

Learning to Deal With Inner Issues

Because the concepts discussed in this section of the *Workbook* are complex, take some time to *answer the following questions before your next appointment*. You can use the space provided or your journal. You and your seizure counselor may want to spend some time discussing and clarifying the following questions:

1. What is your understanding of the terms “issue,” “conflict,” and “chronic negative feeling state?”
2. What issues/conflicts have you already listed in your *Workbook*? Give examples of recent self-observations of these issues.
3. How exactly would you go about self-observing and validating these and other inner issues?
4. What are some of the issues that you may have discussed in previous sessions but perhaps did not identify as an “issue?” Add them to your list if appropriate.
5. Have you had experiences of making an unconscious issue conscious, and learning to take care of that issue by conscious choice? If so, please describe. If not, discuss with your seizure counselor your picture of what this process might be like, taking one of the issues you have identified as an example. (Perhaps your support person or friend has had this experience and would be willing to tell you about it.)

6. What do your critical thoughts tell you about internal issues and conflicts? Critical thoughts, which you may frown upon as somewhat dishonorable feelings, can instead be used as valuable indicators of your own internal issues and conflicts. If you decide to observe the criticism that you have toward other people, you might discover that your critical thoughts result from fears about yourself. If you are afraid of being lazy, it may make it hard for you to take appropriate breaks and rest periods. As a result, you might hold a grudge against people who have a more easy-going attitude toward fulfilling their duties. Realize that sometimes identifying issues in others' lives comes easy because we have some of the traits within ourselves. It can also be easier to point the finger at another person than to reflect on how the same issue may be operating in our own life.

Can you remember a time you chose to criticize rather than look at your own feelings?

7. What do jealous feelings tell you? Jealousy is an obvious sign of a wish to be or to have a certain thing, trait, or skill that you observe in another person. If comparing yourself with others makes you feel inferior, it is important for you to notice this in order to develop realistic expectations of yourself. If you constantly strive to be like someone else and think you will be happy once you become this other person, you have created a concept of happiness that is a setup for failure. This condition for happiness is far from realistic. At times, jealous feelings can be like a gift or inspirational wake-up call to practice self-acceptance.

Can you write about an example that affected you?