

EC: I Move from Ego Insecurity to Unconditional Self-Security

EXERCISE: Insecurity is at the heart of psychological problems. This exercise is intended to help you get past your insecurity. The exercise will help each time you do it. The effect of the exercise is accumulative, hence, the more you do it the more it will help you to give up your habit of insecurity.

The exercise consists of three steps. First, you recognize your insecurity. Second, you remove your insecurity. Third, you replace your insecurity. You can use the exercise either for general insecurity or specific insecurity. You can either recognize that you have insecurity in general or in a specific instance. You can either remove your insecurity in general or in a particular situation. You can replace your insecurity in general or in a specific role, function, behavior, or experience.

INSECURITY: Insecurity is about how your identity will make you feel. Insecurity is the feeling you have when you are NOT sure how you or others will view you. You are afraid of being viewed as negative knowing that if you identify with that view—it will cause you psychological pain. This pain is ego pain and usually occurs in the form of shame or guilt.

You can understand insecurity by seeing how insecurity both produces and is caused by the SAPGAD emotions: a negative feedback loop. **Shame** is the pain of feeling bad that others think you are bad. You have insecurity about feeling shame again. **Anxiety** is the fear of looking bad. You have insecurity about looking bad again. **Pride** is the pleasure in looking good. You have insecurity about keeping and losing pride. **Guilt** is the pain of feeling bad that you think you are bad. You have insecurity that you will have guilt again. **Anger** is your attempt to stop others or self from “making” you look bad. You have insecurity that others and you will make you look bad again. **Depression** is the pain of believing you have, do, and always will look bad. You have insecurity that you cannot overcome your depression.

Since there is no guarantee that you will never appear bad to yourself or others, insecurity is normal for adults. Most adults try to solve the problem of insecurity by identifying with some self-concept or image of themselves as superior. However, someone else can always see you as inferior, and so can you whenever you fail to live up to your ideal behavior. So trying to be smart, clever, popular, worthwhile, indispensable, educated, knowledgeable, famous, rich, athletic, talented, skilled, beautiful, fashionable, powerful, in control, etc., is bound to fail when you fail at the role or compare yourself to someone who performs the role better.

The only way out of insecurity is to make your identity unassailable. This can be done through either falsehood or truth.

The false way is to make your self-concept so grandiose that it cannot fail. It cannot fail because the behavior of your self-concept is then NOT dependent upon you. For instance, you identify with concepts or images of: groups, governments, political systems, movements, religions, gods, goddesses, saints, prophets, gurus, masters, aliens, heroes, heroines, oneness, spirit, void, universe, nature, peace, love, brotherhood, etc. Since all these are only either dead concepts or dead images, no matter how pretty they are, you become one of the living dead: self as thing. Thus, your ego-mania is your downfall because it makes you lose touch with your self, with your true nature by having your self-concept/image point to something that is never you. You are only the space and place inside your body—no more and no less.

The only true way is to identify your self as the image of God, which He called good. The image of God is a living image and so your identifying with it is NOT death or destruction. You are that life of hosting, reflecting, transceiving. Since God defined it as good, there is no question that it is good. Hence, your identity is unconditionally positive. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”—Genesis 1:27 “And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.”—Genesis 1:31

An alternative way is to identify your self with the image/concept of a living being. A living being by nature and definition must be of value in order to exist and persist. However, even that image is dead. Yet, it is still acceptable in this case for two reasons: (1) because it is a referent and NOT a destination, that is, the image is NOT the point; (2) the image points to your actual self. That is, the image/concept points you back to your real living self and NOT to something that is never you such as the universe. Hence, your self is unconditionally positive as long as it is alive. This works for the agnostic, the atheist, the lost, the confused, and the undecided.

STEP ONE RECOGNIZE INSECURITY: My insecurity is based on my trying to be secure as something. I am really seeking ego security. That is, I want to become something that will always be seen as good. Since others can judge and rate me any way they want, my pursuit of security leads only to ever more insecurity. Since I will continue to make mistakes and act imperfectly, I can continue to be rated as inferior both by myself and others. My seeking to become is really the root of my anxiety, of my insecurity. My very seeking for security is insecurity.

STEP TWO REMOVE INSECURITY: I can never be secure as something because I never can actually become anything more than a human being. I only define myself as something more or different from a human being and that definition can change at any time. Since the definition can change, I can change. Which is really quite silly when I think about it. Obviously, it is only my ego that changes and NOT me at all. Since I really am NOT anything, defining myself as things is foolish indeed.

STEP THREE REPLACE INSECURITY: I have unconditional self-security (USS) because I accept that God knows better than me and He pronounced His creation of man and woman as good. I accept that to devalue myself is to devalue the image of God and that is wrong. I accept that as a living being it is necessary to value myself in order to overcome obstacles and hindrances to my life. I choose to unconditionally value all human beings. I will continually practice distinguishing people from their behaviors. I reserve the right to conditionally value human thoughts, feelings, and actions. However, I also reserve the right to unconditionally positively value all human beings including, of course, myself. “But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.”—Luke 12:7

PERSONALIZE PRACTICE: I will use Kevin’s web site, counseling sessions, REBT, Taoism, Buddhism, Christianity, General Semantics, and any and all other sources that I can find to develop my own favorite collection of the 3 Rs (recognize, remove replace) for my insecurity. I will write them out, record them, listen to them, recite them, memorize them, make posters of them, make 3x5 cards of them, review them with my counselor, and use any means I can think of to make them my new habit. I will think, feel, act and motivate myself against my insecurity using the 3 Rs I develop and collect about my insecurity. I will persistently practice unconditional self-security (USS). I will teach it to others to help me learn it. I see it as the way of peace.