feeling of uneasiness, it is time to move into the Intermediate Phase and restart the delayed process of maturation.

The Intermediate Phase

Taking a year free of general activities to heal is exactly what was needed in order to re-awaken us to what was missing in our lives during our addictive behavior - a feeling of vitality. Slowly the question comes "What the hell went wrong?" This Phase involves AA's Steps 4 & 5, which deal with the taking of a personal inventory. AA directs that the inventory should be based on a personal morality. They read:

Step 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

*Step 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the
Exact nature of our wrongs*

In keeping with our principles we can only deal with that part of our recovery that we can understand and can contribute to. Our inventory will be directed toward how we have behaved in the past as a starting point in an attempt to understanding the nature of our problems. *A clear picture of our nature* will unfold if we collect remembrances of how we acted towards others and to finish the perspective, how we were treated by others. This act alone separates us from our old selves. It marks the beginning of the end of immaturity. With this act we begin to accept the responsibility of the self.

The Normal Plateau is where most all of us live. The title that R/H give to Level 5 could not be better, "The Level of *Interpersonal Control*." The best example of what we are like as *Normal People* is to picture us at a committee meeting. The prevalent attitude is "Yeah but!" If we look carefully at much of our interaction with others in most of our affairs we can see this ever-present *Yeah But*. It covers most of our reaction to others. From wanting to shine, to wanting to seem smarter, or doing one-upmanship, or to just defeat the other guy out of orneriness, 'Yeah but', is the way to go. This is a worldwide interjection for "Interpersonal Control" and a universal symbol for the human race in every day circumstances - "Yeah, but..." Think of how many ways this notion is put into use. "Well,

I'm not so sure of that...," "Don't you mean...," "I like to think of that as...," and the ever forthcoming "bull shit." And, how easily it is used to squash others without having to take the responsibility of it. A more objective way of seeing ourselves is to watch our friends, foes, and fellow workers work their "Interpersonal Control" issues on others and come to grips with how many ways they are of saying "Yeah, but..." And then, realize how adept we are with this very convenient piece of leverage. Just a bit earlier, while we were in the Recovery Phase we were overcompensating for our lack of self-confidence – when we consistently felt attacked and belittled. We used stronger language to compensate for the weak positions then. Then, we had to shout and be insistent to maintain a modicum of self-control. Now a mere "Yeah, but..." will suffice – a clear attitudinal change between low-dysfunctional and normal-dysfunctional disposition.

We are no longer **reacting** but are now **challenging** others to prove us right or wrong. In truth we are testing our own depth of understanding. It is no longer **confrontational** but **adversarial** in nature. Mostly it is fun. But in reality it is the very serious business of testing our own mettle. "Yeah, but..." is an ongoing game of trying to get to the truth of where we ourselves stand on any given issue. An ongoing education that takes the form of an intensive entertainment that seems to keep us off balance instead of informing us. The noise will go on ad-infinitum until we sit down and make decisions that we can stick by. The noise represents the training for the real life that follows. Most of us train 'til we die.

The Transition Phase - Part I

The final efforts that will conclude our journey through the Normal Plateau is a bit trickier to understand in that it is the first half of a Phase that will transition us into the High-functioning Plateau. We enter the Intermediate Phase while we are completing our maturation process and exit the same Phase putting our newly found views to practice in a somewhat different world. The next transition is not described in terms of an attitudinal change as before but as a psychic one similar to the transition from isolation at the Low-functioning Plateau to a newly found trust of others in the Normal-functioning Plateau.

The taking of a personal inventory almost always leaves one with a feeling of relief from finding out that s/he is not the bad person that s/he feared but rather a pretty decent individual. Most of us are rather decent people, but seeing it as an objective truth is exhilarating. Such a sense of freedom from self-doubt should be an impetus to reaching for more but it seldom works like that. The sense of a better self that comes from this exercise during the Intermediate Phase is too often interpreted as a reward for having already stretched oneself and brings all efforts of self-help to an abrupt end.

It's no wonder that Step 6, the next effort after the inventory taking, begins with the words, "This will separate the men from the boys." These two Steps, 6 and 7, have the most far-reaching effect of all the Steps. They are also the least attended. My contention that nobody does steps

six and seven is received with a lot of resentment but never contested with proof. The best guarantee against this sense of self-congratulation is to introduce the R/H continuum at the inventory taking time. The effects of this are two-fold. It bolsters our resolve by giving us an insight into our best-self that is in our future, and it awakens our faulty memories concerning those bad habits that are part of our makeup. Along with that ES takes special care in the area of honesty.

AA's Step 6 is thought of as a preparation for dealing with our defects and Step 7 is dedicated to ridding ourselves of them. To that we add Step 8 as a preparation for making amends and Step 9 aimed at making these amends. These actions are inseparable. Our functional view of these in a nutshell is; for Steps 6 & 7 "We assume the responsibility of our own existence, and for Steps 8 & 9 "We develop an attitude of reconciliation toward our fellow man." The sense being that this effort is being done for our personal benefit and is therefore fully our responsibility.

In 6 & 7 we stop all the childishness and become responsible for ourselves by monitoring our own actions and bringing them in line to a code of behavior that will free us from being less than we feel we should be. That in turn creates a completely different way of looking at and understanding others. It ends the attitude of **competitiveness** and is replaced with a sense of community – an enormous psychic change. Steps 6 – 7 – 8 - 9 sets up habits that will blossom for the rest of our lives.

The High-functioning Plateau

Emotional Sobriety, at the High-functioning Plateau consists of AA's Steps 8 through 12. The price of admission is the realization of just who we are, warts and all. The expression in AA is "We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it." Once that sort of honesty is set in place how we see others also changes. The job we formerly assigned to our Ego was to make us look good in the public arena, but henceforth our ego will be put to better use. It is re-assigned the task of finding new ways of making life easy and enjoyable. Ask a corporate vice-president in charge of making big money why he or she gave it all up to farm a small piece of land. Better yet find your own Bliss through Emotional Balance. EB is not unique it is the explanation of how people run into a different self.

The Transitional Phase is a lifetime effort. It starts by having us look at ourselves in earnest until we learn how to do it automatically, and it becomes a way of life. It is the full realization that we are the entire continuum of our personality at all times – acting spontaneously within the latitudes therein. There are no saints in that crowd – just aware humans doing their thing.

The High-functioning Plateau is the portion of my system that concentrates entirely on Emotional Balance instead of Emotional Sobriety - a treaty of its own. Not everyone who is interested in emotional balance

starts out as an addict. All of us need to make corrections along the path of life.

The Steps System helps us with what needs to take place if we are to change and that happens from Step 6 onward. Even the healthiest among us need reliable input if only to tweak our thinking every now and then. Most of us need mentoring to help us interpret the road ahead.

The Reflective Phase, that involves AA's Step 10, now has two parts to it. It recommends keeping alert through a system of continuing inventory-taking for all sorts of relapses for what is sometimes called "reverting to kind." To that we have added the task of heeding the future so that we do stay alert against old negative propensities of taking the easy road.

The Expansive Phase involves redirecting our efforts in new directions that were never in contention previous to this psychic change – new opportunities that did not exist before.

The Responsive Phase takes place in a rarified atmosphere. Not many of us live there although we visit on occasions. A small number of people understand this peaceful way of life, not free of stress but living with some serenity.

Comments

The Enneagram has a good take on human nature. None of us are positioned at a fixed emotional attitude in life. We are all emotionally

dynamic people capable of running the entire range of emotions in a single day. The Level at which we find ourselves to be most often is what we can read as a starting point from which to monitor our actions in both directions. We often start a meeting with a declaration of how far our emotions and actions have traveled during the past week. Human progress is rewarding in ways that we are not able to anticipate.

The following chart is a simplified view of
Emotional Sobriety

Low-functioning Plateau

<i>Emotional Sobriety (E S)</i> AA Riso-Hudson (R-H)	<i>Pre-recovery Phase</i> <i>Pre-recovery</i> Levels 7, 8, and 9.	<i>COMPULSIVE</i> Pathological.
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Normal-functioning Plateau

The Recovery Phase E S AA R-H	The Recovery Phase Steps 1, 2, & 3 Level 6	REACTIVE Entry-level Over-compensation
The Intermediate Phase E S AA R-H	The Intermediate Phase Steps 4 & 5 Level 5	DEFENSIVE Inventory Interpersonal Control
The Transition Phase I E S AA R-H	The Transition Phase Steps 6 & 7 Level 4	RESPONSIBLE Ask to remove defects Imbalance

High-functioning Plateau

The Transition Phase II E S AA R-H	The Transition Phase II Steps 7 & 8 Level 3	INCLUSIVE Made amends Social Values
The Reflective Phase E S AA R-H	The Reflective Phase Step 10 Level 2	REFLECTIVE Inventory Psychological Capacity
The Responsive Phase I E S AA R-H	The Responsive Phase Step 11 Level 2	EXPANSIVE Prayer & Meditation Psychological Capacity
The Responsive Phase II E S AA R-H	The Responsive II Step 12 Level 1	RESPONSIVE Carry the Message Liberation

The Emotional Sobriety Continuum of Changing Attitudes.

Low-functioning Plateau

Pre-recovery COMPULSIVE
Reacts compulsively to protect Inner fears

Normal-functioning Plateau

The Recovery Phase REACTIVE
Reacts to outside world but with less force – Fears abate

The Intermediate Phase DEFENSIVE
Defends fixed views and personal boundaries Fears become more manageable

The Transition Phase I RESPONSIBLE
Becomes aware of personal behavior – Tolerance re-appears

High-functioning Plateau

The Transition Phase II INCLUSIVE
Becomes aware of responsibility to others. Tolerance returns

The Reflective Phase REFLECTIVE
Inventories new self - integrity dominates. Re-evaluates actions

The Responsive Phase I EXPANDS
Prepares for a different future

The Responsive Phase II RESPONSIVE
Assumes new responsibilities. Responds to new insights

The Process of Recovery And Personal Growth

Most of us live a life of self-doubt and insecurity. This is the way of the Normal Plateau of Emotional Sobriety. The Low-functioning Plateau is about despair - people out of balance with their own best self and with the rest of the world. The High-functioning Plateau is about being at peace within and with others - where our spontaneous personal growth takes place. What is left, the Normal-functioning Plateau, is how we transition out of despair and into peace. We are referring to the great majority of the human race here. If we consider only those *capable* of being sustained by the use of self-help measures, we are arguably speaking of almost all of us. Autistic people cannot be helped by the use of the Twelve Steps and those few who are emotionally well balanced are already in touch with most of their precepts. With this in mind let us take a cursory look at what a Type 1 personality might be like along the way.

Personality Type One The Reformer

Reformers are endowed with a strong sense of right and wrong, of fairness and justice. As members of the Instinctive triad they have fire in their belly. They are at war with the injustices that prevail in the world in people's hearts. Under normal conditions they are not particularly tolerant of character defects and shortcomings.

Low-functioning Plateau

Pre-recovery Phase

By the time Reformers have deteriorated to these Levels, they have become convinced of their righteousness and are at war with the world. They can see only the evil in everyone and are blind to their own narrowness. Ones are usually the most difficult to convince of their need to change. Most interventions have no effect because they are convinced of their moral superiority. Often the help comes from a trusted Religious leader whom they admire or a trusted Physician.

Whatever the source of the magic that touches them the outcome is the same as with the other Types, they must develop trust in another person and cause a chink in the armor that protects their sense of isolation. The level of trust must be strong enough to cause them to end a kind of functioning isolation that they are usually not aware of.

Normal-functioning Plateau

The Recovery Phase

Once a Reformer is attending meetings the problem of self-righteousness is not over. Ones remain standoffish for long periods, years or even forever in some cases. They absorb what are considered suggestions in AA parlance and unite them into a rigid code that they hold others responsible to. The first three Steps of AA have become the totality of the AA Bible for many of this Type in the program. There is even a term to describe these people. They are referred to as “Bleeding Deacons” who try and often succeed in controlling individual meetings with iron wills and determined discipline. AA is replete with such people who are critical of others as opposed to “Taking their own inventory.”

Reformers are difficult to work with. They are condescending, critical, and self-righteous all in one breath. They refuse to even consider suggestions that in their view are for everyone else who are clearly lesser humans. Their form of being **reactive** still has a strong attachment to a **compulsive** component for a long time. As the chart suggests they ‘*resist new ideas*’ and ‘*have to stick it out.*’ With time they meet others at meetings whom they develop a high regard for and very slowly absorb some wisdom through osmosis. It is nearly always a lengthy process to reach the point where they are willing to discuss their personal views openly, where they will have to **defend** their thinking. It’s far easier to find a meeting they can dominate, than to find a person whom their highly

critical judgment can admire for an extended period. Counseling is very valuable but not easily accepted.

The Intermediate Phase

Ones are dogged in their convictions. The bywords all have to do with truth, morality, ethics and right and wrong. These are all terms that have an element of judgment that a Reformer is dedicated to uphold. This judgment is personal and involves false as well as true information accumulated over a lifetime. No amount of **defensive** debate will ever resolve all individual points of contention. But debate is the mix that will turn the focus on reason as opposed to dogma. The personal growth that is needed at this time is one that the Reformer has a natural talent for - the sense of fairness to others. Of all the One's assets their sense of fairness will serve them best at this time. For this he/she will sacrifice some of the built-in righteousness, and participate in debate. The Enneagram often break lifelong held tenets by exposing them as self-serving and by puncturing their pet peeves. They are surprisingly resilient and courageous once past the self-righteousness.

Taking a personal inventory for a One is like going to confession for a month. All the harsh judgment that One's lay on others is chump change compared to depth of condemnation they heap on themselves. It is a full-fledged ego trip in reverse. However, with the help of the Enneagram and

some patient guidance, even One's can see a clearing through some very dense brush.

The Transition Phase - Part I

The kind of self-examination encountered in Steps 6 and 7 hold a bottomless bag of gifts that keep coming for as long as we partake through personal effort. Once Reformers find their legs, their sense of fairness will catapult them into a sense of fellowship. Their hell was in not being able to give up the pettiness that is a remnant of their childhood. Their sense of responsibility has always been there in spades. They were merely misapplying the talent by guiding everyone else into using it instead of as a personal talent. At this point they are still not out of the guilt bag. R-H write of this Level "They want to fix themselves and the world." Letting go of the controls is not easy for any of us, but it is especially difficult for Ones. Fixing oneself, as Ones would want it to be done is as impossible as having a Higher Power do it on demand. If we could direct a Higher Power to do such a thing for us it would be useless to Ones anyway.

Still, with all their shoulds, ready solutions, and pointing outs, as long as they continue to debate their own truth will out and their sense of mission will dominate and bring about the necessary discipline needed to see the mistakes in their attitude.

High-functioning Plateau.

The Transition Phase – Part II

Once the EGO has been dampened the ever-present sense of mission to improve the world is not diminished. It is rededicated toward fairness this time with a more objective attitude. Others were always a part of their focus but now an element of respect toward the views of others is added and self-discipline enters that forces Ones to exemplify what they preach. The sense of fellowship that has always prevailed now manifests itself in earnest but with a newfound humility.

The Reflective Phase

Taking inventory of themselves is not natural for Ones but as with everything else they are good at it because they will not allow themselves to overlook convenient habit anymore. Discipline is a forte and they are dedicated to a new outlook. The part that eludes them about inventory taking is in laying out a future - a part of the Tenth Step that Emotional sobriety has introduced.

It is easy to imagine a One, falling into the bad habit of correcting others or of feeling superior at times. The habit of taking inventories of every description is, fortunately, a One'ish thing to do that will cause them much pain and ultimately give them booster shots of needed humility.

The Responsive Phase

When finally Ones begin to function without the need to fortify their EGO, they are realistic (often missing until now), fair, generous and kind. Some of the greatest leaders in history have been High-functioning Ones. Mahatma Gandhi is an example. Among our own group of Ones are a mélange of leaders: Ralph Nader, Sandra Day O’Conner are one sort of Reformers, and William F. Buckley and Noam Chomsky are another - and we might add Mr. Spock of Star Trek.

Because of their ability to be fair they see things more clearly than the rest of us thereby creating standards that the rest of can embrace. They are noble people.

This outline for the One Personality is really a digest of the twenty to thirty pages that are devoted to each Type

In addition

There are some important points that did not find their place in this outline of Emotional Sobriety. Low-functioning people are to a great extent non-verbal, reacting to their environment as opposed to verbal communication. The Enneagram is well suited to the AA type meetings where the individual can read the non-threatening messages of his fellow members. These meetings have an ideal atmosphere in which to introduce the personality differences that represents our humanity toward one another as opposed to philosophical differences that are threatening.

Another important factor concerning the Levels of functioning is concerned with our instinctive ability to recognize the body language of others with similar attitudinal outlooks to ours that transcends personality types. The old joke about the only two people at a party who come from dysfunctional homes will find one another within five minutes is probably true. The attitude of a person is so distinct that it radiates that clear an aura - even the slight variation of being just **one Level** away from one another, say from **responsive** to **reactive**, will cause a slight discomfort in a strangers - a disparity of one or two Levels is tolerable but the discomfort generated by the attitudinal difference greater than that, becomes an immediate strain on both people. Consider a situation where one person is **introspective** and the other is **defensive** and the dichotomy becomes very clear. This creates a disturbing factor between AA members at meetings that can easily be explained away with the introduction of Emotional Sobriety.

Emotional Sobriety also has application for the addict's family during the process of recovery and into the continuing growth process. It is imperative that the family members make parallel progress to eliminate the possibility of creating an attitudinal clash. Emotional Balance, is used in a family setting to explain personality difference that are superficially Type oriented as opposed to attitudinal in nature. This sets up an atmosphere of tolerance and replaces the pervious competitiveness with understanding and empathy for a loved one.

Comments, both critical and complimentary, are always appreciated –
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