

It's Not Always Depression

Working the Change Triangle to
Listen to the Body, Discover
Core Emotions, and Connect to
Your Authentic Self

Hilary Jacobs Hendel, LCSW

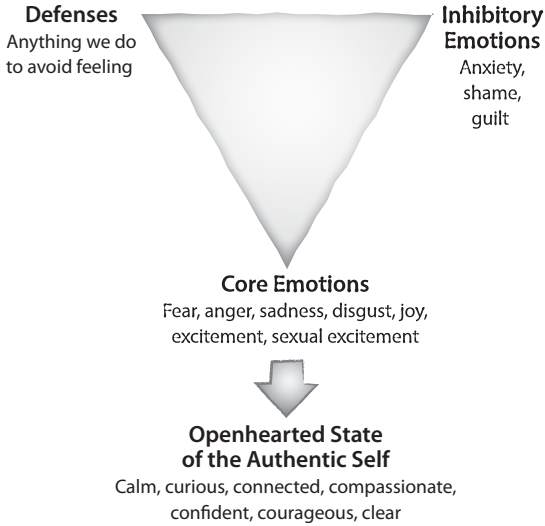
Foreword by Diana Fosha, PhD

Audiobook Reference PDF

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Fig. 01

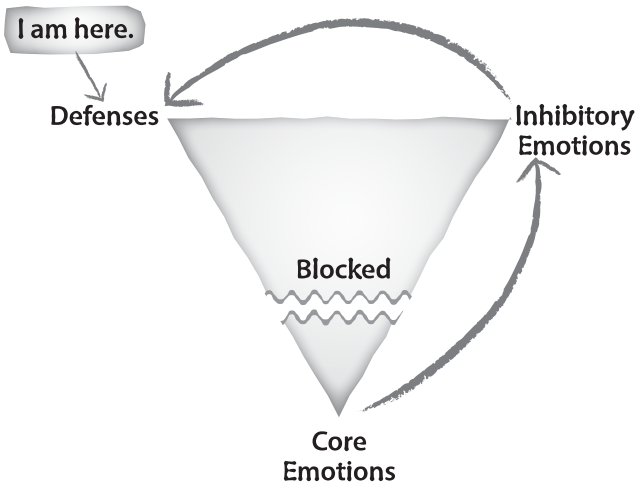
THE CHANGE TRIANGLE



At any given moment, we will find our psychological state on one of the three corners of the Change Triangle or below it in the openhearted state.

Fig. 02

HILARY'S TRIANGLE



At this point my defenses were still working well, meaning I had no symptoms of anxiety or depression. But I was not aware of or in touch with my underlying emotions.

Fig. 03

THE CHANGE TRIANGLE

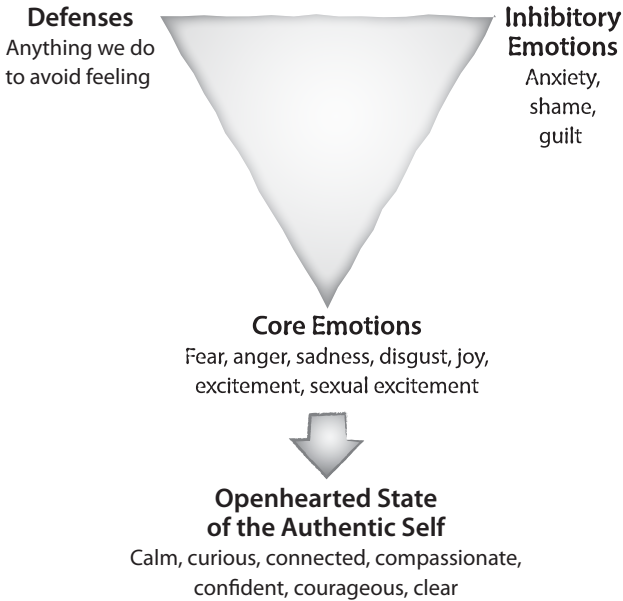


Fig. 04

- joking
- sarcasm
- smiling
- laughing
- worrying
- ruminating
- vagueness
- changing the subject
- avoiding eye contact
- eye rolling
- mumbling
- not talking
- talking too much
- not listening
- spacing out
- tiredness
- criticizing
- perfectionism
- procrastination
- preoccupation
- irritability
- negative thinking
- judging others
- judging ourselves
- prejudice
- racism
- arrogance
- misogyny
- misguided aggression (i.e., getting angry at your partner when you're really angry at your boss)
- working too much
- numbness
- helplessness
- overexercising
- overeating
- undereating
- being secretive
- cutting
- obsessing
- addictions
- suicidal ideas

Fig. 05

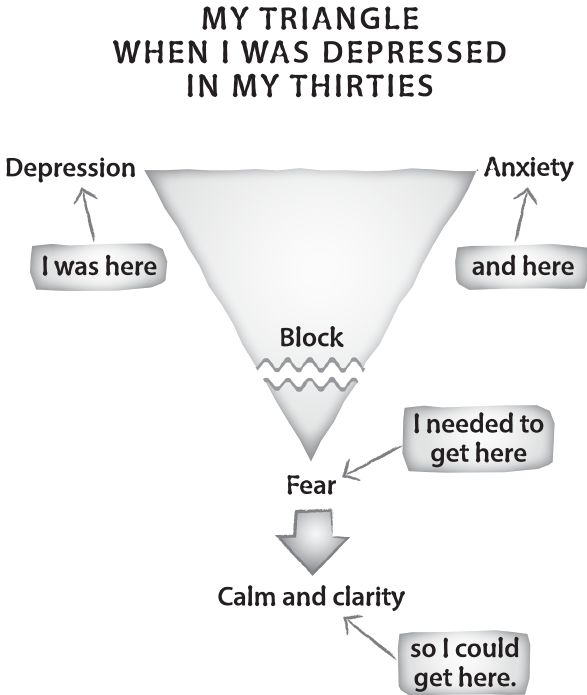


Fig. 06

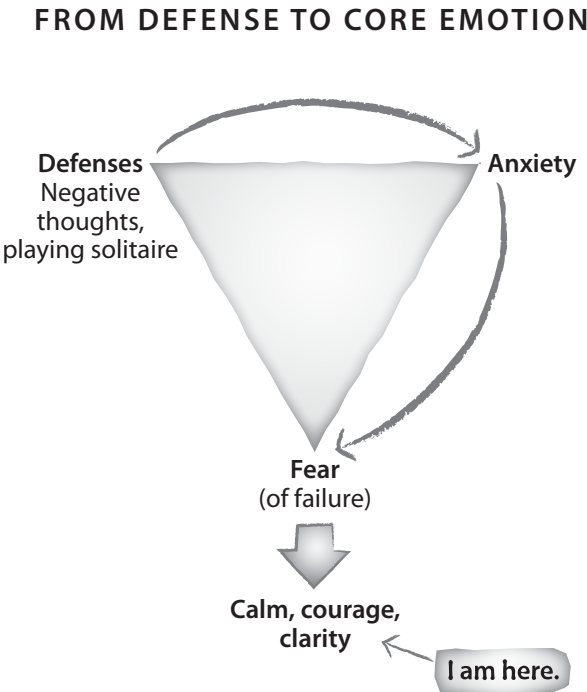


Fig. 07

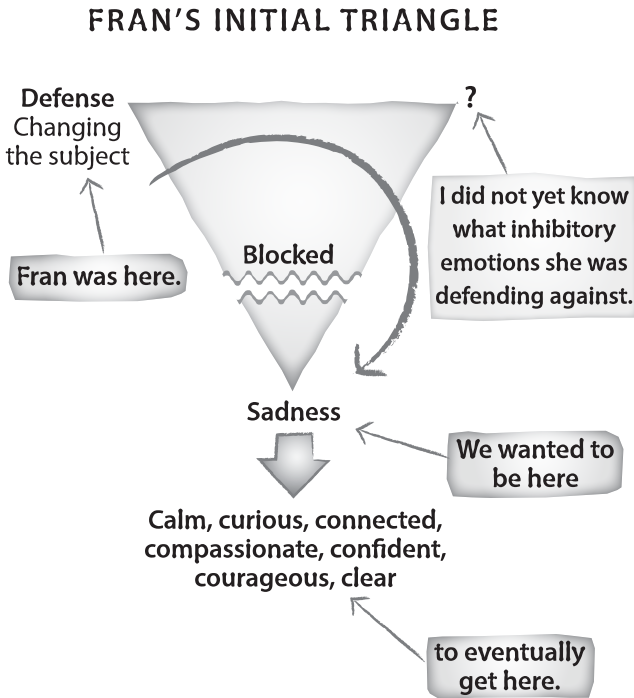
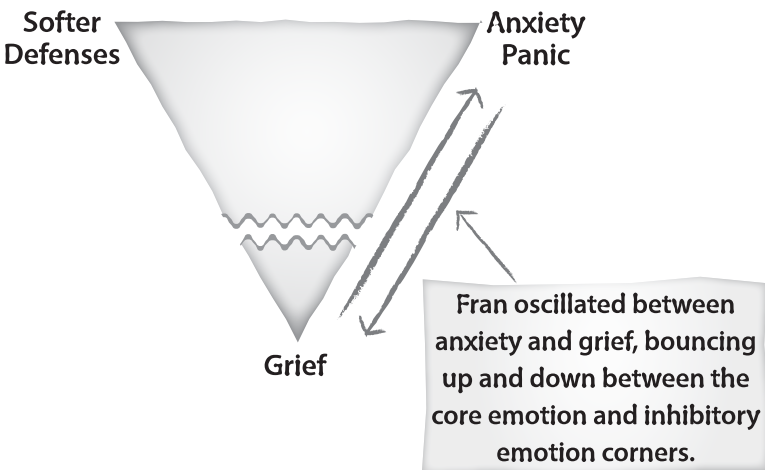


Fig. 08

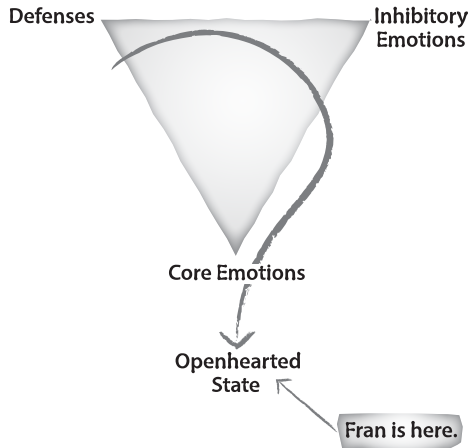
FRAN'S MID-TREATMENT TRIANGLE



Fran had an unconscious conflict about experiencing her grief. The fear of her grief raised her anxiety. She felt she had to avoid anything that might connect her with her sadness.

Fig. 09

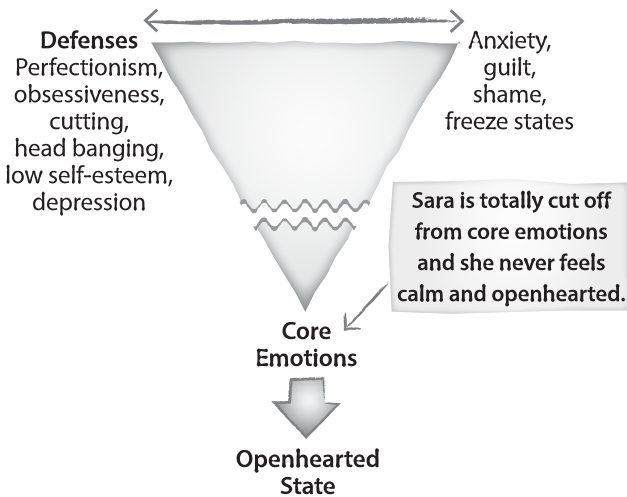
FRAN'S TRIANGLE AT THE END OF THE SESSION AND SHOWING HER MOVEMENT FROM DEFENSES TO OPENHEARTED STATE



Fran's defenses were lowered and her anxiety was calmed, so she was able to fully experience the grief that had been stuck in her nervous system. Fully experiencing her grief allowed her to enter the openhearted state. In the openhearted state, Fran felt calm and spontaneously gained insight into how her trauma had affected her.

Fig. 10

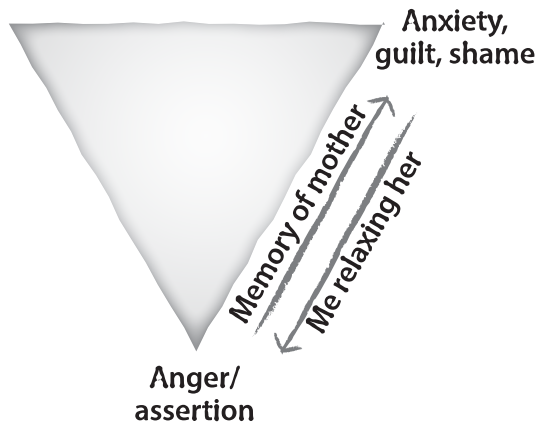
SARA'S TRIANGLE AT THE BEGINNING OF TREATMENT



When I first met Sara, she fluctuated between defenses and high states of anxiety. She had no access to her core emotional experience and was always dysregulated; she was never calm, confident, or any of the other C's.

Fig. 11

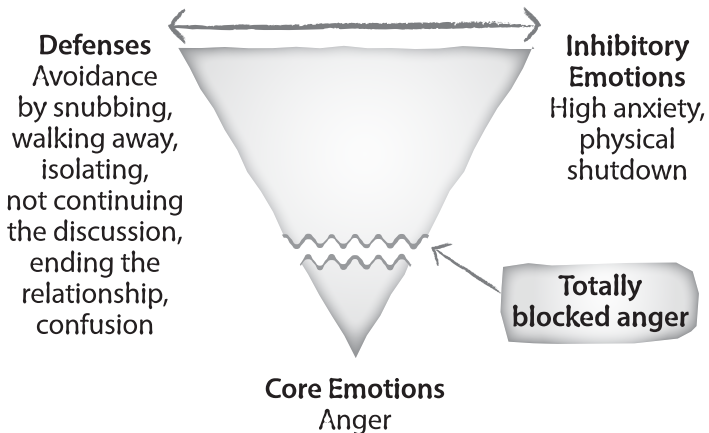
SARA'S TRIANGLE WHEN SHE ASSERTED HER NEEDS AND WANTS



Sara now had access to anger and could assert her wishes, but doing so often triggered anxiety, thrusting her back up the Change Triangle to the inhibitory corner.

Fig. 12

SARA'S UNCONSCIOUS CONFLICTS ABOUT ANGER



Sara inhibits her anger with fear/panic/anxiety/shame. She runs away to stop these painful feelings. But it costs her the relationship as she needs to avoid the other so those bad feelings don't resurface.

Fig. 13

TRIANGLE OF SARA'S THREE-YEAR-OLD CHILD PART

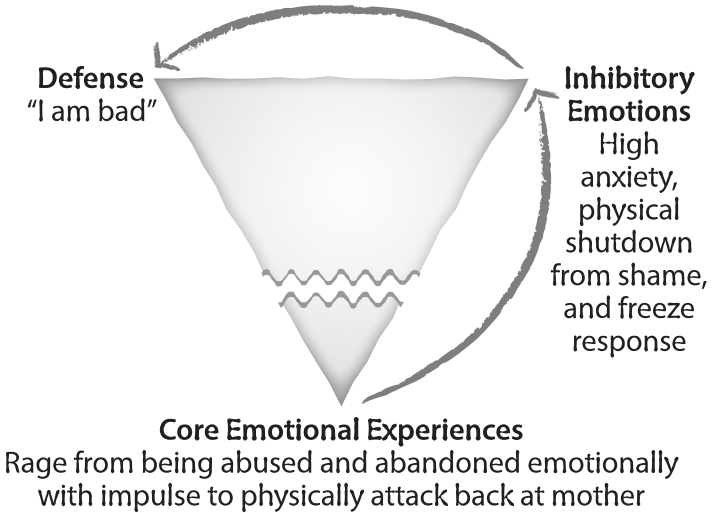
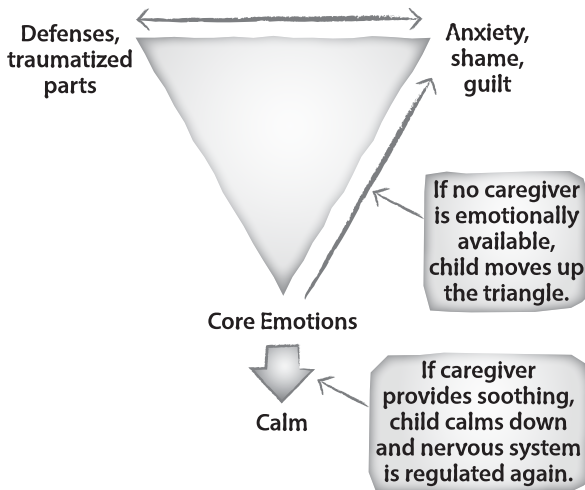


Fig. 14

BABY/CHILD'S EMOTIONS NEED TO BE ACCEPTED



From the perspective of the Change Triangle, the baby/child gets anxious and develops shame from the lack of caring, which makes it impossible for the baby/child to process core emotions.

Fig. 15

BONNIE'S TRIANGLE AT THE START OF TREATMENT

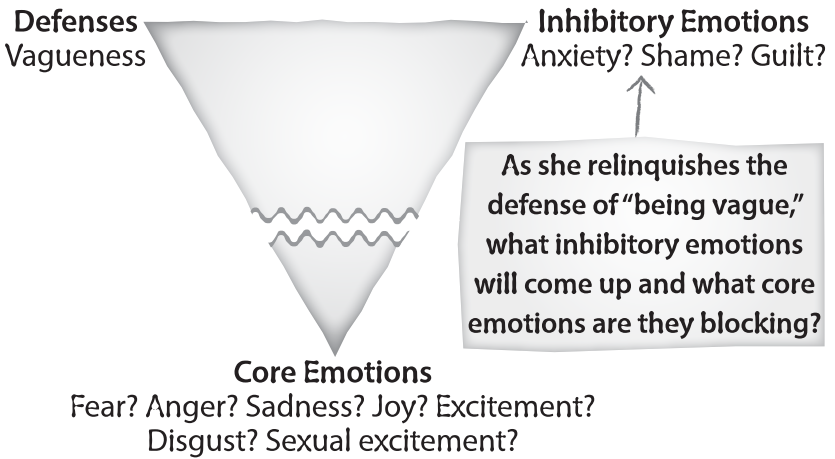
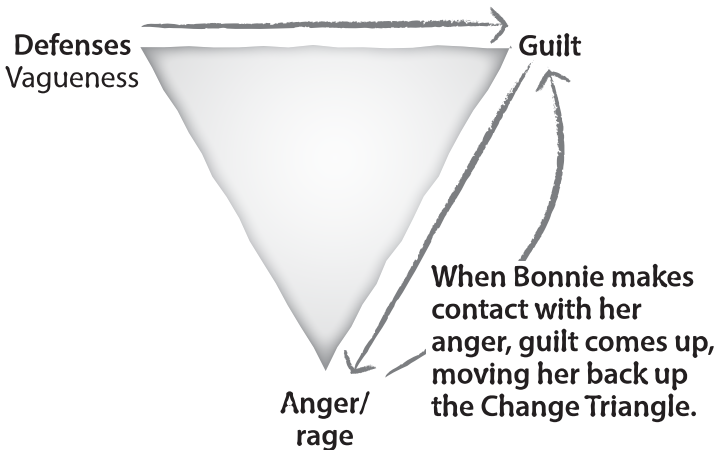


Fig. 16

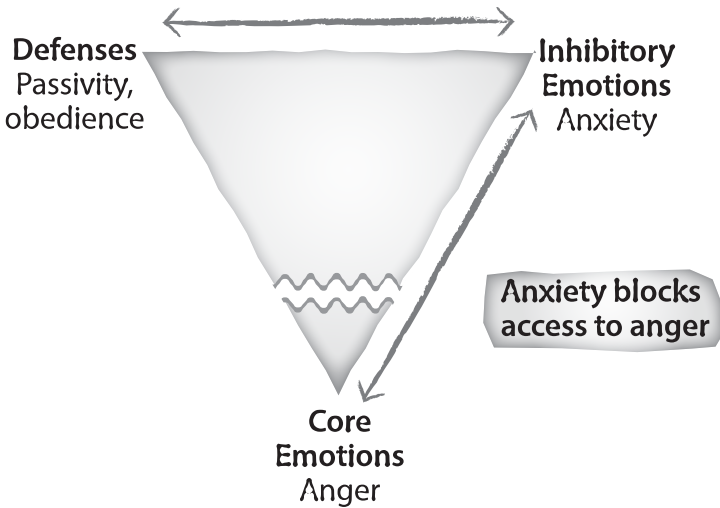
BONNIE'S TRIANGLE DURING ANGER PROCESSING



With the defense of vagueness put aside, Bonnie moved from the top left (defense) corner of the Change Triangle to the top right (inhibitory) corner. She was able to then move her guilt aside so she could access her core anger toward her father. Then guilt arose again, inhibiting the experience of core anger, and moved her back up the Change Triangle to a guilty (inhibitory) state. The anger did not yet feel safe to experience.

Fig. 17

SALLY'S CHANGE TRIANGLE



Anger was blocked by anxiety. To avoid both the anger and the anxiety, Sally became passive and obedient (the defense).

Fig. 18

SPENCER'S CHANGE TRIANGLE AT START OF TREATMENT

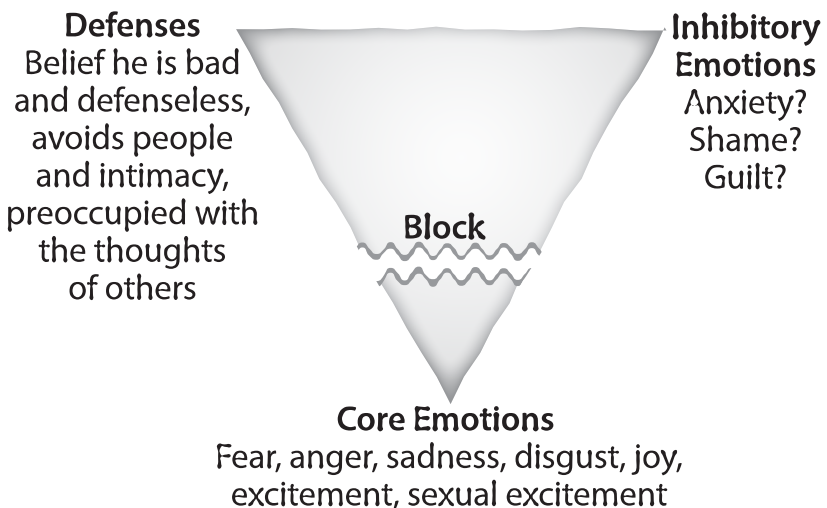


Fig. 19

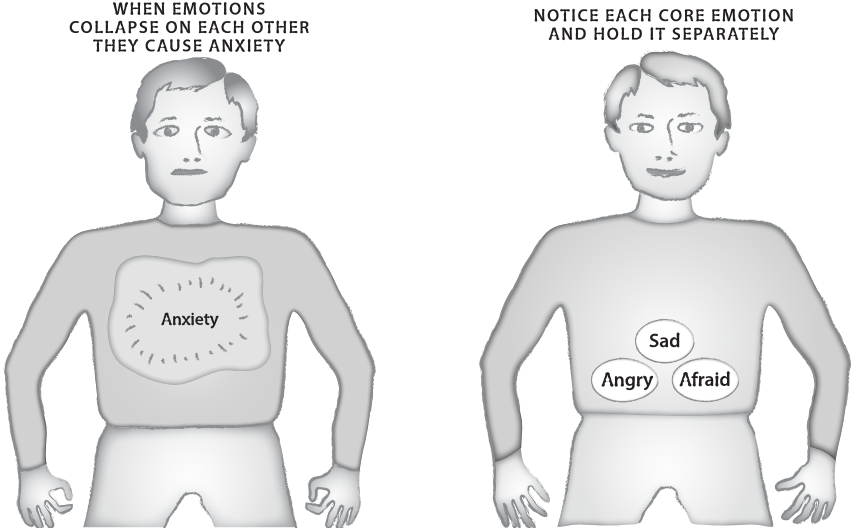


Fig. 20

Write thoughts here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Write emotions here:

1. _____

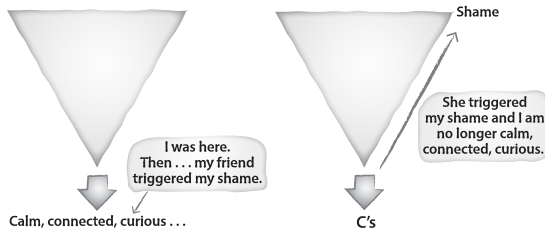
2. _____

3. _____

The image shows a stylized human figure from the chest up. The head area is divided into three horizontal sections by lines, with the text "Write thoughts here:" above the first line and numbers "1.", "2.", and "3." to the left of each line. The torso area is also divided into three horizontal sections by lines, with the text "Write emotions here:" above the first line and numbers "1.", "2.", and "3." to the left of each line.

Fig. 21

MOVEMENT UP THE TRIANGLE



MOVEMENT BACK DOWN THE TRIANGLE

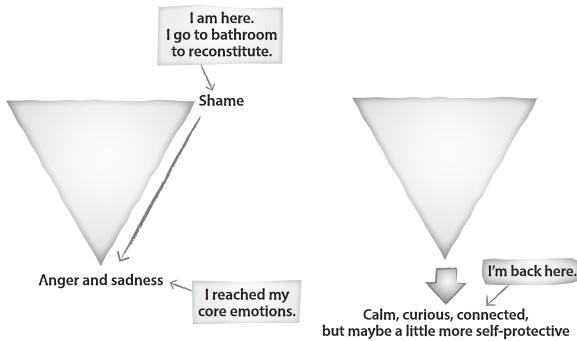


Fig. 22

BETSY MAPPED OUT HER DEFENSE, INHIBITORY EMOTION, AND CORE EMOTIONS ON THE CHANGE TRIANGLE

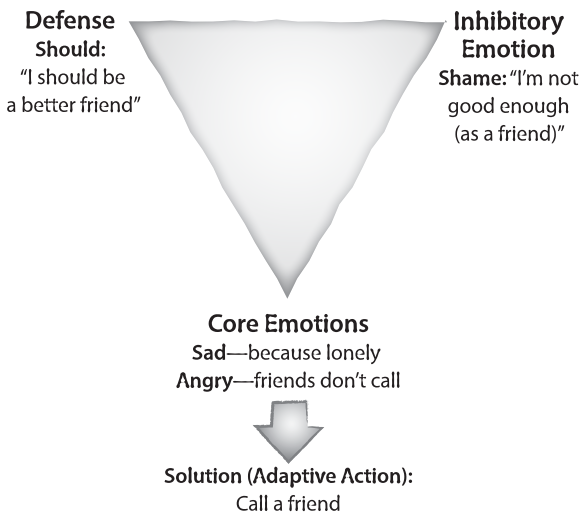


Fig. 23

MARIO'S CHANGE TRIANGLE AROUND A TRAUMATIC EVENT WHEN HE WAS FOUR YEARS OLD

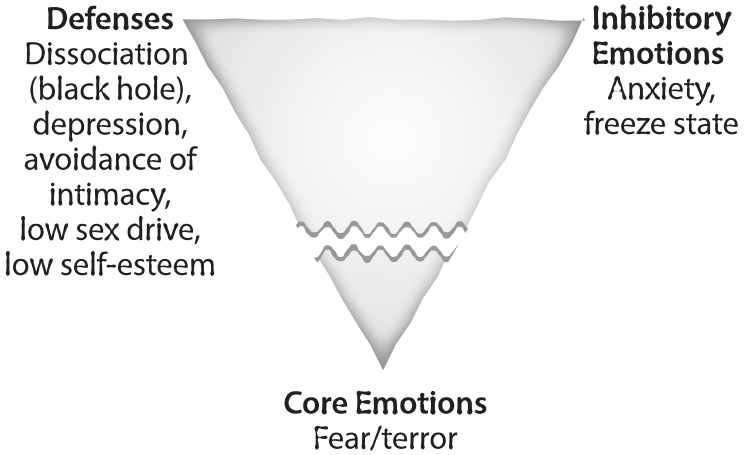


Fig. 24

MARIO'S CHANGE TRIANGLE: GUILT AND ANGER (MURDEROUS RAGE)

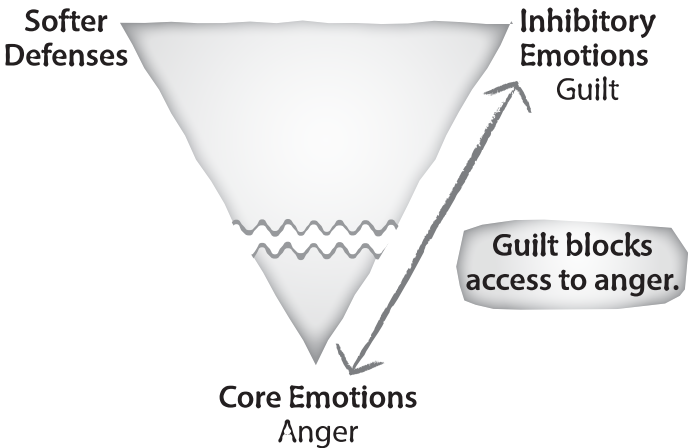
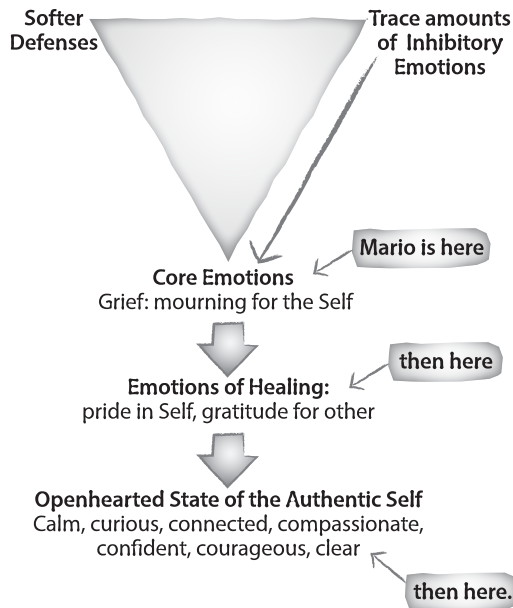


Fig. 25



Core emotions of rage and grief are finally unblocked and experienced. Healing begins, the past is perceived by the brain as truly past, and gratitude and pride in the Self emerge.

Fig. 26

SARA'S TRIANGLE FROM JOY TO THE OPENHEARTED SELF

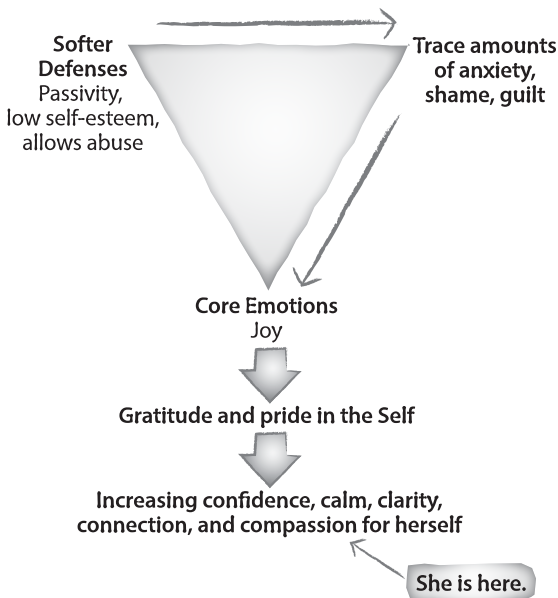
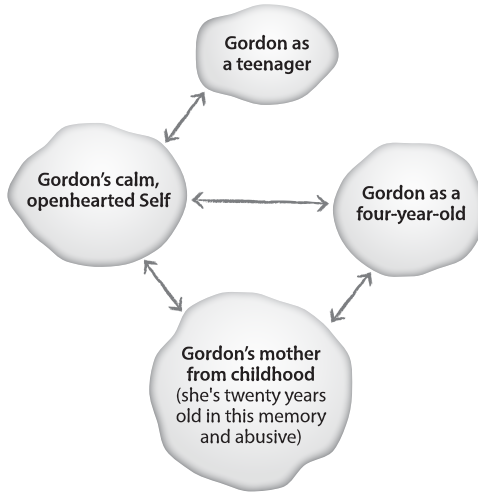


Fig. 27

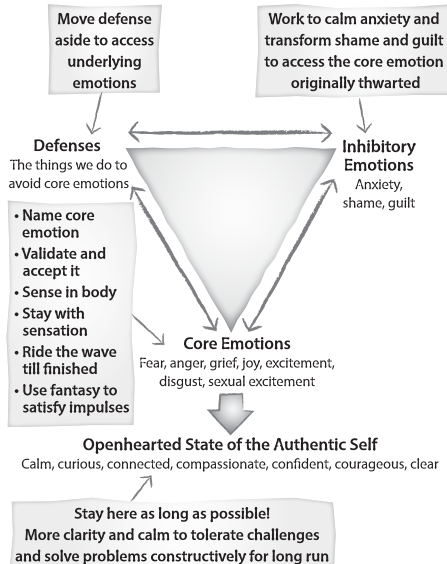
LINES OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE SELF AND INTERNAL PARTS



The Self learns to communicate with other parts and helps build communication between parts. In neuroscience terms, we are integrating dissociated neural networks. As a result, the nervous system calms down and is not as easily triggered.

Fig. 28

THE CHANGE TRIANGLE What to Do at Each Corner



This is a summary or "cheat sheet" for what to do to work the Change Triangle. Each corner you find yourself on requires you to do something to move to the next corner going clockwise so you end up in the openhearted state of the authentic Self as much as possible.

Fig. 29

WHERE AM I ON THE CHANGE TRIANGLE?

