

## Eliminating Self-Defeating Behavior Workshop - Session Two

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### ***The Prices You Pay for Maintaining Your SDB***

In session one we learned that any behavior that is unbecoming to you and defeats you in your ability to enjoy your life is a self-defeating behavior (SDB).

People who keep using their self-defeating behaviors report some degree of unhappiness. They are not in full control of their lives and feel a growing tiredness that piles up as the behavior is continually used. Workshop participants who completely drop their defeating behaviors report a joy and a delight being themselves, having more meaning and peace within, enjoying an ability to love more deeply, and experiencing an eagerness for each new moment of living. They sense freedom and control that comes from being at the helm of their lives. In essence what they say is, "When I used self-defeating behaviors, I paid very heavy prices; it was only after I let the behaviors go that life opened up for me, and I could truly see what the behaviors were costing me."

Congratulations for enrolling in this workshop. You enrolled with every expectation to change because you are aware of your bad habits, faulty thinking patterns, and foolish behaviors that are preventing you from the happiness you want. Yet, while you know you need to make some changes, you need additional motivation.

You will find plenty of motivation when you begin to identify all the negative consequences and all the positive things you are missing out on. This concept is easy to understand, but it must be internalized until you not only understand the prices, but **feel** them as well. You must feel them so deeply that there is no question about giving up your SDB. It has to be done!

If you are saying, "Well, my SDB is bad but not that bad," then you are saying you really don't want to change because, after all, it's not that bad. If you have this attitude you will have no motivation to change. Your SDB is causing you some discomfort but not enough to take any action to change it. You seem to say those nearest you who also suffer as a result of your SDBs; "You have to just accept me as I am and get over it."

You will receive the necessary motivation as you deeply feel the prices, the adverse consequences you pay and the pain you cause others. Yes, others. You have a definite influence on others in your life for good or for bad. Take stock of the prices you are experiencing personally and then look at the prices you are imposing upon those around you.

After you have identified the many prices you pay for doing your SDB, and after you have felt them at deeper levels, then take notice of how you minimize those prices when you are about to do your SDB again. (It seems to be a normal behavior for people to minimize or rationalize the adverse consequences **before** doing their SDBs.) Immediately afterward, we reap the full array of prices that cannot be minimized. After the act, we realize how we were deceiving or fooling ourselves by blocking out the consequences that allowed us to do it again.

When you do this, you are blinding yourself to the consequences, but the prices are still waiting patiently to be paid, and you will most assuredly pay those prices. You must be wise enough to consider the prices before doing your SDB and making the appropriate choices that will free you from doing it.

#### **To apply these concepts, make a list of the following:**

1. All the immediate and lasting prices you pay for doing your SDB. Dig deeper than ever before so that you will be thorough in this effort, and include the adverse results plus those positive things you miss out on by doing it.
2. Take a few quiet moments to meditate on those prices and to feel them deeply and to recognize how much they truly hurt you and others.
3. Then, list ways you have attempted to minimize these prices. For example, what things do you tell yourself that make the paying the prices seem so minimal or benign that you can justify doing the SDB again. Knowing the prices you pay, there is no way that you can continue to do your SDB unless you minimize the prices. Being fully aware of how you do this is extremely important in giving up this behavior. Talk out loud to yourself about how you minimize in order to hear yourself say it.

Here are some examples of how others have done these three steps. The prices for using self-defeating behaviors fall into two categories: 1. The actual adverse results that come about from using the behavior and, 2. The positive experiences missed as the behavior is used.

#### **Results from using my SDB:**

1. Inability to be fully happy with self.

2. Depression.
3. Impaired relationships,
4. Poor health and early death.
5. Unnecessary expenditure of money.
6. A giving-up feeling from carrying around this SDB. Call it hopelessness.
7. Contribute to others' hurt by getting in the way of their growth and happiness.
8. Death of energy, time, and spontaneity.
9. Shame with self as the behavior is used.
10. Negative contributions (if only in very tiny ways) to all of the systems one is part of: family, church, school, city, country, world, universe. (Think of the example of a rock thrown into a pond and the ripple effects it causes.)
11. Loss of full control over one's life.
12. Inability to fully know oneself as a person.
13. Living with fear.

**Positive things I miss because of doing my SDB:**

1. Increased time and energy to do important things.
2. Ability to accept self as a normal human and being happy with just that.
3. More meaning and peace within.
4. Deeper ability to love.
5. Eagerness for a new day to dawn and looking forward to new and unexpected adventures.
6. Ability to live in the now, fully, without holding back.
7. Sense of freedom by being at the helm of your own life.
8. Increased production at work, home, and at play.
9. Openness to growth.
10. Ability to experience in a life-giving manner the full range of emotions from joy to grief.
11. Positive impact on the lives of others.

Add to your list as you become aware of new prices for doing your SDBs and of other rewards when you don't.

**How I minimize the prices by doing my SDB so I can continue to use it:**

1. Keep busy and occupied as a way to avoid facing them.
2. Joke about the prices to try to make them seem less severe.
3. Compare my prices with others' prices in such a way that mine don't appear so bad after all and especially as not so awful as theirs are.
4. Recreate debilitating SDB patterns and recognize I pay prices. Congratulate myself on my ability to put up with so much and minimize the prices by seeing myself as a martyr.
5. Perceive prices to be beneficial. For instance, I create tension then convince myself I can't function without it.
6. Avoid recognizing the pain I inflict on others. I perceive prices as something that can't be avoided, and that's just the way life is.
7. Function at 50% capacity or less and tell myself this is all the energy I will permit at the present.
8. Get engrossed in the problems and hang-ups of other people in order to turn away from facing the prices I pay within myself.
9. Consider real freedom from this SDB as an impossibility and ignore what I do to restrict my own freedom.
10. Say to myself that these problems will some day go away; I probably won't have them in the grave.
11. Conclude I'm not so bad off, so I don't have to do anything to change.
12. Constantly make apologies for my behavior and the prices, and then conclude that by admitting my mistakes it takes me off the hook for the hurtful things I do to myself and others.
13. Conclude that it was predestined to be this way and that's the way it is. That's the way God made me. Believe it's not my fault.
14. Build a way of life around them and adapt to them so that I don't have to give them up.
15. Ignore that I am being hurt or that I am hurting anybody else.

If you want to rid yourself of destructive repeatable behavior patterns, you must let the prices you pay, and that others pay because of you, weigh heavily upon you. When you do so, you will have the motivation and the courage to face the fears and get rid of the SDB.

### **Homework**

To receive maximum help, email your homework: (ie, list your prices, the positive things you miss, and how you minimize your prices to: [DrDavidCoombs@gmail.com](mailto:DrDavidCoombs@gmail.com) at least two days before our next session. You do not have to identify yourself. You may remain anonymous. But be as open and transparent as you can be in your email. Be real!