

Seminar Writings – Discovery

1 Vote

Seminar Work – Teen Discovery

Right/Wrong vs. Working/Non-Working

Learning about the ways that I have continually held myself back has really enlightened me to the points of my personality that I need to change. I chose to look at life from within the narrow context of right and wrong. I saw situations as having a win-lose outcome – one that either caused me to fail or caused me to falsely triumph. I see now how I limited what could happen in my life and how I created all of the conflict that I believed was a matter of circumstance. For a choice to work for me it does not have to be “right.” A decision being right directly implies that it is the only way, that I am somehow better than those who chose differently from me. I see now how the right/wrong method of thinking allowed me to rely not on the reality of a situation or on an accountable heart-motivated decision process but rather on the thoughts and acceptance of others. If I am “right” then others must see this and admit either their agreement to my choice or realize that they are “wrong” and therefore lower than me. For a choice to be working I must evaluate the results, consequences, and emotions attributed both to myself and to others. I must look

at the function my choice has played in the overall scheme of my life and decide if the results benefited me or were destructive.

Feedback

Feedback is honest information given to a person to let them see the parts of who they are that are working and non-working and that they are likely unconscious of. I used to really hate to receive criticism – which is how I perceived non-working feedback. Now, I enjoy both giving and receiving feedback. I heard a lot of feedback yesterday. Nearly everyone picked up on my self-esteem issue. My body image came up a lot and the way I present myself physically.

I have a habit of covering my stomach and body with my hands. Someone else pointed out that I feel really rejected by my peers and because of this not only did I develop a sense of self-hatred but I developed a hatred for my peers. The feedback that I denied the most was that I play the ditz and I am completely hurt by my parents but refuse to feel or project those emotions or build a relationship with my family. I think the fact that I deny and hate to hear that feedback makes it most likely to be true. I know that I do present myself in a ditzzy manner. I smile a lot. I talk about things that aren't particularly important to avoid discussing what is really going on with me. I don't know why I chose such a petty image. I suppose it is a direct reflection of what I don't want to be: superficial, unintelligent, and uninvolved. When I took a look at my Magical Child, I realized I am the reverse of those things. I see that I don't know myself as well as I would like to. I want to focus as much energy as possible on changing the negative parts of

myself that I have created. I really saw my Magical Child yesterday. People give feedback to help me to see what they see, feel, or experience when they look at me. I can use that to help myself weed through the parts of myself that are only image so that I can truly find the person I am inside and when I do that I will find true happiness.

Grungies

My biggest Grungie was acting lonely and depressed. "All I want is Love" "Nobody Cares" "No One Will Ever Understand Me" were my favorite lines. I didn't want to admit that I had control over how I felt and how I let the world effect me. I used situations that occurred in my life as though they had happened "to" me. I took my victimizing skills and made myself into a poor pathetic little girl. In doing so, I sacrificed my control. I made excuses for everything and justified each and every move I made. I didn't have to be honest or accountable. I realize now that if I want to be happy and free, I have to be willing to stop fooling myself. I have full control over the way I feel. I will always be exactly how I feel about the person I am inside. A Grungie is an excuse to be less than I really am and it is something that is really not working in my life. I am choosing to hold myself back every time I choose to fall back on my Grungie.

Integrity

Integrity is the act of being true to myself and my values. When I was running my number back at home, I didn't exercise any integrity. Integrity requires that I stay very much in tune with myself, my beliefs and my heart. I think of integrity as the outcome of self-respect. I chose to focus solely on the negative parts of my personality and chose an image based upon the glorification of those very much non-working traits. I have always had integrity. I simply chose not to use it – now I have rediscovered my values. I know what I want out of life and understand the expectations.

Accountability

When something happens in my life, I am accountable based on the choices that I've made. I can blame myself or others and live in a fault-based world or I can simply accept that I create everything – working and non-working – through the choices and decisions that I make. That is the only way that I can truly have control over what goes on in my life. I make the choice to put myself in every situation in life that I will ever be in. Now that I truly understand this, I can use this knowledge to make working choices that will bring me to the places I want to be. It is up to me – and me alone – to take control by being accountable and really think about what will result from my decisions. This time I was lucky and only ended up here. If it happens again, I can foresee my results will be much more harsh: jail, death, poverty, etc.

Image

My image was that of a “party girl”. I was trashy and and a drug addict. I used sex as a tool to promote myself and manipulation as a method of sustaining my addictions. My image was a way to cover up my insecurities. I pretended to be someone that I wasn’t because I didn’t have respect for who I really was. If I’m not being true to myself, then I am not being true to anyone. That’s what an image is all about – it is a lie that I create to avoid the emotions and feelings that come with revealing who I am inside. Living in an an image isn’t a life that I want for myself. It is really not even a life at all. What I was doing was letting fear blind me from really experiencing myself or what my life could be like. I have discovered that who I truly am is the opposite of my image. My image was ugly, trashy, and uninterested/constantly dissatisfied.

Comfort Zone

Nothing good will come to me in life unless I am willing to step outside of my comfort zone. This is something that I have learned the hard way, by coming here in particular, but also by the way I lived my life before. It is very easy to build comfort zones and to get stuck in them. I have found that I – and all of humanity for that matter – do it with everything that we do. Coming here definitely ripped me away from my comfort zone. At first it was really hard and I fought it. Now I see that pleasure and happiness only come with pain and sorrow. When I step away from past behavior and ruts, I expose myself to a world of new choices and opportunities.

Non-Working Decision Analysis

Non-Working Decision: I did not take full advantage of my opportunities to write my parents and begin to form a stronger relationship with them. I chose, rather, to let anger be all that I sent back home.

Stop: When I first arrived here, I sent home letters that really did nothing to help me or my parents. I was writing them about how much I did not want to be “stuck” here and solely out of an effort to be pulled from the facility. I showed no compassion for their emotions and refused to take any accountability for my actions.

Look: I had been stuffing down my problems for years and I expressed my pain through anger. I was very afraid to be here as I knew that I would have to face – and feel – a lot of difficult emotions that I did not want to look at. In blocking out my bad emotions, I had also made myself numb to those that I wanted to feel, and truly did feel, such as love for my family and respect for myself.

Choose: I chose to take the old comfortable path – running from what scared me, regardless of the losses. It was a lot easier for me to get out of here than it was for me to work on a relationship with my parents. I made the choice to take the opportunities that were given to me for building that bond and use them as weapon which I hoped would inspire guilt and get me removed.

Vote: I declared it to myself and through my journal that I would do anything to get out of here and that I really didn't care what

happened.

Step Left: I learned a lot from this situation. Opportunities don't come every day. I just recently started working the relationship between my parents and myself and had I taken advantage of the opportunities I had been given I would not be as far behind as I am now. I learned that I can't let fear run me and that when I am given a chance, I should take the chance. Often times, the losses of a missed opportunity far outweigh the consequences of a braved challenge.

Non-Working Decision Analysis

Non-Working Decision: I chose to speak without permission to a Level 3 student. We were in the classroom. I did not ask staff. No consequence was received.

Stop: I wanted to ask someone a question about art supplies. The staff had already specified that there would be no more talking except for the few who had already been given permission. I was far enough away from staff that they probably wouldn't notice if I spoke without permission.

Look: I really wanted my own way. I was in a mood where I felt it didn't matter what results occurred as long as what I wanted was achieved. I was placing my immediate desires in the disillusioned place of being needs. I was in a "taking" routine.

Choose: At the time, I wanted to create the result of receiving the use of art supplies and the result that I wanted disregarded respect and obedience towards authority. I made the conscious choice to break the rules and risk a consequence both for myself and for others involved.

Vote: I declared within myself the choice I had made and also to the other person involved through the statement, "I don't have permission, but..."

Do It: I acted upon my decision and asked the question without staff's permission. My actions were sneaky and I spoke very quietly and discreetly to avoid being heard.

Step Left: I didn't get into trouble for my TWOP. The staff didn't hear me. I got my desired results and no consequence was given. However, none of these factors cause my choice to be a working decision. I was setting myself up for future consequences and it is something that I really need to learn from. In life I will not always get caught by others. It is my responsibility rather to catch myself. Every time I get away with something, I make that behavior an easier habit as I associate it less and less with consequence. I see now that just because a staff doesn't consequence me doesn't mean I shouldn't do it myself.

Non-Working Decision Analysis

Non-Working Decision: I neglected my water bottle outside of the dining hall. We were in the shower area when I finally realized I did not have it.

Stop: I chose not to stop and think about what my responsibilities were when we were leaving the dining hall. I made the non-working decision to let my current thoughts overrule my responsibilities. I intended to get lost in my mind, based on my result of neglecting to grab my water bottle due to preoccupation.

Look: I was thinking about what I was going to be doing later as opposed to what I should have been doing at that moment. I was focusing on thoughts that really were not necessary or applicable to the present moment. I didn't want to live up to my responsibilities, so I was avoiding.

Choose: My initial choice of neglecting my water bottle did not work for me. I now want my water bottle back. I will get a neglect consequence. I plan to self-correct in order to take accountability for my decision. One non-working choice does not need to lead to one more.

Vote: I made a non-working decision for which I plan to take full accountability. No matter what happens, I will not be a victim.

Do It: I notified staff of my neglected water bottle. I received a scolding and as expected the consequence. I chose to self-correct and followed through on it.

Step Left: My choice to neglect the water bottle did not work for me. Forgetfulness is a choice that I make when I am prioritizing my thoughts. I need to focus more on the now and what I should be doing as opposed to other thoughts.

Working Decision Analysis

Working Decision: I chose to share about very personal issues in group. It was difficult and uncomfortable.

Stop: I decided that instead of continuing to bottle up my emotions and issues, I would brave my fear of speaking about them to others and just do it. I spoke about my experience in Junior High. For the first time ever in group, I was recognized for my openness and received acknowledgements.

Look: I was afraid, but I also felt a confidence to face my problems and fears. I really had a lot coming up for me and I wanted to deal with it then as opposed to later.

Choose: I made the decision to face my fears by sharing in group. I knew that talking about my feelings would produce the result of a more clear state of mind and that it was something I needed to do for myself.

Vote: I declared to the group that I needed to share. It was then put in place that it was an action I was committed to and planned to carry out.

Do it: I shared in group, letting my emotions flow freely. I went with the flow and did not hold back anything. I ignored my fear of speaking in front of the group and used my personal inner strength to conquer my fears.

Step Left: I learned that when I am open and honest with myself and others, I feel a lot better about myself and am much more prepared to deal with my feelings. Stepping out of my comfort zone – which is what I did – also gives me new opportunities to learn and grow as a person. I also learned that no fears can be overcome without first braving hardships.

Working Decision Analysis

Working Decision: I opted to do the art work for and head up the process of creating Integrity's banner for Fun Day.

Stop: I love art and engage myself in artistic activities as much as possible. Recently we discovered a banner for Fun Day needed to be put together. I chose to head the committee to put it together and also to produce the banner's design. It was the biggest step I had made towards coming out in the family.

Look: I had begun to realize that my closed off attitude was not getting me anywhere and that I needed to make the most out of my situation. If I wanted to have positive friends and engage myself in a fun yet positive atmosphere, I would need to create it for myself. I was feeling creative and responsible.

Choose: I saw the opportunity to work on the banner as a chance to get my energy and talent put to use in a positive manner. I chose to commit myself to working on the project and designing the art.

Declare: I told our case manager that I wanted to work on the project and she agreed. I began designing the art that I wanted to put on the banner.

Do it: Once assigned the position, I acted upon it. I came up with a sketch and began taking suggestions and ideas from members of the family. I am putting forth 100% of my talent, ability, and energy.

Step Left: I received a lot of acknowledgments for my involvement with the family and also for my artistic talent. I learned that people will respect me for who I am and what I create. I realize that my talents are a working form of expression for myself.

Victimization

When I am acting like a victim, I have a general routine that I run. First, I express a certain amount of anger towards the situation, as though it were an animate creature capable of inflicting something upon me. I tend to use “I” statements when referring to actions that cause me to appear to have been “wronged”, or referring to aftermath emotions, such as the pain I experience after an event. I act as though my life is something happening “to”

me and that I have no control over my circumstances. I play a major right/wrong game and it is one that incorporates a great amount of fault and blame. I emphasize other people's actions or key events but downplay or eliminate the actions and choices I made to put myself into the situation. I generally begin to believe that I truly am a victim. I sacrifice my self-power for the sympathy of others. Being a victim helps me to avoid my problems by taking away my ability to fully control my life. In the end, it just leaves me with a great deal more emotional baggage than does just taking accountability for my life. It leaves me closed off to possibilities, because in order to not be accountable, I can't acknowledge the power of choice and use it to my advantage in my life. Being a victim causes me to feel and wallow in the feelings associated to someone or something violating me and situations come up quite often that don't work. If I choose to be a victim, I must experience pain over and over again without the ability to change my situation.

Action/Behavior Analysis

Action: Self-starvation

Stop: I often (and repeatedly) look at my body with disgust. My body image is very poor and I tend to recognize only flaws, particularly with my weight. I become very compulsive with food and rectify my body problems by not eating.

Look: When I start a self-starvation cycle, my self-confidence is very low. I often feel that my life is out of control and I look to my body to find something that I can control. I am generally frustrated, hopeless, and without love for myself or my life.

Problems are brewing under the surface and I am desperately seeking an escape or temporary relief from my inner pain with general disregard for consequence.

Choose: The starvation cycle causes endocrines to be released throughout my brain and the combination of pain and emotional stimulation give me not only an escape mechanism but also a feeling of control over a problem in my life. When I feel my life is out of control, I choose starvation as a method of relief.

Vote: I declare my choice generally in a manner as to not bring attention or alarm. "Oh, I'm going on a diet" or "Oh, I need to lose some weight" are my methods of declaration.

Do It: For weeks or months I cut down on my eating to a survival based level. For that brief period, I feel better as I am temporarily distracted from my real issues. I stop and maintain my emotions for a brief period of time before the issues return, amplified in intensity, and the cycle begins again.

Step Left: The cycle doesn't solve anything. It only intensifies my underlying emotional problems and causes physical problems as well. I need to deal with the real issues when they come up instead of escaping them with self-destructive behaviors.

Action/Behavior Analysis

Action: Poor Posture

Stop: I stand with a slouched back, arms folded around my stomach, with a shaky closed-off demeanor. I do this in an effort to hide myself and comfort myself.

Look: When I stand this way, I generally do it out of low self-esteem. I do not feel worthy enough to stand tall and open myself up. I do not feel comfortable allowing others to see my flaws and I try to hide them.

Choose: I generally declare this subconsciously but I make a definite choice to engage in this sort of posture.

Do It: I stand this way, drop my head, lower my voice, and avoid eye contact to avoid attention and in some way make myself feel better. This is not the result I get. Rather, people see my low self-respect and I provide them with an opportunity to feed off of it.

Step Left: To others, I am exactly as I appear. This behavior shows me that my self-esteem is still a major issue for me.

Action/Behavior Analysis

Action: Lashing Out/Easily Frustrated

Stop: I often lash out at others over small actions that they take, or if there is not anyone around I allow myself to be easily set off by circumstances, such as dirt, bugs, a squeaky bed, a noise, etc.

Look: There is usually a lot going on inside of me that I am not properly dealing with. I often feel a certain amount of pain, stress, or fear that I want to release but not look at or experience.

Choose: To get rid of my emotion, I need a stimulus or a target. A small annoyance is perfect as I can take out my emotions about myself on someone else without focusing on the actual problem at hand.

Vote: I declare my choice by focusing on external targets and by seeking out my “problem.” Internally, I declare that I will solve it with aggression or attitude.

Do It: Once I have selected my target, I relieve my pent up emotion towards myself onto it. It generally doesn't last all that long. My results are generally someone else getting hurt or angry, and myself being left with the same – or more – problems being stuffed down inside.

Step Left: When I blow up about little things, I push people away from me. I make it difficult to maintain relationships and cause a lot of unnecessary stress for myself and for others. Taking out my feelings on others is not an effective way of dealing with problems

and is really a way that I avoid being accountable and responsible for dealing with the pent up emotions I create for myself.

Action/Behavior Analysis

Action: Forgetfulness, Tendency to Neglect Tasks

Stop: I neglect things and often forget to get things done. I recognize that this is a choice I make.

Look: When I forget things, I am often experiencing a great deal of stress. I believe that this comes from my tendency to stuff down my feelings. Over time, these feelings have a way of working their way up to the surface. When they do, I find myself hit with a wave of intense feeling that seems to come from nowhere. This emotion is very consuming and demands to be processed. Dealing with this burst of feeling demands a majority of my energy and focus. I am faced with a choice between the task or responsibility at hand or the emotions that are coming up for me.

Choose: I choose to focus on the internal as opposed to my responsibilities. The strong emotions become more important to me than what is going on around me. I make this choice on a more subconscious level and tend to justify my active choice to neglect my responsibilities by claiming to have “forgotten” about it/them.

Vote: Once the choice has been made, I declare it myself or others with statements like, “I forgot about...” or “There is so much going

on with me that I keep forgetting to....”

Do It: My choice results in my thinking about the other issues that are on my mind and simply not doing what I have committed myself to. This is a habit that I do quite often and has become a cycle that needs to be stopped. I only cause myself to neglect my responsibilities thus making a great deal more problems for myself.

Step Left: I realize that when I “forget” it is because of a choice that I made in the past. I choose to focus my mind on something other than the task that I should be focusing on. I have learned that I need to deal with problems at first instead of shoving them down and letting them dominate my life.

Traumatic Events and Victim Analysis

8 Most Traumatic Events:

1. My birthday sign in 8th grade getting ruined
2. Going to the hospital
3. My parent's reaction to my suicide attempt
4. L's overdose
5. Getting kicked out

6. Being made fun of

7. Starving myself and passing out at school

8. Coming to Tranquility Bay

I take full accountability for the choices I made that led to these situations. I used to play a victim but I realize that I am simply perpetuating the problem and setting myself up for repeat occurrences in the future.

1. When I was in 8th grade my friends made me a sign to hang on my locker. It said “Happy Birthday Chelsea” and was very special to me as I didn’t have many friends at the time. I went to lunch and when I returned my name had been crossed out and “Pimple Back Chelsea” was written on it. I ripped it off and pretended it was never there. I felt very ugly and disgusting. My self-esteem was very low and when people commented on the way that I looked I let it get to me in a big way. I chose to focus on other people’s opinions more than my own and let it run me. In this situation, I chose to focus on someone else’s opinion and not believe in myself or my own opinions. I declared this to myself by ripping the sign off of the locker. That was my way of saying that I agreed with the statement and was giving in to the pain. By declaring this, I committed myself to action. I changed my opinion of myself and let it run me for a long time. The pain that I felt was not because of the opinion of someone else – it was because I chose to believe it. A lot of my body issues come from this event. I

built a lot of self-limiting beliefs by choosing to make someone else's opinion more important than my own.

Self Limiting Belief I Created: I'm Not Good Enough

2. When I attempted to commit suicide my parents were notified by my friend's parents. They waited over an hour to check on me. I chose to get angry with them for this and hold it against them for a very long time. I was hurt. I was asking for attention and love and felt as though my parents did not give me either. I was afraid to ask and used my suicide attempt in place of direct conversation. I felt very rejected and unloved by my parents. I chose not to be direct about my feelings. Only when my wants, needs, and feelings are put forward in a direct and honest manner can I really expect to get the results I want. I made the choice to disregard that knowledge and instead hurt myself in an effort to try and manipulate my desired results from my parents. I declared this to myself internally by imagining myself getting rescued by my parents and having that action provide me with the love and attention I desired from them. I made the decision to expect something from them without taking it upon myself to ask for it. I chose to put an expectation on their reaction to a horrible event and to base my feelings of self-worth upon their reaction. I was the one who chose to put both myself and my parents in that situation and unless I directly ask for something I really can't expect my parents to know what I want, let alone give it to me. I have learned that I when need love or attention, I need to ask.

Self Limiting Belief I Created: I Am Unlovable

3. I was in a situation where someone very close to me overdosed on pills and I had to choose whether or not to send him to the hospital against his will or leave him in his bed like both he and his mother thought was best. Taking him to the hospital would have risked major legal trouble for the both of us. I felt he was going to die if he did not go to the hospital. He was angry and upset at the idea and was lashing out at me. I felt betrayed, and very unloved. I didn't understand how he could do something like this despite all the people who cared about him and then threaten them for trying to help him. I felt like I wasn't good enough to keep him alive. I made the decision to take him to the hospital. I declared this to all involved. He was very upset and angry about my choice. His condition was deteriorating more and more and he tried to hit me. In the end, my choice saved his life but he was not grateful. I once again chose to feel that what I had done wasn't good enough, despite the end result. I made the best choice I could have regarding his life, but not about my emotions.

Self Limiting Belief I Created: I'm Not Good Enough

4. My parents told me to leave the house and not come back until I could act civil. I left for two months. My actions at home were out of control but I did them in an effort to get attention. When my parents kicked me out I felt very hurt and rejected. I felt unloved. I had a lot of self-limiting beliefs come up and get reinforced in this event. I ignored what I had done to create the

problem and focused instead on how “they” made me feel (victim). I chose to make the decisions that led to me getting kicked out. I declared this by stating how unfair it was and also by reacting to my parents with a great deal of anger that should have been directed towards myself. I made the choice and spent a great deal of time being a victim to the situation. I have learned the being a victim is choosing to feel wronged even when it was choices of my own creation that brought me into that situation.

Self Limiting Belief I Created: I’m Unlovable

5. I was given the name “Pimple Back Chelsea” because my skin would break out all the time. I chose to let this statement effect my self-esteem and the way I dressed and portrayed myself.

When people started to call me that, I felt very ugly and ashamed of my body. I chose to believe in the opinions of someone else other than my own. I knew who I was, but I chose to sacrifice my true self and replace it with someone else’s experience of me. I acted upon this belief by acting as though what was said was true.

I wouldn’t wear tank tops or bathing suits. I hid my body and chose to stop believing in myself. In this situation, I build and reinforced a few of my most difficult self limiting beliefs. I chose to put other people’s opinions ahead of my own and sacrificed my own self-worth for what was just the opinion of someone else.

Self Limiting Beliefs I Created: I’m Unlovable, I’m Rejected, and I’m Not Good Enough

Discovery Reflections

The right/wrong game really represented so much in my life and made me realize a lot about how the world really works – especially my world. The game really woke me up to my issues with being extremely competitive. I always felt I had to be better than the people around me and that happiness came from conquest and not from togetherness and unity. I did so much to other people, especially my family. If I take the time to look at life from a positive viewpoint and to take risks in a manner that promote togetherness instead of separation, there is no real way to “lose.” I realize that all of the problems in my life were created by me and me alone.

Life is a game of interaction, of relationships, but mostly of perception. What I see influences how I feel, how I act, and what effect I have on the people around me. I can choose to look at life as a battle, as something negative, and I truly will produce those results. This is what I have been doing for so long and it is truly amazing for me to how much I learned and became aware when we played the red/black game. I saw that I have really been interacting with my family on a battle type basis. I saw how much I compared the actions in my life – good or bad – to my siblings. All that it produced for me was a feeling of failure. I see that I created that also since I obviously made the decision to play a game with that being the only possible result. I feel like someone just flipped a switch in my head and said “Hello Chelsea! You made your life this way!” I learned in the black/red game that any

problem I face in my life can be traced back to a belief that I have instilled in my mind that needs to be challenged and changed.

This process, and the entire Discovery Seminar, has challenged every belief I've ever had. Yes – the truth hurts. Facing up to the fact that I create major negative energy in my life isn't easy. I experienced a lot of rude wake up calls, but without an occasional rude awakening, I might sleep until it's too late. I want to change myself and become a stronger person and I really believe this is the way.