My Life Space

("What do I feel in the different areas of my life?")

The purpose of this exercise is to help you pinpoint the unwanted *emotions* and the *contexts* of your life where you are struggling the most. In order to release our unwanted emotions it is essential that we *identify* those emotions and also the *thought processes* and *beliefs* that sustain those emotions. The result of this simple exercise is that you will become more focused on the issues of your life that require the most attention.

It is important to notice that your ego is invested in *disowning* responsibility for your emotions and thus you may view "the problem" in your partner or in an unpleasant circumstance of your life. As long as "the problem" remains outside of you, you are destined to be continually upset. When you can re-identify the problem *as in your own emotional response to things* you then have a foundation from which to create true change in your life. Taking responsibility for your emotions places you in charge of your happiness and is the basis for true communication and effective action.

How to proceed

1. Take an inventory of the most troubling areas of your life

On the "Life Space" page look over the general contexts or "spaces" of your life. As you reflect on the reality of what is happening in these various areas, simply check the areas that are most troubling for you in one way or another. A "troubling area" is any area where you feel "stuck" or dissatisfied, feel troubling emotions or perhaps want something better for yourself. After checking the troubling areas, then check the more *specific* areas of concern within the general areas. Once you have identified the troubling areas go ahead and highlight or color in these areas. You will immediately have an overview of the "trouble spots" in your life. Then choose the one area *that troubles you the most* and then write it at the top of "My Negative Emotions and Thoughts" page. For other areas, you will want to do a new "My Negative Emotions and Thoughts" page but for now just focus on your major area.

2. Identify the emotions that you feel in your most troubling area.

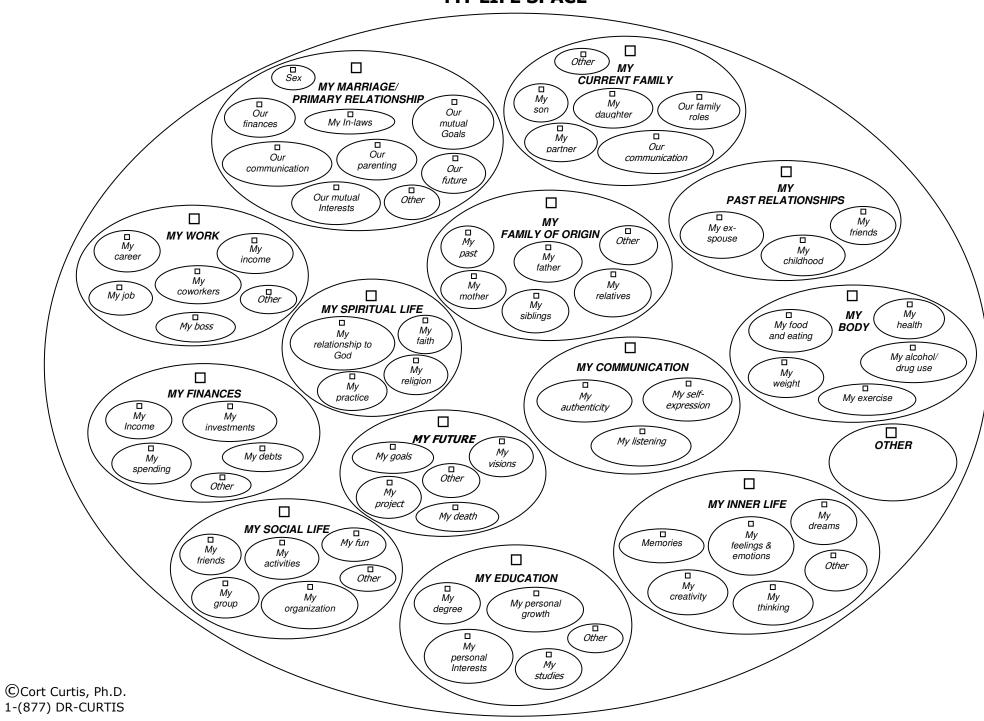
On "My Negative Emotions and Thoughts" page, scan the list of emotions that best describe how you feel in *your most troubling area*. As you reflect on your most troubling area, simply check the emotions that best describe how you feel.

3. Identify the thought processes that sustain the emotions.

Once you have identified the most troubling area and the emotions that you feel, then move over to the next column and check any of the negative thoughts that further describe the emotion. Feel free to journal on the back of the page any other negative thoughts that more closely describe the reality of what you think. There may be thoughts that you think from time to time or there may be more persistent thoughts. Check off any ones that you can relate to. Once you have checked off the thoughts, highlight the ones that appear *most persistent*, that is, the ones that seem to go "round and round" in a circular fashion.

Your goal in this exercise is to identify as many of the unwanted thoughts and emotions that you feel in your most troubling areas. As you identify these troubling areas, and the emotions contained within them, you will later go back and journal on these feelings and emotions to help in the process of releasing them.

MY LIFE SPACE



My Negative Emotions and Thoughts

	Area in which I feel these emotions:				
■ Cut off ■ Defeated ■ Discouraged ■ Empty ■ Insecure ■ Lifeless ■ Listless	□Lonely □Numb □Rejected □Resigned □Unimportant	BELIEF/THOUGHT/WH "I can't" "I can't win" "I don't care anymore" "I don't count" "I don't know how" "I don't matter" "I give up" "I'm doomed" "How could you"	AT I TELL MYSELF ("I'm telling n "I'm useless" "I'm worthless" "I'm not good enough for you" "You don't love me" "Nobody loves me" "You don't care" "Nobody cares" "You don't want me" "I'm not needed anymore"	"Nobody wants me" "I'll never love again" "What's wrong with me" I might as well die" "I'll never" "I'm not good enough" "I'll just leave" "Don't touch me" Other (on back)	
□ Insufficient □ Bored □ Disappointed □ Dissatisfied □ Disheartened □ Dismayed □ Disillusioned □ Doubtful □ Failure □ Frustrated □ Gloomy □ Grief □ Helpless	□Inadequate □Indecisive □Inferior □A loss □Pessimistic □Powerless □Regretful □Sad □Unhappy	"It'll never work" "It's a dead end" "It's too hard" "Let it wait" "Poor me" "Why bother" "No way out" "No use, why try" "What's the use" "Why try anymore" "What if I fail?" "I can't do it right"	"I can't live without you" "There's nothing to live for anymore" "What's the point of living" "No way, forget about it" "No matter what I do" "I'll do it tomorrow" "I might as well give up" "I've come to the end" "I've lost everything" "I'll never get it right" "I can't do anything about it" "It's all over for me"	"It's over" "I'm so stupid" "It's not fair" "Why me?" "I'm a victim" "I'm a failure" "It's no use" "It's too late" "I'll never recover" "Nothing works"	
□Guilty □Ashamed □Embarrassed □Regret □Shame □Sorrow		"I could never show my face" "Why did I do that" "How could I do that" "I'm terrible" "I'm awful" "I'm not worth living" "I'm in hot water now" "II should"	□"I'm such a bad person" □"You might as well hang me" □"How could I do such a thing" □"I'm a sorry example of a human being" □"If you ever found out" □"You'll never forgive me" □"There must be something wrong with me"	"I'm so sorry" "I'm so bad" "I could be in a lot of trouble" "Why would anyone want to be with me" "I'm defective" Other (on back)	
□Afraid □Alarmed □Anxious □Apprehensive □Cautious □Desperate □Disturbed □Dread □Exposed □Frantic □Vulnerable □Worried	□Intimidated □Nervous □Panicky □Paralyzed □Restless □Rushed □Scared □Suspicious □Terrified □Threatened □Trapped	□"Crisis after crisis!" □"I don't want it to change" □"I have to get you before you get me" □"I'm not OK" □"I'm not enough" □"I'm trapped, there is no way out" □"What if" □"What if I fail" □"It's not safe"	□"I've got to hide, disaster is looming" □"I can't let you find me out" □"I have to get it right or you will kill me" □"It is safer to stay still and not take any chances" □"I'm confused and I don't know what to do, so I better not do anything" □"What if you don't like me" □"What if I make a fool of myself" □"What will they think of me"	"What if I get fired" "What if I get into trouble" "You're out to get me" "What will you think of me" "It's closing in around me" "I'm so confused" "It's so confusing that I just can't move" "What if I make a mistake"	

	□Lost	□"What is happening to	"It's the same thing over and	□"I thought it was going
□Confused □Bewildered □Disillusioned □Disoriented □Distrustful □Doubtful □Dumbfounded	☐Mixed up☐Perplexed☐Pessimistic☐Shy☐Uncertain☐Unsure	me" "Why is this happening to me" "This is not the way I thought it would be" "I can't trust anyone" "I'll never work it out"	over" "Why did she do that" "Why did he do that" "What is going on" "How can this be happening" "Is this what I have to look" forward to?	to be different" "It'll never work out"
□Self-Centered □Aloof □Arrogant □Blaming □Distant □Dominating □Demanding □Haughty □Moralistic □Proud □Reserved	d □Separative □Serious □Uncaring □Unconcerned	"I'll just reject!" "How dare you!" "I knew that" "I know everything" "I won't associate with those kind of people" "I'm better than all of you" "I'm better than you" "I'm in a better place than all of you" "I'm not like you" "I'm right" "I'm smarter than you"	"I'll look like I'm agreeing and do it my way" "I'm too busy with important matters to have time for you" "I'm the only one who can do it right" "What's wrong with you!" "Who do they think they are!" "Who do you think you are!" "Why is everyone so incompetent" "You don't belong" "You need me to get it done" "You poor bastard" "You need me"	□"I'm the only one who can get it done" □"I'm the savior/hero" □"It's your fault" □"Maybe I will and maybe I won't" □"My way is the only way" □"What do <i>you</i> know" □Other (on back)
□ Craving □ Controlling □ Displeased □ Demanding □ Envious □ Greedy □ Hungry □ Impatient □ Jealous	□Longing	□"I want" □"Do it my way" □"Don't stop" □"How can I get it" □"I can't wait" □"I have to" □"I like it this way" □"I must do it my way" □"I must have it"	"I must know" "I must figure it out" "I must understand" "I'm not satisfied" "It feels so good" "There won't be enough" "There isn't enough for me" "I want excitement" "I need"	"I want it all" "I want it now!" "Look at me" "Me, me, me" "I need you" "I need them" "I'm starving" "I'want more" Other (on back)
□Angry □Annoyed □Bitter □Disgusted □Exasperated □Furious □Hate □Incensed □Indignant □Irritated □Livid □Mad	□Outraged □Resentful □Spiteful □Upset □Violent □Vengeful □Vindictive	"Drop dead!" "F off!" "F you!" "Fat chance!" "Ill get even!" "I'll get you!" "I'll get them" "I'll kill you!" "I'll never give in" "Not a chance" "Not on your life!"	□"Do it my way or else!" □"Don't even think of it!" □"You can't push me around!" □"Don't tell ME what to do!" □"I'll let you go down the tube" □"I'm not doing anything!" □"If you don't listen to me" □"Me do it your way?! Not on your life!" □"Who do you think you are!" □"You better do it my way or else!" □"Get out of here!"	"I hate you!" "Out of my way!" "Why can't you!" "You bd!" "You bh!" "You little!" "Asshole!" "Oh my God" "You'll be sorry" Other (on back)
□Hurt □Appalled □Alienated □Bruised □Crushed □Dejected □Disturbed □Heartbroken	☐Humiliated☐Injured☐Insulted☐Offended☐Tormented☐Rejected☐Wounded☐	"I'm stunned" "How could you do this" "I'll never recover from this" "I'll never talk to you again" "I hope you die"	"I wish you were dead" "You don't know how this feels" "I'll get back at you" "How can I get back at you" "What could I do" "There must be something wrong with me" "I'll never love again"	"How dare you" "I'll show you" "There's something wrong"

My Life Space Plus

("What would I like to feel in the different areas of my life?")

The previous part of this exercise helped you to identify the emotions that you are experiencing *now* in the various contexts of your life. These are some of the emotions that are creating unhappiness for you. We often look at our life situation and assign responsibility for our unhappiness on the external circumstances (e.g. my relationship, my job, my living situation, etc) of our lives. When we view our unhappiness as outside of ourselves we have nothing to do but seek to control or change those circumstances. We say in effect, "If my circumstances were different maybe I could be happy." This belief leads to a never ending quest to change or control our circumstances in order to be happy.

While there is certainly nothing wrong with seeking to change our circumstances when it would serve us to do so, if we are carrying around negative emotions that we haven't dealt with, we will likely bring those emotions into the next situation. The result is that we will find ourselves playing out the same emotional drama. My circumstances have changed but I am still struggling with these same emotions! When you can begin to deal with the reality of what you feel and find your own inner resources to transform those feelings into positive ones, then *you* become in charge of your own happiness *not* your circumstances.

It is important to recognize that there really is no such thing as a "positive" or a "negative" emotion. Your emotions are your emotions and whatever you feel *now* in particular areas of your life are probably understandable. It is not that you "shouldn't" feel what you feel; in fact you "should" feel what you feel because you feel it! The only thing "negative" about any emotion is how long they persist. And persistent emotions create unhappiness in our lives. You want to get to a place where you allow your emotions to flow—to come and go and naturally disappear. The only thing that keeps us stuck are our thoughts—the ones that go "round and round".

In this part of the exercise you will identify what you would *like* to feel in these areas. We are not concerned at this point in *how* you might begin to feel these feelings. The important thing is to consider *what* you would like to feel. This is a question that we rarely ask ourselves with any specificity because we are so bogged down in our negative emotions. And when we are bogged down in our negative emotions, feeling "positive" is about the last thing we want to consider. In this exercise you will consider some of the positive emotions that you would like to feel in the most troubling areas of your life.

Start with the area where you struggle the most and write it at the top of the "My Positive Emotions and Thoughts" page below. Then simply scan the list of positive emotions and thoughts and check off the ones that inspire you. The result is a direction for your own happiness. For other areas return with a new "My Positive Emotions and Thoughts" page and go through the emotions for that area.

Area in which I would like to feel these emotions:					
EMOTION ("I would like to feel") "What I could tell myself is"					
□Loved □Accepted □Appreciated □Cared about □Cared for □Close □Considered □Respected □Valuable	"I can" "I'm good enough" "I matter" "I's a new chapter" "There is good in this" "I'm unique" "I'm good" "I respect myself"	"There's a place for me" "I can't please everyone" "I can please myself" "I am what I am!" "I can let love in" "I am loveable" "I can make the best of this" "There is no one like me" "I can make a difference"	"I'm valuable" "I'm worth it" "I'm OK" "I'm alive!" "I'm wanted" "I'm needed" "I'm important" "I'm blessed"		
□Sufficient □Capable □Certain □Confident □Dynamic □Enough □Powerful □Self-supportive □Steady □Sure	"I can learn from this" "I'll do it myself" "I can do it" "I'll make it work" "It's possible" "I'll just try again" "If I fail, so what?" "I'll do the best I can" "I can get others to help me" "It's worth a try"	"There is another way of seeing this" "I can find a way" "I'll never know unless I try" "So what, I failed" "I know what I know" "If it can be done, I'm the one to do it" "I can recover from this" "There's something I'm meant to do" "I'll deal with whatever comes" "I' can always learn more"	□"I can learn from this experience" □"I can do better next time" □"It'll happen" □"Let's go for it" □"Why not!" □"I'm game" □"Let's do it" □"Yes!" □"It's a new day!" □"I can get it back" □"Its never too late"		
□Innocent □Absolved □Blameless □Exonerated □Forgiven □Humbled □Redeemed	"I'll get through this" "I can make up for this" "I can forgive myself" "I've made some mistakes"	"I can admit it" "I've made a mistake" "I'm still worthwhile" "I can show that I'm OK" "I understand if you don't trust me" "This does not mean I'm terrible "I am still a child of God" "I had bad judgment"	"I'm responsible" "I did it" "I hurt you" "I blew your trust" "I'm learning" "I am sorry" "I blew it" "I admit it"		
□ Patient □ Certain □ Content □ Delighted □ Generous □ In no doubt □ Satisfied □ Trusting	"You can have it" "That's another way of doing it!" "I can wait for the right time" "It'll work out" "It will happen in its own time"	"There's enough for everybody" "I don't need to figure it all out" "I can live with this" "I love the way you treat me" "When you are ready" "When I am ready" "I'd like it but I don't have to have it"	"If you would like" "I trust that you will" "I can wait" "You treat me great" "I can trust" "I can let it be" "It's OK"		
□ Peace □ Still □ Trusting □ Confident □ Quiet □ Relaxed □ Safe □ Satisfied □ Secure □ Self-assured	☐"So what if I fail" ☐"They will think what they think" ☐"I can't be responsible for what others think" ☐"I can take it a day a time" ☐"I can at least try"	"Here comes another chance" "I'll try it and see how I do!" "There's always something to learn" "If I blow it I blow it!" "If it happens, it happens!" "I'll just deal with it" "Opportunity after opportunity!" "It's all going to work out" "I'll just say it the way it is" "There's nothing wrong"	"It's all OK" "I don't need to try and change anything" "The world is safe" "I'm safe" "So what!" "I can be positive" "I can feel peace" "I can flow with this" "There's nothing to fear"		

□ Freedom □ Authentic □ Carefree □ Free to express □ Free to move □ Free to be	□Genuine □Honest □Liberated	"I can choose" "I'm free!" "I can say what I feel" "People will think what they think" "What others think is none of my business"	"I can assert myself" "I don't need to pretend" "I don't have to say anything" "I can be loving" "I'm willing" "I am what I am" "I can create anything" "I can be anything" "My life is what I make of it"	"It's not about me" "I can do anything" "I am not a victim" "I can decide" "It's all going to work out"
□ Gratitude □ Appreciating □ Inspired □ Loving □ Moved	□Thankful □Touched □Validating □Valuing	"Thank you!" "I love you" "I appreciate you" "I'm so glad"	"I'm honored" "I acknowledge you" "Thank you for being" "I trust you"	□ "I'm listening"
□ Forgiving □ Accepting □ Flowing □ Understanding		"This is not the end of the world" "I can't change others" "You can find your way through this" "I' can't change the world"	"I can choose peace instead of this" "You've got your own lessons" "I understand" "Maybe I don't understand " "Maybe I can help you" "Thank you for your point of view" "I' can see we have a difference here"	"I can flow with this" "I'll give this to God" "That's valid" "That's reasonable"
□ Committed □ Determined □ Heartfelt □ Indomitable □ Unwavering □ Firm □ Resolved	d	"I don't agree with it" "I won't be a part of that" "You will have to work that out yourself" "We have a difference here." "I' respect your point of view" "I' respect your way of doing things" us"	"I feel strongly about this" "I still love you" "I have to let this go" "I' won't try to change you" "I' must at least say this" "We have our own paths" "I' can lighten up about it" "I' don't have to take it so seriously" "I' can trust" "I'll trust this" "I'I is not my way." "I'm committed to"	"I'm here for you" "I'm committed to you" "You made a mistake" "Is there any way I can help" "You can count on me" "I'm here" "You are my highest priority"
□Joy □Aroused □Attracted □Awe □Carefree □Celebrating □Daring □Delighted □Cheerful □Ecstatic □Enthusiastic □Expectant □Excited	□Fascinated □Glad □In good spirits □Jovial □Lighthearted □Playful □Overjoyed □Positive □Sexual □Silly □Thrilled □Wonder	"Wow!" "Cool!" "All right!" "Yessss!" "Whoopee!" "Yippee!" "Yahoo!" "WooHoo" "Can't wait!" "This is great!"	"Look at you!" "You are something!" "Man o' man!" "I can't believe it!" "Let's go!" "I'm breathless!" "I'm beside myself!" "Let's dance all night!" "You're the one!" "Take it to the limit!" "Excuse me while I kiss the sky!" "Serious is not in my vocabulary"	"That's the way it is by golly!" "This moment is perfect"