

## Part 1: Emotional Cleansing: Why We Need it and Where to Start

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There is a lot of talk today about the benefits of internal cleansing. Science is now advocating, what our ancestors knew and practiced a long time ago, that the body needs to be relieved of toxins. Practicing liver and digestive cleanses have become popular because those of us who have tried them realize that our bodies feel and function much better after doing them. Cleanses become a sort of upgrade to our physical system. Yet, very few of us have invested any time or money to learn and carry out emotional cleanses. The truth is that we all need an emotional cleansing from time to time. Some of us have carried the weight of emotional toxicity for very long periods in our lives and thus need to take time off for emotional cleansing.

First, we must reflect and take inventory of situations, habits and people that produce excess baggage on our emotions and our lives. The fact is that any person or situation that is capable of eliciting feelings of insecurity, fear, doubt, unworthiness, inadequacy and other emotions that cause us to mentally demean and second-guess our decisions or abilities is a producer of harmful toxins on our emotions. After coming to the realization that we are carrying emotional toxins, the next step is to begin the process of cleansing our hearts and minds of these emotional pollutants.

Deciding to take an emotional cleanse is a life changing decision that usually comes after the realization that we cannot continue living life as is. Sometimes a crisis can push us to want to make life changing decisions, or perhaps it's feeling the need to lose weight, ending an abusive relationship, leaving a professionally unhealthy workplace, putting our finances in order, or ending a noxious friendship. The aforementioned are all situations that can be directly linked to emotional toxicity. Taking an emotional cleanse to rid ourselves of these situations will impact everything about life as we once knew it and will bring with it some level of pain. It is much more comfortable, and thus less painful, to leave things as they are. Emotional cleansing is not for the faint at heart because it forces us to dig deep and to look at things honestly. However, as part of the process we need to be willing to put ourselves on a path towards wholeness and healing. Here are the first two steps to help you begin a process of emotional cleansing:

**STEP 1: Begin with self-analysis. How did you get here in the first place?**

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We all have character flaws that can make us vulnerable and open us up to taking wrong decisions. Many of these weaknesses stem from childhood influences and the patterns we were exposed to in our formative years. Many of these patterns were toxic but other individuals, particularly family, lived them before us and we assumed them to be normal. These toxic patterns have become inherently unhealthy influences in our lives. Broken homes, broken parental relationships, addictions, abuse, sibling rivalry, neglect, abandonment and rejection, they each can create high emotional toxicity. What are your weaknesses? Where do they come from? What kind of emotions do they bring out in you? How have they impacted your life decisions?

**STEP 2: Stop blaming others. Accept responsibility and be remorseful for your mistakes. Warning: You will also need to apologize to the people you've hurt.**

Accepting responsibility is never easy; it is always much easier to place the blame on others. Yet while there may be occasions in which we were unwilling participants and became victims of certain situations, there comes a time we must cut ourselves loose emotionally, spiritually and physically from it. Whenever we choose to knowingly remain as victims we graduate ourselves to becoming enablers and willing participants with our tormentors. As a consequence, we hurt other people by our choice to remain besieged by these toxic situations and people. The saying is true: "hurting people hurt other people." Once you take the step to move out of toxicity, there are people that you will need to go to and ask for forgiveness. This is the only way to guarantee that you will start a new slate with no debts pending. Real change can only come as a result of us being willing to accept where we also went wrong.

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