

REWIRED: A BOLD NEW APPROACH TO ADDICTION AND RECOVERY

10 ELEMENTS OF RECOVERY

AUTHENTICITY:

- Living authentically can be uncomfortable. We don't want to burden others with the truth; we tell them what we think they want to hear. In doing so we take a step away from our own integrity.
- Taking off the mask requires delving into the defense mechanisms that are often times unconscious and fuel the addiction. It can be very challenging to defy one's accepted role but instead of helping us survive, they are ruining our chances for happiness and fueling substance use.
- A person who lives authentically has nothing to fear. There are no skeletons in the closet, no keeping up with appearances. Peace of mind and comfort in one's own skin is the norm. In every area of life, we can ask ourselves, "Does this choice reflect the real me?"
- There are ways to ground yourself in your new authentic identity. Strengthen the inner voice just like a regular muscle through exercise. Journaling, connecting with nature, meditation, and solitude can amplify your intuition. Keep a notebook by your bed at night and jot down times during the day when you felt disconnected from your true nature. By doing this, you can begin to isolate certain features of your struggle.

QUESTIONS TO STRENGTHEN AUTHENTICITY

- | | |
|---|---|
| ➤ In what areas of my life do I lack authenticity? | ➤ Who are the people who undermine my growth and recovery? |
| ➤ In what ways am I a people-pleaser? | ➤ What is my life's purpose? Am I fulfilling my destiny or hiding from my dreams? |
| ➤ In what circumstances have I ignored my inner voice? Why? | ➤ What changes have I noticed since beginning this work? |
| ➤ What are the consequences of ignoring my inner voice? | ➤ Have I experienced any signs of withdrawal from inauthenticity? |
| ➤ In what ways have I betrayed myself? | ➤ What have I done this week to strengthen my inner voice? What were the results? |
| ➤ What masks do I wear? | ➤ How did I reward myself this week? |
| ➤ Who are the people who support my authentic self? | |

HONESTY

- Shame can be a powerful influence, when we are made to feel embarrassed, inferior, or incompetent, shame can cripple our ability to tell the truth. Healing only comes when we grieve the initial trauma, accepting others and ourselves as imperfect.

- Slowly, we can begin to believe we are lovable even with our flaws and the need to impress is gradually replaced with the thrill of being embraced as an imperfect human.
- Another reason people lie is to control and manipulate others. Trauma can create a need to feel in control and gain the upper hand. Healing can only occur when you are willing to touch the center of your sorrow, sit down with the primal feelings of terror and hopelessness, and surrender your need to hurt or control others.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE HONESTY

- | | |
|---|---|
| ➤ How have I lied to hide my addiction? | ➤ In what areas of my life do I minimize the truth or make excuses? |
| ➤ Have I cheated or stolen during my addiction? | ➤ In what areas of my life do I exaggerate the truth? |
| ➤ What white lies do I tell and why? | ➤ Is there anything in my life that I am currently in denial about? |
| ➤ What role has shame played in my dishonesty? | ➤ Do I have any traumas or uncomfortable truths from the past that I am not facing? |
| ➤ What role has manipulation and control played in my dishonesty? | ➤ Am I hiding my assets, skills, or strengths out of fear, shame, or self-loathing? |
| ➤ Do I lie to keep others at arm's length? | |
| ➤ How has dishonesty undermined my personal relationships? | |
| ➤ How has dishonesty undermined my professional life? | |

EVOLUTION

- Addiction is almost like being frozen in time; we repeat the same dead-end activities as though in a trance. We sense that we are squandering our potential, and secretly we know that we are hiding from life, but our rut is safe and cozy. Using can be a crutch for dealing with boredom and the fear of success or fear of failure keep us paralyzed.
- Fear of failure is probably one of the main reasons why we prefer to numb ourselves through addiction rather than move forward. Sometimes we are so afraid of disappointing others that we become paralyzed. Other times it's a deep-seated feeling of unworthiness that makes us question our abilities. No one wants to fail, but there is no way to succeed other than to fail many times. This helps failure lose its sting.
- The inner critic is fear of failure's greatest weapon. One way to combat the inner critic is to pause and firmly say out loud "No." Other tools are to repeat positive affirmations to yourself or create a daily written inventory of everything you are doing right. Do this for 30 days and your entire mental outlook will radically change. You will begin to focus on your strengths rather than your flaws and begin to develop self-compassion and understanding for yourself.

- Fear of success can be just as devastating as fear of failure. It can be easy to use, not rock the boat, and make sure no one feels insecure about us.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE EVOLUTION

- What do you want to change in your life?
- What are some of your personal ruts?
- What do you think is holding you back from making that change and evolving to the next level of your life?
- What's your greatest fear regarding moving forward?
- If you could be anything in life and were guaranteed to succeed, what would it be?
- What might you learn about yourself if you take the risk to make a desired change?
- What new doors might open if you make the changes you envision?
- What steps will you take to support your goals?
- Who are your allies who support your dreams?
- Try doing the positive self-inventory for a week, what are your results?
- How will you reward yourself when you make progress?

SOLITUDE

- To know our real value, we have to look inside. The only way to heal the wounds of low self-esteem is to give the attention to ourselves that we sorely need.
- To be authentic, we must first know what we think and feel before being able to share these insights with others. Solitude helps us know our own hearts and minds. In order to know our dreams and ambitions, we need to spend time exploring our hobbies, wandering, and allowing ourselves the freedom to try new things without having to please others. Experiment by taking five minutes during the day to sit and do something for yourself.
- Isolation and solitude are not the same thing. Isolation, rather than being a purposeful act of self-love, self-discovery, and adventure, is a fear-based act of hiding out. Isolation is not an empowered choice a person makes in order to facilitate person growth.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE SOLITUDE

- How much time do you spend by yourself?
- Do you fear being alone?
- Do you find it painful and difficult to tell others when you need to separate?
- Are you connected to technology 24/7? Do you go into withdrawal if your internet connection fails?
- How can you comfort and nurture yourself on a daily basis?

Rewired: A Bold New Approach to Addiction and Recovery – 10 elements of recovery

- In what areas of your life do you need to cultivate more serenity and peace? In what areas have you been successful at doing this?
- Are you attracted to drama?
- What would it feel like to have no drama in your life?
- Do you lean toward isolation?
- What change have you experienced upon spending more time with yourself?
- Write a letter to yourself as a child, then to yourself at 90. What messages do these selves have for you in the present?

TIME MANAGEMENT

- Until you value yourself, you won't value your time. Until you value your time, you won't do anything with it.
- A perfect gauge of our relationship with time is our breathing. If we are not breathing enough, or breathing shallowly, we can find ourselves off beat. Try sitting down and breathing naturally, without force. When you hold your breath, whether out of dread, anxiety, or not to feel, you cause yourself stress.
- Procrastination is a sign that we may be avoiding uncomfortable feelings. Figure out why you're procrastinating, is it a fear of success or failure?

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE TIME MANAGEMENT

- How do you allocate your time each day?
- Does your work drain you of your energy or does it give you purpose, enjoyment, hope?
- To whom do you give your energy on a daily basis? Do they add light to your life or do they deplete you?
- How might you restructure your time and energy so that you have more time to spend on taking care of yourself?
- In what areas of your life do you procrastinate?
- Do you suffer from chronic tardiness, if so, what is the root cause?
- Is your life in balance?
- What dreams or aspirations are you willing to work toward in small steps?
- What does it feel like when you are truly present in the moment?

SELF-CARE

- Self-care may be hard for us if our basic needs were neglected or denied as children. When our needs went unfulfilled, we may have developed a sense of undeserving, believing that somewhere inside we lack worth. We mistakenly believed we were the cause of the cruelty or coldness at home, and this low self-esteem and self-loathing now informs all our daily activities.

- There is a big difference between self-care and selfishness. We can't take care of others if we aren't taken care of ourselves. Gently setting boundaries with friends and family members is a must.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE SELF-CARE

- What is the most important thing you can do today to exercise self-care?
- In what ways have you neglected yourself during your active addiction?
- What steps can you take to nourish and nurture your physical body? Your mind? Your heart and emotions? Your spirit?
- What were the results, how did you feel before, during, and after?
- How can you do for yourself the things you wish others would do for you?
- How often do you say yes when you mean no? How often do you do the opposite?
- Who are your allies that will support your self-care?
- How can you better care for yourself at work?
- What are your personal danger signals that you are slipping back into your old ways?
- How can you reward your progress on a daily basis?

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

- The purpose of a relationship is not to have another who might complete you, but to have another with whom you might share your completeness. We must begin to teach others how to treat us.
- Addiction is largely a disease of poor boundaries. We tend to gravitate towards enmeshment or too much involvement or we become overwhelmed and isolate.
- If we want long-term sobriety, we have to take stock of all the relationship in our lives, determining which ones are toxic, which require repair, and which ones nourish us.
- Healthy relationships are based on the underlying principle of trust. It's okay to get to know people slowly. It's okay to evaluate others.
- The only way to detach successfully is to do so with love. You can begin by making a list of gratitudes about the person you need to separate from. Think of all they've taught you, if nothing positive, focus on the self-awareness you've gained while knowing them.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

- Do the people closest to you add light to your life? Do they want what is truly best for you?
- Do you feel emotionally and physically safe in your relationships?
- Are you fearful, anxious, or extremely unhappy in your current relationship?
- What are your expectations of healthy relationships? What defines a healthy relationship to you?

Rewired: A Bold New Approach to Addiction and Recovery – 10 elements of recovery

- What does trust mean to you?
- How are your communication skills?
What could you do to improve communication in your life?
- Do you give more than you take?
Take more than you give? What can you do to come into balance?
- If you are struggling to let go of toxic relationships, what support can you get to help you through the transition?

GRATITUDE

- Gratitude grounds us in the present moment and connects us to those around us. It is the practice of thankfulness- counting one's blessings and cultivating a perspective on life that focuses on the positive.
- Research reveals that hypothalamus activity in the brain during meditations on gratitude was observed at record high levels. The hypothalamus controls stress levels, metabolism, sleep cycles, and emotional stability. Gratitude was revealed as a natural anti-depressant.
- Gratitude helps us to forgive, to heal the gravest of injustices. By choosing to live in the present moment, rather than dwell on the unchangeable past, we can avoid losing more precious time, of which so much has already been sacrificed to addiction.
- There are two types of fear: that of not getting what you want and that of losing what you already have. Gratitude is the solution to both. It's very difficult to attract good into your life if you are busy meditating on what you don't have yet. If you are angry and bitter now, you will only be more angry and bitter when you have more; it will never be enough to fill the empty hole inside.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE GRATITUDE

- What are you grateful for?
- Do you have a sense of entitlement?
- Do you engage in self-pity?
- Do you feel lucky to be you? Why or why not?
- How often do you compare yourself to others?
- Do you buy into advertising messages about your self-worth?
- What steps can you take to celebrate yourself?
- What painful experiences are you grateful for? What have you learned and how have you grown?
- How can you show others you are grateful for them today?
- How can you give back to your community, your family, and those who have supported you?

COMPASSION

- Compassion is self-acceptance and acceptance of others. It means an end to demands, comparisons, and complaints. We are all flawed and compassion teaches us that despite this, we still deserve love.
- One of the best methods of silencing the hateful voices in our heads is to work with affirmations. Looking into the mirror and reciting affirmations is highly effective.
- The Compliment Log- a small journal to carry with you to record every nice thing that others say about you.
- Once we are easier on ourselves, we can start to give others a break too. If someone offends us, we can pause before rushing to judgment, giving them the benefit of the doubt.
- Sometimes we need to acknowledge that our relationships with other people mirror the ones we have with ourselves. If we continuously find ourselves attracted to someone who is unkind, we may need to examine whether that person is merely vocalizing aloud a lot of the beliefs we ourselves hold within.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE COMPASSION

- | | |
|--|---|
| ➤ Do you find being compassionate toward yourself easy? | ➤ Do you have anger issues? How can the compassion help manage rage? |
| ➤ Do you feel guilty or ashamed of who you are or your actions? | ➤ How well do you give and receive compliments? |
| ➤ In what areas do you need to practice self-acceptance? | ➤ Do you forgive easily? |
| ➤ In what ways do you need to be more accepting of others? | ➤ Have you been holding a grudge? |
| ➤ Where and when can you give others the benefit of the doubt? | ➤ What would it mean to forgive everyone in your life? What would it feel like? |
| ➤ Do you practice relative ethics, treating some people well and others not so well? | ➤ How has shame and guilt driven your addiction? |
| ➤ What does tolerance mean to you? Do you practice it? | ➤ What would it feel like to be free from all shame and guilt? |

LOVE

- “There are two basic motivating forces: fear and love. When we are afraid, we pull back from life. When we are in love, we open to all that life has to offer with passion, excitement, and acceptance. We need to learn to love ourselves first, in all our glory and

imperfections. If we cannot love ourselves, we cannot fully open to our ability to love others or our potential to create. Evolution and all hopes for a better world rest in the fearlessness and open-hearted vision of people who embrace life.” – John Lennon

- Fear drives us to play it safe and pretend that love is a foolish waste of time. Where love is lacking, trauma is most often to blame, and at the root of trauma is a betrayal of love.
- Once we affirm that love is love, regardless of its sources, we can begin feeling its warmth all around us in unexpected, exciting ways. One of the best exercises is to focus on what you have in common with people rather than on the differences.
- If we’re truly at a loss for incoming love, we can always focus on the love we have to give. Expressing love toward others has the same effect as receiving love.

Questions to Explore Love

- | | |
|---|---|
| ➤ How do you see love manifesting in your life? | ➤ How do you show your love toward family and friends? Toward your partner? |
| ➤ In what ways have you chosen love over fear? | ➤ How do you cope with jealousy? |
| ➤ In what ways do you practice self-love? | ➤ Have you experienced a significant loss of love? |
| ➤ Is it easier to say something nice to someone else, but harder to say it to yourself? | ➤ What can you do to open your heart once more? |