



Letting Go

W O R K B O O K

Finding Freedom From Our Past

Ken Martz, Psy.D



TABLE OF CONTENTS

3

ABOUT DR. KEN

Learn more about the experience behind the pages

6

ACCEPTANCE

Honest awareness of our past helps to create responsive goals.

15

BRAVERY

Courage to explore and understand the issues brings clarity

22

CLOSURE

Letting go creates the ability to be free

29

...AND BEYOND

What's next? Let's keep the momentum moving!

ABOUT

D r . K e n

HELLO !

My Work

I have been working in the treatment field for decades, supporting literally tens of thousands of individuals in their journey toward a happier, more fulfilling life. Through the years, I have written over a dozen publications as well as have presented over 100 local, national and international presentations in the mental health and addictions field.

My passion centers around continuing to share my experience and knowledge regarding mental health, as this is needed now more than ever!

Experience

Over the years, I have worked in a variety of settings. These include outpatient clinics, residential treatment centers, university classrooms, and state government operation boardrooms. In addition to having practiced clinical work for 30 years, I have supplemented my teachings with education regarding meditation and yoga for the past two decades.

All of my experiences and training have helped me to create a rounded view of a Patient from many different angles. I have done research into developing effective tools and techniques so that you don't have to! Let's use a few of these life-changing tools together to help you build a new life!



Ken Martz, Psy.D.



www.DrKenMartz.com



www.twitter.com/ken_martz



facebook.com/DrKenMartz



youtube.com/@dr.kenmartz6207



www.amazon.com

As Seen On



BUSINESS INSIDER

Psychology Today



LETTING GO

OVERVIEW

Letting Go Flows through Several Interlocking Elements



The ABCs of Letting Go

These three elements are central to letting go. We begin with an awareness of our emotional challenge, bravely take hold of it, and actively change to bring closure.

STEP

1

Awareness

Be present in all things and thankful for all things.

Maya Angelou





STEP

Awareness

In the journey of letting go, whether it be of emotions, past experiences, or limiting beliefs, the first and perhaps most crucial step is cultivating awareness. Awareness serves as the gateway through which the process of transformation begins and flourishes.

Why is awareness so pivotal? At its core, awareness is the conscious recognition of our inner world – our thoughts, feelings, values, and reactions. Without this recognition, the process of letting go is like trying to navigate a dark room; we might stumble upon what we need to release, but we lack the clarity and direction to do so effectively.

Imagine a person struggling with anxiety or past traumas. Often, these experiences are buried deep, obscured by layers of defense mechanisms and daily distractions. By fostering awareness, we gently peel back these layers, revealing the hidden emotions and beliefs that hold us back. It's a process like turning on a light in that dark room, illuminating the areas that require our attention and care.

Awareness is not merely about recognizing what is there; it's about understanding our relationship with our thoughts and emotions. It's realizing that while we may not have control over external events, but we have the power to choose how we respond to them. This realization is empowering. It shifts the locus of control back to us.

Cultivating awareness is not always a comfortable process. It requires courage to confront uncomfortable truths about ourselves and our experiences. Yet, it is within this discomfort that growth occurs. By becoming aware, we set the stage for change. We learn to observe our emotions without being overwhelmed by them and, ultimately, to let go of what no longer serves us.

In the pages that follow, we will delve into practical strategies and exercises designed to enhance your awareness. Each step is aimed at empowering you to recognize, understand, and release the burdens that have been holding you back. Remember, the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, and that step is awareness.

KNOW MYSELF

BE COURAGEOUS, MARK ALL THAT APPLY
AS AWARENESS AREAS FOR PERSONAL
GROWTH

GENERAL

Question 1

Do you often find yourself unable to stop thinking about past events or relationships?

Yes No

Question 2

Do your emotions regarding past experiences frequently influence your decisions and actions in the present?

Yes No

Question 3

Have you experienced physical discomfort or stress symptoms (like headaches, stomach issues, or tension) when recalling these past experiences?

Yes No

Question 4

Do you tend to avoid situations or people that remind you of these past experiences?

Yes No

Question 5

Are you hesitant or resistant to the idea of changing your current coping mechanisms?

Yes No

Question 6

Do you feel afraid that letting go of these experiences might lead to forgetting important parts of your life or losing a part of yourself?

Yes No

Question 7

Do you find it challenging to consider forgiving either yourself or others involved in these past experiences?

Yes No

Question 8

Do you often catch yourself ruminating over the same thoughts or regrets related to these experiences?

Yes No

Question 9

Do you feel that you have adequate social support to help you through the process of letting go?

Yes No

Question 10

Have you established regular self-care practices that help you cope with and process your emotions healthily?

Yes No

KNOW MYSELF

BE COURAGEOUS, MARK ALL THAT APPLY
AS AWARENESS AREAS FOR PERSONAL
GROWTH

EMOTIONS

Question 1

Can I easily identify what I am feeling at any given moment?

Yes No

Question 2

Am I aware of what triggers my strong emotional reactions?

Yes No

Question 3

Do I feel in control of my emotions, or do they often control me?

Yes No

Question 4

Am I comfortable expressing my emotions to others?

Yes No

Question 5

Do I understand how my thoughts influence my emotions?

Yes No

Question 6

Can I recognize how my emotions affect my behavior and decisions?

Yes No

Question 7

Have I noticed any recurring patterns in my emotional responses to certain situations?

Yes No

Question 8

Do my emotions positively or negatively impact my relationships with others?

Yes No

Question 9

Am I honest with myself about what I am truly feeling?

Yes No

Question 10

Do I take time to reflect on my emotional experiences and learn from them?

Yes No

STEP 1

AWARENESS

RECOGNIZING OUR PAST

1) What are three patterns that I am aware of in my behaviors that I would like to let go?

2) What are some issues I am afraid of that I would like to let go?

3) What am I angry about that I would like to let go?

4) What disappointments or losses would I like to let go?

STEP 1

AWARENESS

RECOGNIZING OUR PAST

1) Who are three people that most annoy me?

2) What are the characteristics of these people that are annoying?

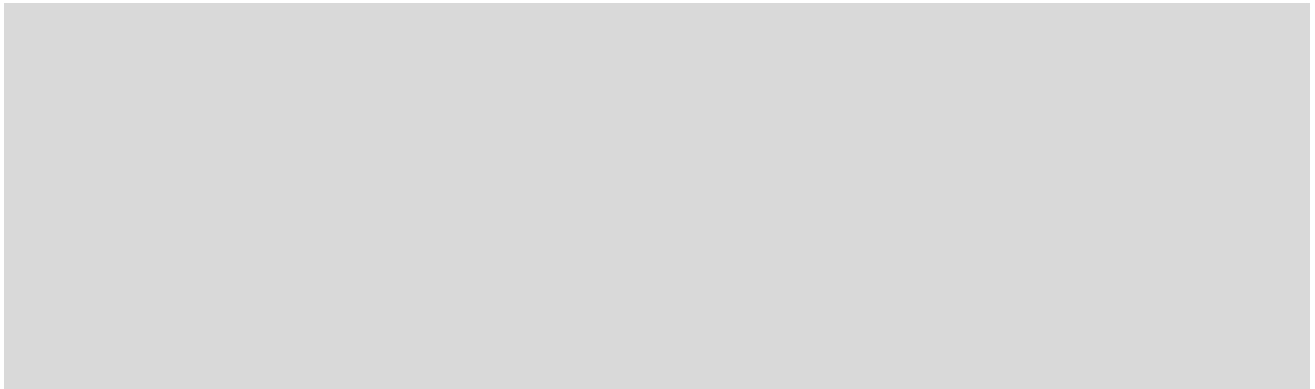
3) Who in my life would accuse me of the same characteristics?

4) How have I behaved in these ways, even if unintentionally?

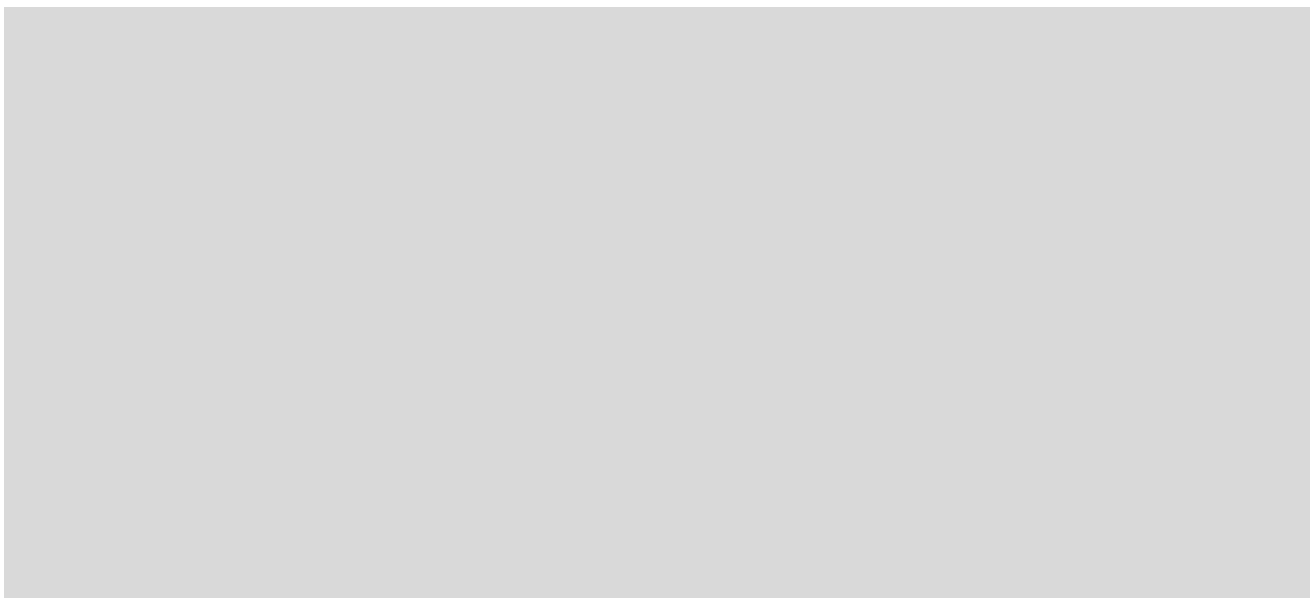
STEP 1

REFLECTION

Based on these exercises, what are some of the most important emotions, beliefs, or memories I would want to let go?



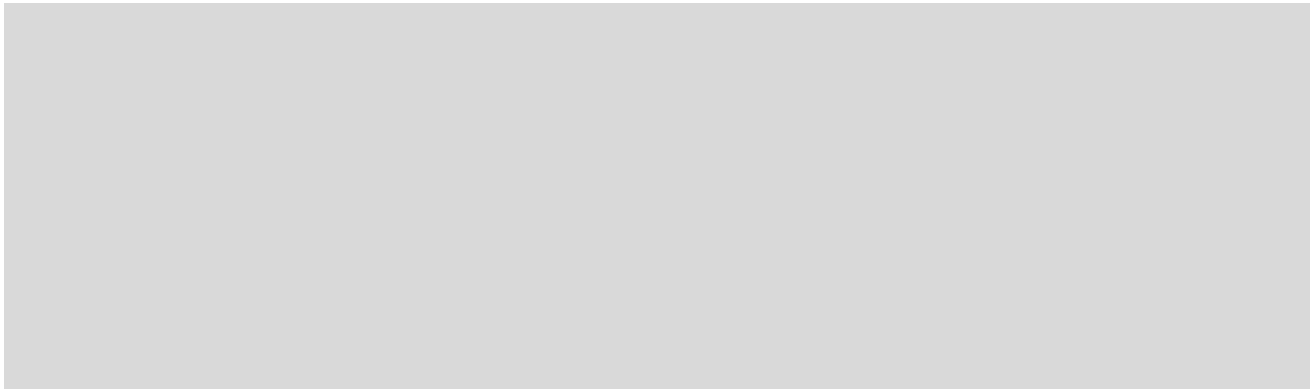
What are some of the ways these emotions, beliefs, or memories have been impacting my life today?



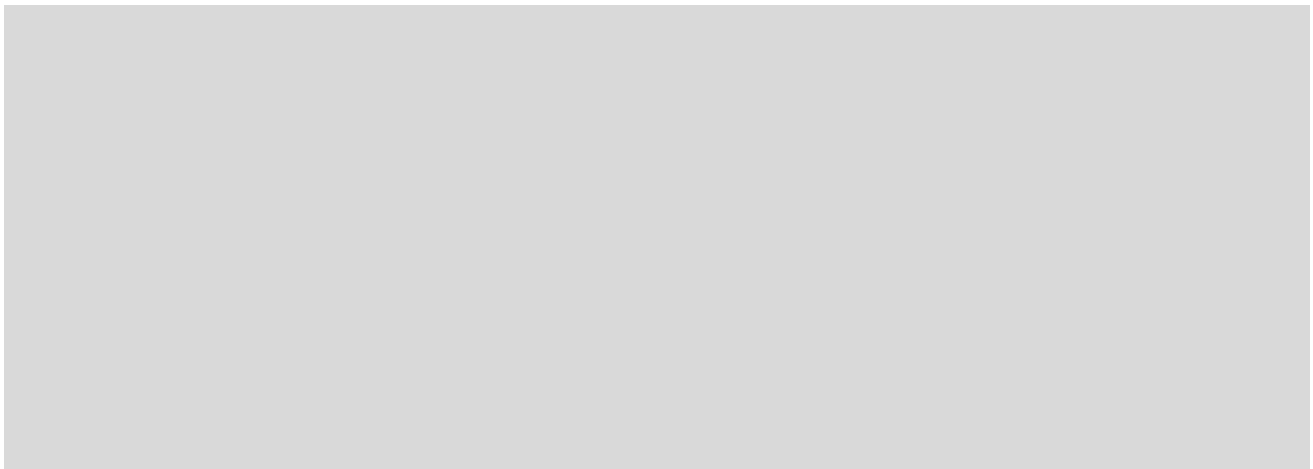
STEP 1

REFLECTION

Of those identified, which is the most important pattern that I have become aware of that I want to change? What makes this one so important?



Exercise: Close your eyes, and take a few relaxing breaths. Take a few minutes to scan through your life history. Identify situations when you had this important pattern or learned lessons about that pattern from others. Scan through life in childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, and through today. Based on what you find, what did you learn about the roots and experience of this pattern?



JAKE'S STORY



Could this be you too?

I Changed My Life

Jake, a 38-year-old marketing executive, always prided himself on his strong work ethic and determination. Despite his success, he found himself increasingly troubled by anxiety and a pervasive sense of dissatisfaction. His relationships suffered, and his work, once a source of pride, began to feel like a burden.

Jake's primary issue was his uncontrollable temper in high-stress situations, both at work and in his personal life. He often found himself lashing out at colleagues and loved ones, followed by deep feelings of remorse. This pattern was affecting his professional reputation and personal relationships, leaving him feeling isolated and unhappy. He wanted to let go of his anger.

During a series of counseling sessions, Jake and I delved into his past, particularly his childhood. It was revealed that Jake grew up in a household where his father, a perfectionist, was quick to anger over small mistakes. As a child, Jake internalized his father's reactions, learning to equate mistakes with personal failure and developing a deep-seated fear of imperfection and related emotions. This unconscious belief system was driving his current behavior.

The breakthrough came when Jake became aware of how these ingrained beliefs from his past were dictating his reactions in the present. He realized that his outbursts were a defense mechanism, a way to protect himself from perceived failures, just as he had tried to protect himself from his father's criticism. With this awareness, Jake began the process of change. He worked on understanding and challenging his belief that mistakes equated to personal failure. He learned to separate his self-worth from his achievements and imperfections. Mindfulness techniques helped him recognize the onset of anger and frustration, allowing him to pause and choose a different response. He learned to let go not only of his anger but also of his self-doubt and fear of disappointing his father.

As Jake's self-awareness grew, so did his control over his reactions. He became more patient and understanding, both with himself and others. His relationships improved, and he found new joy in his work. Jake's transformation was not overnight, but the awareness of his unconscious beliefs and their impact on his current behavior was the catalyst for lasting change.

STEP

2

Braving

Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves.

Carl Jung



2

STEP BRAVING

.....

Once we understand how we got to this place, we can use this knowledge as the springboard to our future. Once we understand the challenges we want to change, that helps to clarify the direction we want to go toward.

Consider the things you discovered in Step 1. Often it is not our fault. We were never taught this in school, or we may have had painful experiences that taught us to avoid communication in this specific way.

On the following pages, identify tools you can begin to practice to make progress forward.



STEP 2

BRAVING

FINDING FREEDOM

1) Choose one issue that you identified in the present that you would like to let go of. Describe it.

2) What beliefs do I tell myself about this situation?

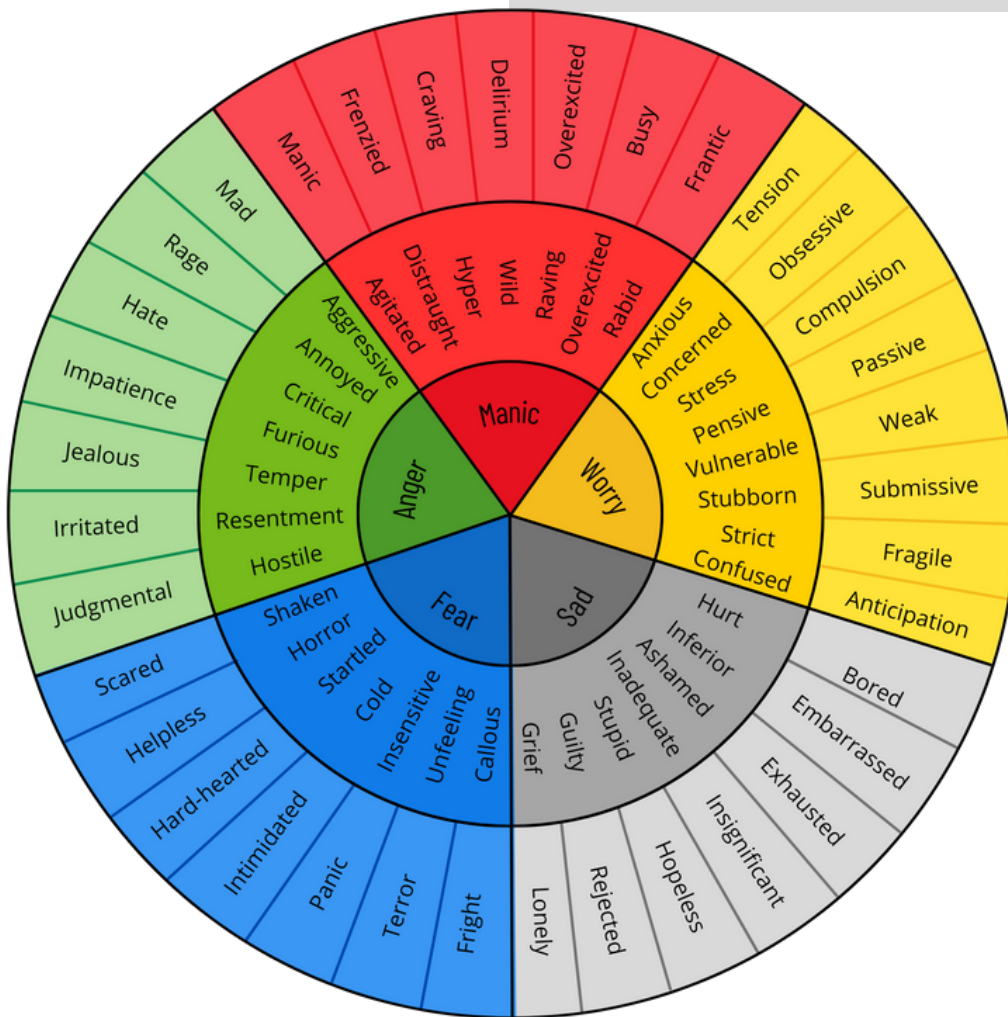
3) What values do I hold that are in conflict here?

4) What relationships (or lack of relationships) feed this issue?

BRAVING

FINDING FREEDOM

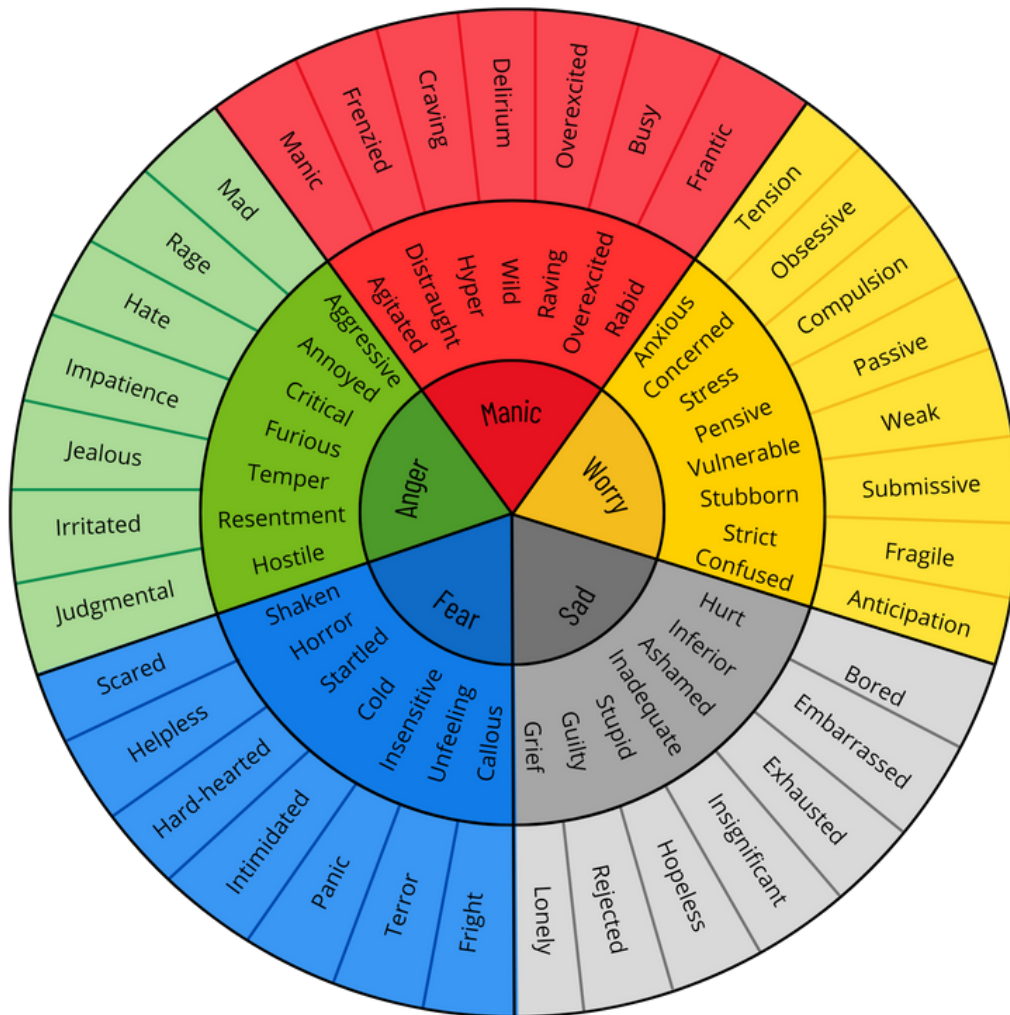
5) Choose one emotion that seems to be the center of this situation: for example, fear, anger, mania, worry, sadness.



6) Using the feelings wheel, identify 2-3 emotions in that category.

BRAVING

FINDING FREEDOM

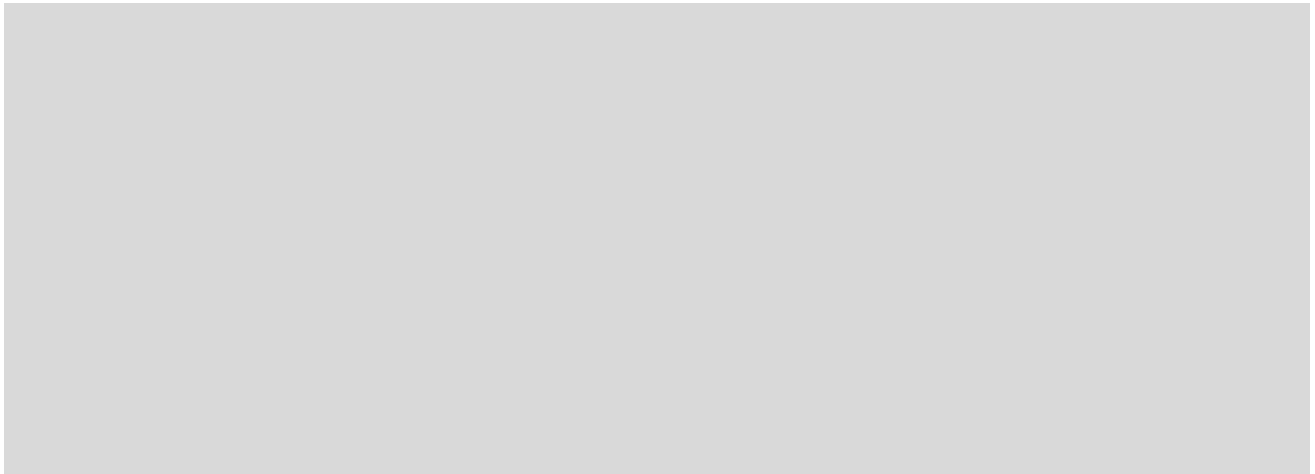


7) Using the feelings wheel, identify other related emotions you are feeling from other categories. Pay particular attention to emotions that may hide underneath the initial emotion.

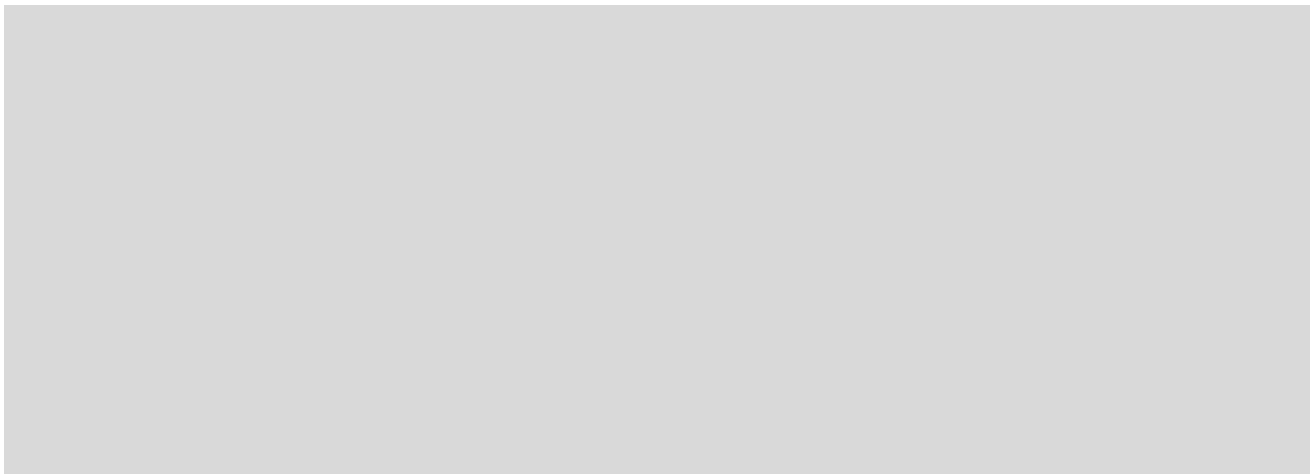
STEP 2

REFLECTION

When was the first time that I experienced this emotional pattern? And other situations?



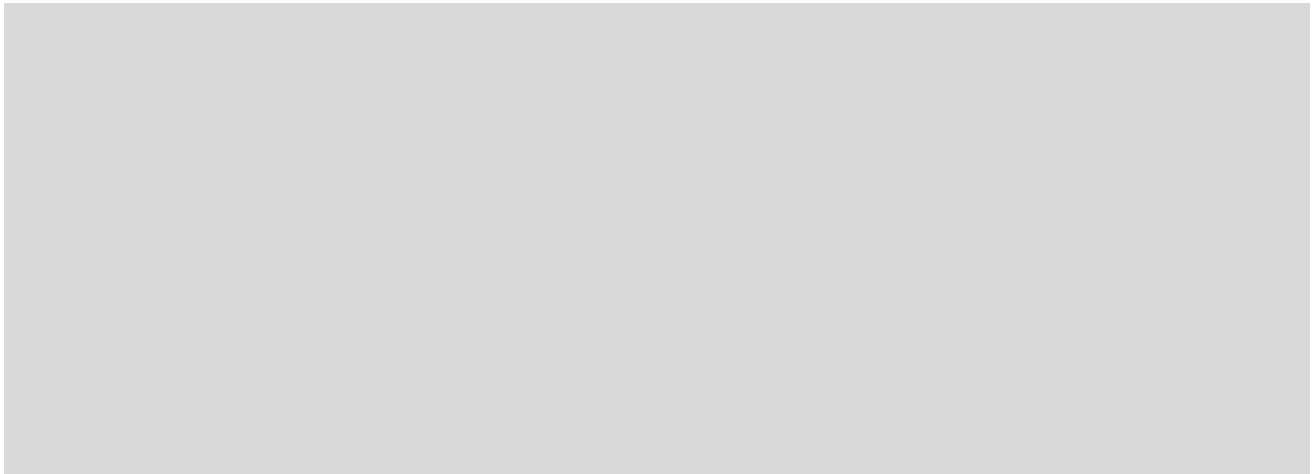
In what ways has this emotional pattern helped me or protected me, at least in the short term?



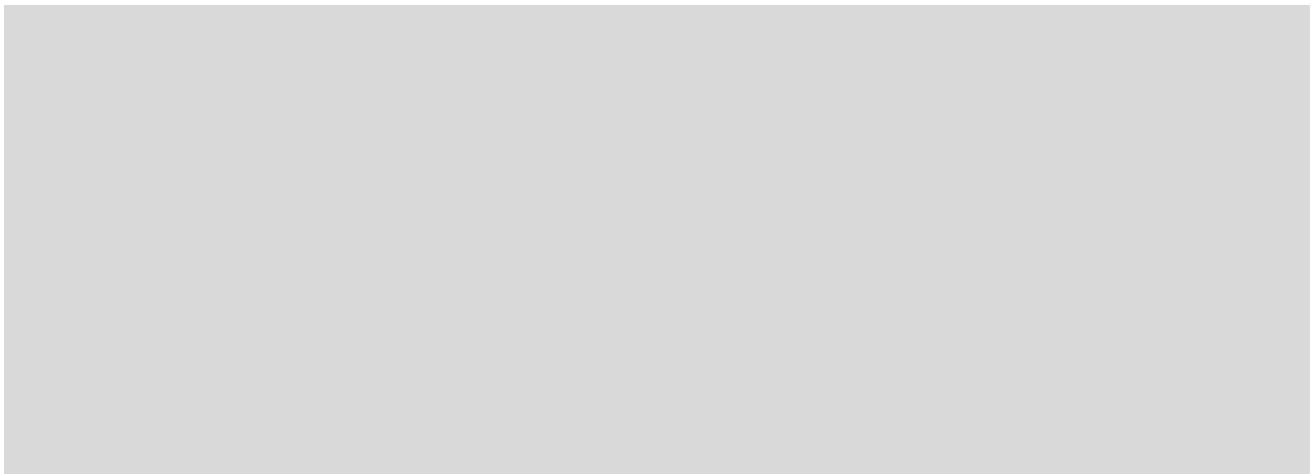
S T E P 2

REFLECTION

What is the most important insight I have learned in this step?



Based on what I have learned what is the next right step?



STEP

3

Closure

*In the process of letting go, you will lose many things from the past, but
you will find yourself.*

Deepak Chopra



3

STEP CLOSURE

.....

Once we understand our situation, its related elements, and their history, it is time to let go.

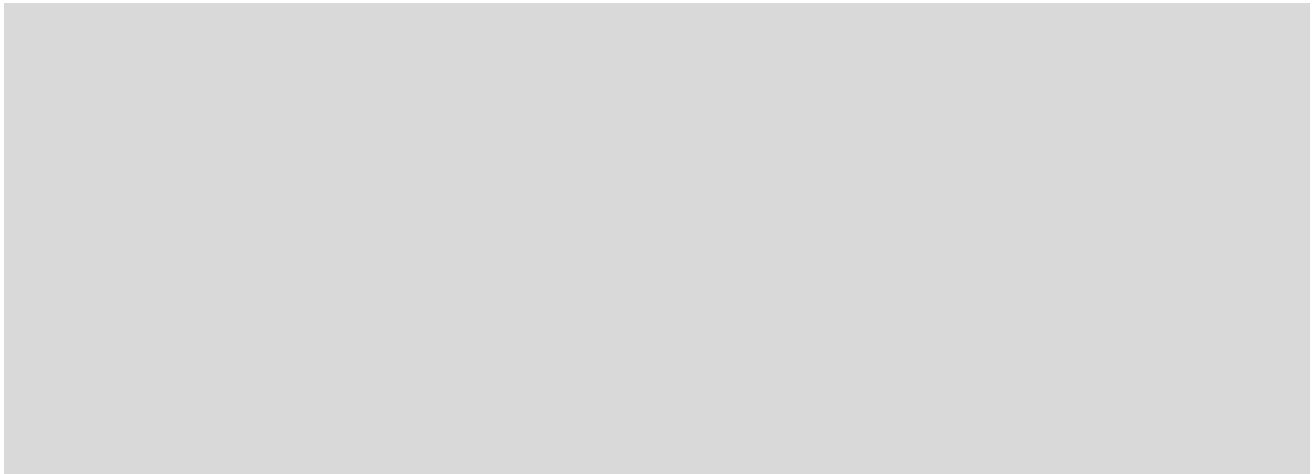
On the following pages, begin to put this awareness into action and change.



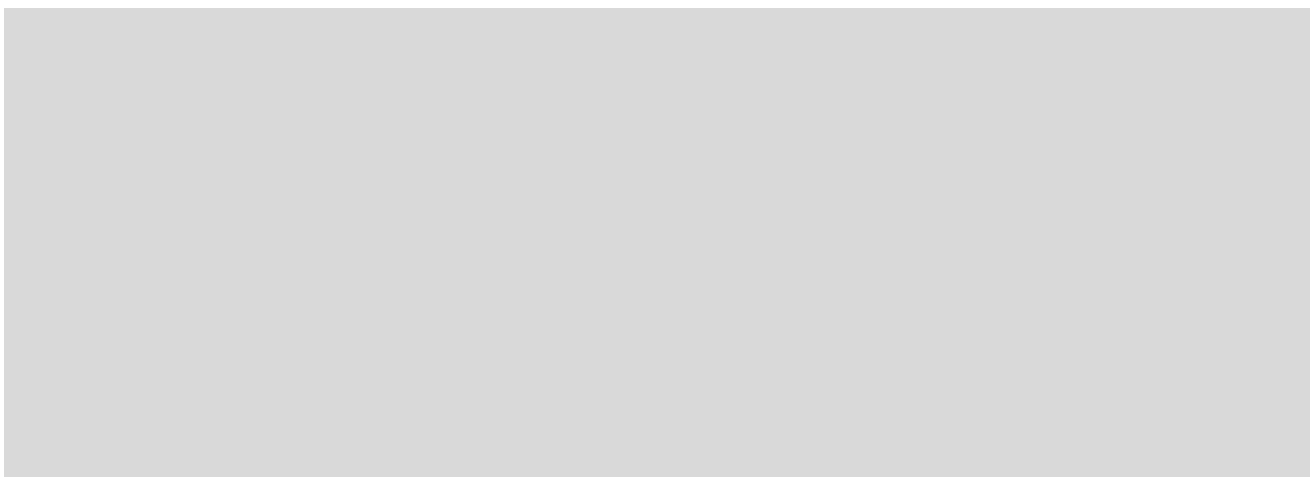
STEP 3

COMMITMENT

Based on your review of these experiences, when you are free to let go, in what ways will life be different and better?



What would it mean to you if these risk areas were not addressed?



STEP 3

COMMITMENT

Am I willing to let go now?

Yes No

JUST DO IT

With greater awareness and precision, it is often easier to let go. There are many ways to actually let go. Here are some. Choose one and do it.

1) Letter Writing

Write a letter to the person or situation. Describe how it has affected you. Pour all of your emotions and thoughts into the letter. When finished, rip, burn, or otherwise destroy the letter, symbolically releasing these emotions you have been carrying.

2) Visualization

Find a comfortable space and close your eyes. Visualize the problem area or pattern in detail like a photograph. Let the image become smaller and smaller, and further and further away, until it is the size of a small postage stamp. Then visualize folding it up and throwing it away.

3) Let Go

Hold a pen with your right fingers, with your palm facing down. Now let go of the pen. Consider how you did this. There is not a good language to describe the process, but it is similar to what we have been doing: 1) Become aware that we are holding the pen 2) Decide that we want to let it go 3) Do it.

Understanding this process, think of your problem area, be aware that you are holding it in your life, decide to let it go, and do it. Now.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Didn't Let Go?

Repeat the process or try a different method. Sometimes, you need to let go of some of the other beliefs or emotions that you identified. Also, consider if there is another belief or feeling that you either did not identify or are unwilling to release.

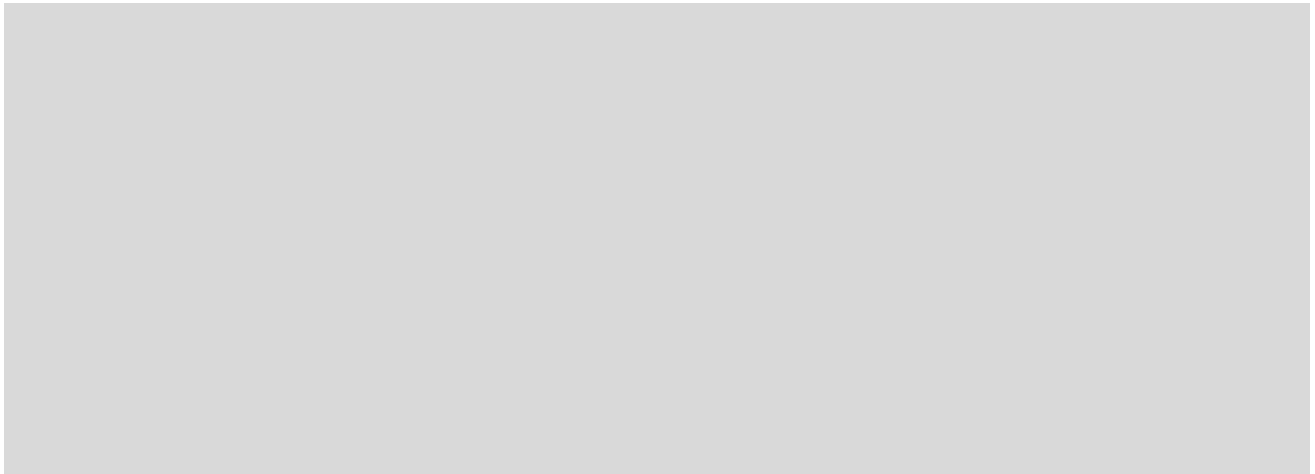
It Happened Again?

Sometimes our behaviors are deep patterns of behavior. These habits can resurface from time to time. You can repeat the process. You can also purposely plan habits that are protective or “antidotes” to the emotion you are releasing. For example, plan regular social times with a current loved one, to help letting go of some of the memories surrounding a loved one from the past.

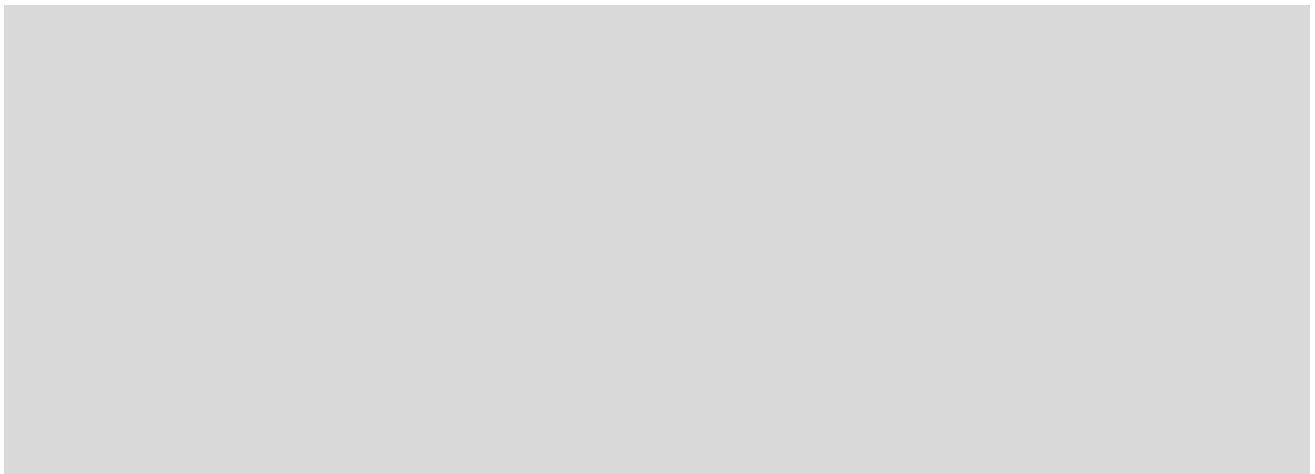
STEP 3

REFLECTION

What is the most important insight I have learned in this step?



Based on what I have learned what is the next right step?



STEP

4

...AND BEYOND

All The Talent In The World Is Useless Without Perseverance
Steve Morse



6

STEP

CHANGING DIRECTIONS

You have made it here. Congratulations. The work continues. You have the things you need to implement these changes and be successful.

It is my passion to give people of every budget the tools that they need. You can sign up for free for my mailing list and visit my website, social media, or Facebook group at any time. I have a range of books on Amazon and seminars online that I continue to release, specifically for people who wish to self-direct.

Tired of doing it all on your own? For those who wish for professional Expert guidance and experience, I offer one-on-one packages. This specific support can help you to transform quicker and easier, with accountability built-in. Excited to start working together? Please see the last page of this workbook in order to book a free 15-minute meeting with me!

I am looking forward to hearing from you and helping you on this journey to greater success, health, and happiness! Different things are right for different people. Whatever is best, I am here for you.

Not sure about the right fit? Here is what others had to say about my services...



facebook.com/DrKenMartz



www.DrKenMartz.com



www.tiny.one/DRKEN



www.twitter.com/ken_martz



JOIN US

WWW.DRKENMARTZ.COM

What Do the Experts Say?



Dr. Blythe Cleverly, Brain and Behavior Expert

I am honored to call Dr. Ken Martz a trusted friend and colleague. Beyond the professional accolades, it is his personal warmth and honest enthusiasm for giving hope to those who suffer, that is truly inspiring to me. The world needs more qualified and caring practitioners like him!
www.DrCleverly.com

Joel Elston, Master Life Coach

Dr. Martz does an outstanding job of offering solutions to manage our emotions, and prevent them from sabotaging our life goals. His 30 years of experience in the mental health and addictions field allows for insight and perspectives that few can give.



What Do Clients Say?



Amazing

He is an amazing therapist. Highly Recommend

Cares

Dr. Ken is professional and respectful. He has a wealth of experience and truly cared about what he is doing. I've enjoyed the time shared while growing as a human being.



Passionate

Dr. Ken's excitement and enthusiasm radiate through the technology. I genuinely feel Dr. Ken is passionate about his work.

Understanding

He has been understanding, completely non-judgmental, and helpful in my journey to find myself.



WANT MORE?

1:1 SUPPORT

Sometimes our self-awareness can identify large or difficult experiences. Or you may simply wish to have extra support so that you can progress faster.

If you wish to work with me directly, schedule a free 15-minute meeting to explore possibilities such as a one-time consultation or ongoing support to learn to apply these tools to a specific issue.

Those scheduling today may use coupon code WB100 for \$100 off the monthly 1:1 rate for a limited time.

See you there!

<https://tinyurl.com/MEETKENFREE>

JOIN US



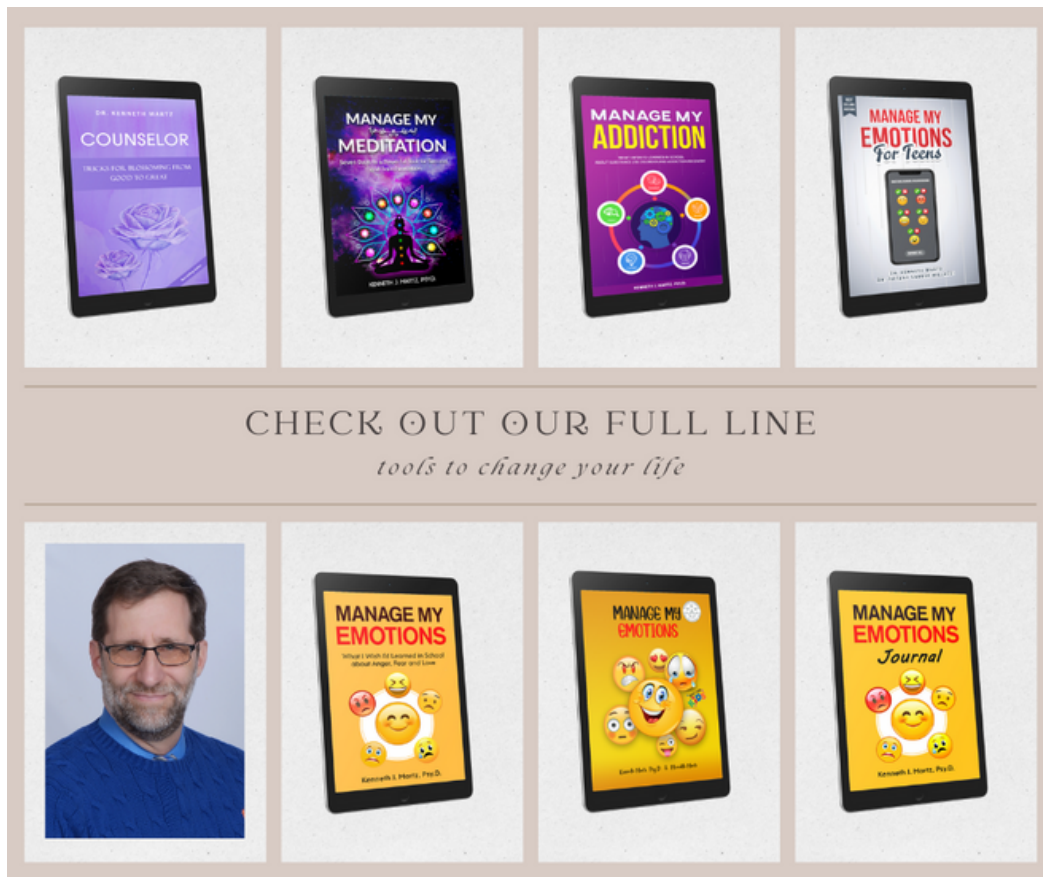
WANT MORE?

SUPPORT

The Coping Skills Toolbox offers dozens of tools like this, across a range of topics. Get yours today, just \$197 for a limited time.

<https://tinyurl.com/DrKensCoping>

A range of books are available through Amazon. Enjoy!



www.tiny.one/DRKEN

WWW.DRKENMARTZ.COM