

Your Decisions

A Weapon of Hope™



Guidebook

"I Commit to Change"

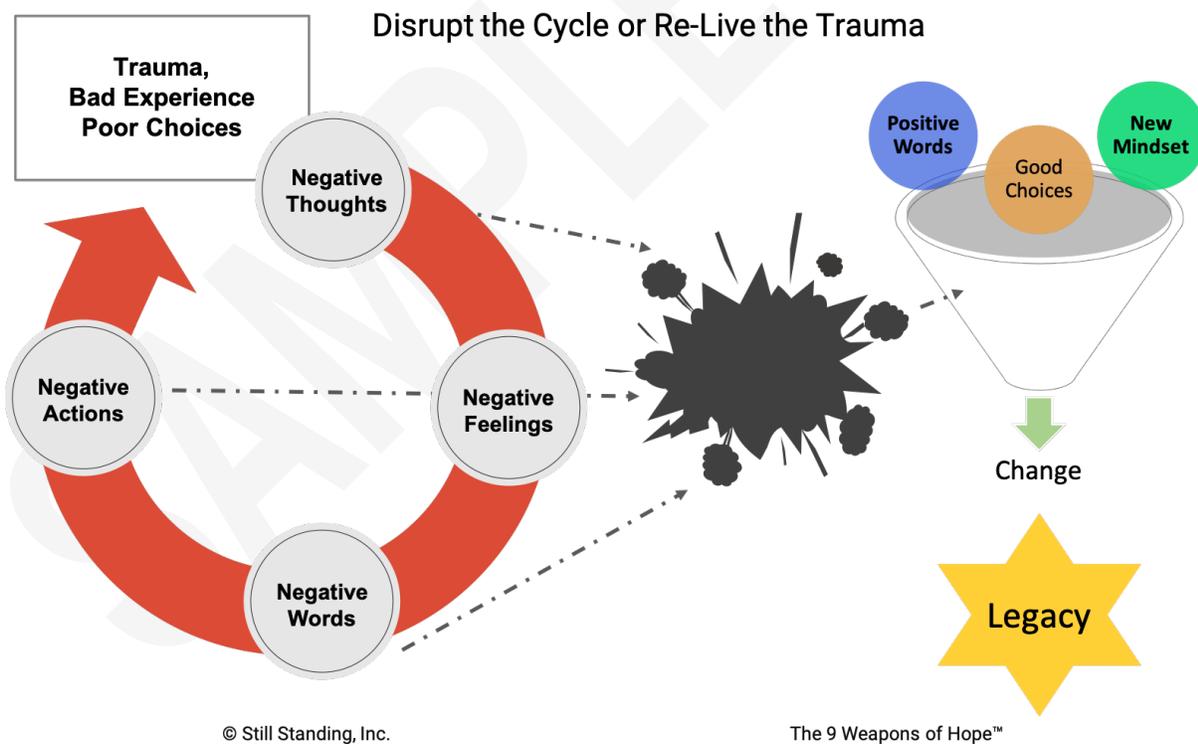
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Module 5: Welcome to Your Decisions

- Watch “Welcome to Your Decisions”

Each of the 9 Weapons of Hope™ is beneficial in its own right, and together, they are life-changing, so it would be nearly impossible to choose one Weapon as being the most valuable. However, we always start with Your Decisions, because, without a definite decision to act, it is likely nothing will change.

We either continue re-living trauma or choose to disrupt the cycle by speaking positive words, improving our mindset, and making better choices. Not only will the quality of your life improve, but your legacy depends upon these changes.



In this course, you will be challenged to consider the value of your time and look at the excuses you might make. You will begin to understand the relationship between decisions, commitment,

Module 6:

Decide to Stand Up and Fight

□ **Watch “Decide to Stand Up and Fight”**

We wait for others to change or make excuses for why we cannot. We settle for mediocrity, or worse, we head into self-destruct mode. A negative mindset takes hold of us, and before long, self-limiting beliefs destroy our self-confidence. You may be in this position today, wondering if you have the strength to fight.

When Jamie and Sean were very young, I began teaching them to believe in their abilities. If they said they couldn't do something (that I knew could be done with some effort), I would ask them what Henry Ford said, to which they would reply,

“Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're right.”

If you think you CAN accomplish something, then you CAN – your positive mindset results in speaking positive words, which will lead to taking supportive action. Believe you can, and you can. If you think you can't, you're right.

In the 1960s, one of my favorite television programs was “I Dream of Jeannie.” The character, Jeannie, was a housewife married to an astronaut. Everything about Jeannie was normal, except for the part about her being a genie. All she had to do was blink her eyes and make it so. It would be nice if a blink could cause us to be in a different place or a new situation, but that is not reality.

The truth is that anything worth doing, having, or being will take sacrifice. Nobody is going to come along and sprinkle magic fairy dust over you, and suddenly everything is okay. You need to find the courage to stand up and fight for what you want or need. It may be a struggle. It could even be an epic battle, but don't let this scare you! You are a warrior, and I know you are up for the challenge.

I wasted years waiting for the ride to smooth out or come to an end. I wanted God to yank me up and out of my seat. I finally realized none of those things were happening, so I did the only thing we can do on that terrifying ride – I took responsibility for my circumstances, pulled the emergency brake, and got off.

- Are you ready to pull the emergency brake and get off?**

If you are riding the Roller Coaster From Hell, you need to pull the emergency brake and get off.

Module 10: Fighting the Right Battle

- Watch “Fighting the Right Battle”**

In the last Module, you were asked to consider standing for someone else if you currently find it challenging to do it for yourself. There is a difference between standing for another person as an example and fighting their battle for them.

No matter how much you love someone, you can't tackle their Beast for them. We can stand with them as they fight, but that battle is theirs. If you could save someone from themselves or their Beast, you would have done it long ago. (See the Your Release Weapon of Hope™ for more on letting go). Even with support, each person is ultimately responsible for their path.

If you are so tired of the fight that you cannot imagine taking a step forward, it could be that you are fighting the wrong battle, leaving you frustrated and exhausted.

- Are you trying to fight somebody's battle for them? Who is it, and why are you doing this?**

- Is it working?**

- **In the chart above, list as many excuses as you can think of, then start jotting down the reasons to stand up and fight.**

Right now, your list of excuses might be lengthy, but be careful not to allow having too many excuses to become another excuse! Focus on your list of reasons to stand.

It is time to set aside all of your excuses not to act and start finding reasons to stand up and fight. Don't come to the end of your life weighed down by regrets. (See the next Module). To stop making excuses, you need to be ready to face fear and to experience some pain. Unmask your excuses. Rip the fancy wrapping off and expose the justifications.

Module 12:

The Pain of Regret

Watch “The Pain of Regret”

You will never regret most things you tried but will always regret things you didn't do. I have wanted to write a book since I was very young. Approximately 15 years before I published my first book, I started writing a novel. Due to my interest in psychology and the satisfaction of witnessing the justice puzzle come together, I went with what I enjoyed reading – a murder mystery. Never could I have imagined I would live a true crime story.

After Jamie was shot the first time (when she was eighteen years old), I lost my enthusiasm for writing, story-telling, and for my murder mystery novel. As the years wore on and life became more chaotic, I let go of the dream of becoming an author altogether.

Is there something you have wanted to do but have let go of the dream?

I didn't know that becoming an author was in my future, but it would look quite different from what I had imagined. It's okay if you stop and start, take a break, pivot, or even take a sharp turn, but don't stop for good.

What will you regret not trying?

Module 13:

Your Pivotal Decision

□ **Watch “Your Pivotal Decision”**

At various times, you will be sitting at a crossroads. Some paths might be easy to figure out, while others will cause you confusion or fear, not knowing which way to go.

Up to the point where all hell broke loose in my life, I was a quick decision-maker. Thinking and acting fast were second nature. Once my daughter, Jamie, was deep into her addiction, and life was coming at me from many other angles, I found it challenging to make even the most straightforward decisions. Trauma can leave us paralyzed with fear and indecision.

However, our lowest points can also be pivotal moments. The day I told Rich, “I don’t want to be here anymore,” and scared myself into action was one of mine. I was sitting at a crossroads that would define the rest of my life, one way or another, depending upon my decision. I glanced at the two roads before me. The current path was filled with pain, sadness, fear, self-doubt, shame, guilt, and chaos, but it was familiar. The second was unfamiliar and contained roadblocks, mountains, and monsters, but so did the road I was already traveling! It was scary, and I was apprehensive but willing to head down a new path to freedom from my Beast. With a tiny bit of hope and a shred of self-confidence, I chose the new route.

The purpose of this module is for you to make the all-important decision that will set your life on a new path. It could be the decision that propels your life to a place you never imagined. If you only have a tiny bit of hope and a shred of self-confidence, as I did, it is enough. You don’t have to have everything figured out to make your decision. Back in Module #1, you identified what you wanted. Your Pivotal Decision will be the first in a series of decisions and actions that will make it a reality.

You are standing at a crossroads...

1. **Expect them.** They might show up as our Beasts, a well-meaning friend, somebody who doesn't want you to change, or your own thoughts.
2. **Get on your Spiritual Armor.** Call on something that is stronger than you and knows the future.
3. **Graciously reject negative comments.** You are not required to take in what other people spew at you.
4. **Have an accountability partner.** Find someone you can call when these things happen who will help you stay on track.

In 1937, Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss, published his first children's book after being rejected by 27 publishers before one of them agreed to take a chance on his first of 60 books published.ⁱ

Ross Perot was attributed with having said,

"Most people give up just when they're about to achieve success. They quit on the one-yard line. They give up the last minute of the game, one foot from scoring a touchdown."

The closer we move to a goal, the more challenging it becomes. Consider the effort it takes for a football team to cross the goal line at the critical one-yard mark. They have potentially moved the ball dozens of yards in the current possession, yet it can take all four downs to make it one yard.

When you are close to the goal line, you will experience increased opposition from many sources, but you must persevere!

I wonder how many times Dr. Seuss wanted to quit. Imagine how different the world of children's books would be, had he done that after the 27th rejection – when he was on the one-yard line.

You are not alone in this journey. It is my honor and privilege to stand with you. Your story matters, so, live it courageously.

*Valerie
Silveira*

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