

Understanding the Power of Injunctive Messages and How They Are Resolved in Redecision Therapy

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Abstract

This article summarizes the theoretical findings of six previous articles (McNeel, 1999, 2000, 2002a, 200b, 2009a, 2009b) and looks at rededecision as a process, with particular emphasis on understanding the power, influence, and impact of injunctive messages as well as the way in which they are resolved. It is posited that there are two, rather than one, central decision to each injunctive message: a despairing decision and a defiant decision. The defiant decision (which is the person's best attempt at health) creates an observable coping behavior that becomes the observable evidence for the diagnosis of specific injunctive messages. The rededecision to each injunctive message is presented as a process of acquiring a new belief, and a resolving activity is described as a practice to strengthen the new belief. Furthermore, a new internal parental voice is shown to be a necessary antidote to the previous internal parental influence. Finally, a tool is offered for self-diagnosis of various injunctive messages using internal responses (labeled "bitter" or "healing") to the injunctions. Twenty-five injunctions are described in terms of five categories: survival, attachment, identity, competence, and security.

Background

This article summarizes the theoretical findings in four published (McNeel, 1999, 2000, 2002a, 2002b) and two unpublished (McNeel, 2009a, 2009b) articles about rededecision therapy and includes an expanded view of injunctions. The original concept of injunctions was first mentioned by Eric Berne (1972) and Claude Steiner (1971, 1974). The interesting history of the concept is explored elsewhere (McNeel, 2000). In summary, by 1979, Robert and Mary Goulding had identified and canonized 12

injunctions in their book *Changing Lives through Redecision Therapy*. In 1987 Stewart and Joines also referred to these 12 injunctions in their book *TA Today*. In 1988 Bader and Pearson (p. 220) reiterated this list. In addition to the original 12, I (McNeel, 2000) added 10 more injunctions, bringing the list to 22. With this article, three new injunctions—Don't Touch, Don't Share Your Life, and Don't Invest—are added for the first time, bringing the total to 25.

For the remainder of this article, injunctions will be referred to as "injunctive messages" to imply an ongoing effect in a person's life. The word "injunction" is often used in legal proceedings, where it has prohibitive power while in effect and can cease to have power when it is revoked. Injunctive messages do not disappear nor can they be revoked, but they can be coped with better over time to the point of having little or no effect.

The Gouldings (Goulding & Goulding, 1979) defined injunctions as "messages from the Child Ego State of Parents, given out of the parents' own pains, unhappiness, anxiety, disappointment, anger, frustration, secret desires. While these messages are irrational in terms of the child, they may seem perfectly rational to the parent who gives them" (p. 34).

For the purposes of this article, injunctive messages are defined as messages emanating from parental figures, often outside their awareness, that are negative in content, often delivered in a context of prohibition, and defeating to the natural life urges of existence, attachment, identity, competence, and security.

The material described in this article is the result of a long, painstaking process lasting over a decade by the people recognized at the end of this article. It had its genesis in the belief that the Gouldings had created something of remarkable value in the concept of separate, identifiable injunctions. Rededecision therapy, as created by the Gouldings, was a modality of

brief therapy. In their original formula, they described a redecision as taking place in a supportive environment while the client was regressed. In this way, the client could experience a past scene in the present, recall an early decision made in that scene in a state of extremis, and then actively and consciously make a new decision in the context of that scene. The expectation was that new behavior would occur naturally as a result of resolving the past impasse. It is interesting to note that the word "redcision," while in common use now for more than 40 years in certain therapeutic circles, is not actually a word in the English language. Even though the Gouldings wrote extensively about redecisions and redecision therapy, they do not offer a specific definition in their earlier writings regarding what constitutes a redecision.

In a 1985 presentation Bob Goulding stated: Now I want to talk about Redcision therapy. Redcision therapy is not simply making a decision to be different. It is the process in which we facilitate the client getting into his or her Child Ego State. From that state, he relives an old scene and changes his or her part in it. (p. 305)

However, all those who worked closely with and were trained by the Gouldings felt clear that a redecision is a powerful event, identifiable in a moment of time, with the expectation of lasting, positive consequences. Research (McNeel, 1975, 1982) indicated positive outcomes as a result of redecision therapy, although these studies failed to offer a definition of a redecision. Bader and Pearson (1988) offered this definition of a redecision and its presumed outcomes:

The Gouldings work to help the client achieve a redecision, which is an autonomous, deep-level decision based in the child ego state, to no longer respond to the injunction received as a child. Thus, the redecision represents a cognitive and an emotional understanding of one's life script. The results of the redecision process (often carried out within a gestalt dialogue) are strong emotional changes and congruent changes in behavior. (p. 220)

In exploring the impact of injunctions on peoples' lives, I found that there appeared to be two distinct decisions in response to each

injunctive message. Whereas the Gouldings (Goulding, 1972) defined specific decisions in response to the Don't Exist injunction, decisions to the other injunctive messages were addressed in the context of each individual's life. The two decisions I have identified are the despairing decision and the defiant decision. The despairing decision represents the conclusion by the child faced with an injunctive message that something is wrong with him or her. The defiant decision is the child's best attempt at health, a creative way to resist the injunctive message and master the circumstances. The injunctive messages that had the most power were those that were embedded in the early environment, repeated over time, and reinforced by parental ignorance, abuse, absence, neglect, or indifference. The more isolated a child is from the consolation of touch, warmth, affection, and reassurance, the more power the injunctive message has.

Further insight evolved from studying the behaviors exhibited by individuals while operating from the defiant decision. These coping behaviors are created by and emanate from the defiant decision. In his or her pursuit of health, the child adopts certain behaviors with an "I'll-show-you" quality. Of course, these behaviors are doomed to fail because it is not possible to "always be the best" or "never show hurt" and so on. The failure of the defiant decision reveals the deeply held beliefs in the despairing decision by exposing painful feelings of inadequacy, being unlovable and unwanted, terror, or painful vulnerability. Relief for these painful realities is sought by a determined return to the defiant decision. The most remarkable thing about the coping behaviors emanating from the defiant decision is that they indicate the presence of a particular injunctive message. Observation of these behaviors then becomes the means by which the therapist diagnoses and identifies a specific injunctive message rather than primarily seeking this information through the client's own insight. (A physician would never ask a patient to diagnose his or her own pneumonia.) In this way, each injunctive message has its own signature.

While it is apparent that some individuals can make rapid, even startling, changes in their

lives through psychotherapy, it is also clear that change comes more slowly to others. Many who were trained primarily in the redecision model believed that most people could resolve their issues briefly, even dramatically. However, injunctive messages frequently entwine themselves into peoples' lives in an insidious way, creating vast habit patterns that can feel like a part of the person's personality and character. Changing deeply ingrained patterns is not an afternoon's work. This insight alters the view of redecision therapy from being event based to process based. Rather than a memorable event at a moment in time, it becomes a process of acquiring a new belief, one that is original to the individual, novel in its content, and vastly protective. All beliefs derived by individuals in response to injunctive messages are erroneous because all injunctive messages are lies. They only have power because the falsehood in them is believed. There is no truth to the idea that one should not exist, touch, love, grow up, belong, feel, enjoy, relax, or depend on others or to the feeling that one is a failure regardless of how well one succeeds.

The early belief in the inerrancy of injunctive messages has a profound impact on the individual and is reinforced over many years of habitual behavior. Discovering a new belief cognitively is not potent enough to accomplish profound change on its own. Recognizing that more was needed to effectively install a new belief led to the creation of prescribed thoughts and actions that take place in what is called the "resolving activity," which operates like drills in other forms of cognitive behavior therapy. To someone under the thrall of a particular injunctive message, the resolving activity (the recommended behavior and/or thought) that helps to strengthen the new belief will seem strange and unfamiliar. For example, it is odd for someone with the injunctive message *Don't Want to ask* actively for his needs to be met. For someone with *Don't Be You*, it seems alien to think about her innate gifts and talents and to treasure them. And for the person with *Don't Exist*, it seems strange, indeed, to accept unconditional affection. Adherence to the prescribed thoughts and behaviors of the resolving activity solidifies the new belief.

Because they were the source of injunctive messages, parental figures or persons with the force of parental authority were not able to transmit adequate protection to shield the child from the ravages of such messages. It is impossible for a father who embodies the message *Don't Be Close* to also transmit effectively the healthy message, "You can speak words of love from your heart." The parental figure who loves his child unconditionally and is not overly disabled by mental illness is able to show love through word, action, and touch in a way that will not leave that child bereft of defense against any message that says *Don't Exist*. Recognizing this collusion between the ancient Parent and the injunctive message led to the awareness of the need to create a new parental voice that, when integrated, reflects wisdom and protection. The new parental voice serves either to replace a punishing voice or to fill a void where there was no voice. This is called "the parental stance that heals."

There is one further aspect to the tables presented in the rest of this article: self-diagnostic thoughts. This contains two columns: bitter (self-destructive) and healing (self-protective). The content of these two columns invites the individual to examine the content of his or her own thoughts. Because injunctive messages are toxic, they will produce thoughts similar to those listed in the bitter (self-destructive) column. If an injunctive message was not present or was diluted by the warmth or intervention of protective caretakers, then the thoughts recorded in the healing (self-protective) column will be more representative of the content of the person's thoughts. If one has identified more strongly with the content of the bitter column, it is likely that a particular injunctive message has traction and influence in the person's life. A further function of the healing column is to introduce what for many people will be totally original, perhaps even foreign, thoughts. They show how a person thinks who has a strong sense of self-preservation, protection, and little impact from that injunctive message.

Over the years of working with this material, five natural categories of injunctive messages emerged: survival, attachment, identity, competence, and security. These categories are dis-

cussed briefly in upcoming sections along with the injunctive messages for each category. (For a more detailed discussion of each individual injunctive message, see McNeel, 1999, 2000, 2002a, 200b, 2009a, 2009b).

The Survival Injunctions

The injunctive messages in this category are: Don't Exist, Don't be Well, Don't Trust, Don't Be Sane, and Don't Be Important. Sometimes the effects of these injunctions are obvious, as with someone who is actively self-destructive. More often the self-destructive drives emanating from these messages are cloaked in social and professional pursuits that have the imprimatur of success and are admired by society: working 80-hour weeks, being driven to perfection even in trivial matters, or being highly competitive. This group is characterized by attitudes such as, "I'll show you," "I'll prove myself," "I'll be in control," "I'm the best and proud of it," and "You can't stop me."

At the heart of resolving this group of injunctive messages is, actually, the heart. One of the pernicious effects of the survival injunctions is to cause cynicism about the existence of unconditional love. The healing process involves separating out the quest for attention, recognition, and approval and seeing them as different from affection. These injunctive messages are not resolved in the vacuum of one's own efforts but by taking in and internalizing the love of others, by making the seeking of affection a top priority in one's life.

Table 1 provides diagnostic information for the survival injunctions, and Table 2 shows the self-diagnostic thoughts for the survival injunctions.

The Attachment Injunctions

The injunctive messages in this category are: Don't Be Close, Don't Feel Attached, Don't Belong, Don't Be a Child, Don't Want, and Don't Invest. These interfere with the process of attachment by leaving the recipient believing that he or she is alone in the world and there is no one on whom to depend. Relying on his or her imagination, the person is likely to create an ideal image of a partner and what that partner can provide. This typically leads to frustra-

tion and disappointment with real-life partners and friends. Not trusting in the goodness of others or his or her ability to choose good character, the individual is likely to be both controlling and distant in relationships.

Whereas these injunctive messages have created a longing for a love never received, the resolution lies in learning to express warmth, love, and affection. Requisite to this process, the person must learn to give up anger as a control agent in relationships, to diagnose character in others more accurately, and to feel safe in being dependent on others. Determinism must be replaced by acceptance. The person must learn to recognize those individuals who hold unconditional affection for him or her and draw toward them, as opposed to attempting to shape relationships according to the image in his or her mind.

Table 3 provides diagnostic information for the attachment injunctions, and Table 4 shows the self-diagnostic thoughts for the attachment injunctions.

The Identity Injunctions

The injunctive messages in this category are: Don't Be You, Don't Be Separate, Don't Be Visible, and Don't (be engaged in your own life). In discussing the Don't Be You injunction, the Gouldings (Goulding & Goulding, 1979) often emphasized the impact of this message on gender identity. However, this is a small portion of the influence of that injunctive message in particular and these injunctive messages in general. Their central impact is to leave the person feeling unlikable, bereft of intrinsic worth, ashamed, and often fearful of acting on his or her own behalf. It is not uncommon for someone with these injunctive messages to put on a false front. Because such individuals have no sense of their real gifts, they are often characterized by envy focused on gifts they see in others and wish they had for themselves.

Learning and knowing one's gifts as well as one's shortcomings is the key to resolution in this group. Determination to change oneself into an ideal being or to match the imagined wishes of another person is replaced. The new drive is to know oneself intimately. Curiosity becomes a tool for self-discovery. Shame over

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The Injunctive Message	The Despairing Decision (what the person fears to be the truth)	The Defiant Decision (the person's best attempt at health)	The Coping Behavior (which stems from the defiant decision)	The Redecision (the new belief)	The Resolving Activity (a process to strengthen the rededecision)	The Parental Stance that Heals
Don't Exist	I should go away	I will stay here and you won't break or defeat me	Quest for approval/recognition significant enough to allay despair	Unconditional acceptance and affection exist and are gifts	Acknowledging love and accepting affection	Love does exist: Recognition and approval are not the affection you crave
Don't Be Well (don't take care of yourself)	No one ever pays attention to me	I have to be strong	To be driven (often to exhaustion) to meet huge expectations	Boundaries (which create moderation) are worth more than accumulating numbers	Question what matters: How much is enough?	Sympathy is not nurturance: Your life is worth preserving
Don't Trust	I'm terrified and defenseless	I only trust me	Controlling the environment	I can choose to trust	Look for character strength and weakness in people (evaluate character)	There are people and promises in which you can believe
Don't Be Sane	There is no help in the world (for my feelings of craziness)	I'll be supernormal	Hatred of self and others; vengeful	There is a way out (of misery)	Seek continually the "treasure" of reassurance	All parents did the best they could with what they had (it wasn't personal)
Don't Be Important	I'm worthless	I'll be great, bigger than life	Always tries to have an effect: often interrupts, dominates, exaggerates; accepts too much obligation	I can be full (of the goodness of life)	Giving attention to those who will "love me the rest of their lives"	Pride (hubris) is not self-esteem

The Injunctive Message	The Bitter (Self-Destructive) Response	The Healing (Self-Protective) Response
Don't Exist	Deep in my heart I hate my life (look what a mess it is).	I know my life is precious and I cherish it.
Don't Be Well	I look tired and exhausted (but don't allow others to take care of me).	There is time for me in my life, and I do what is healthy for me.
Don't Trust	Often I feel I am betrayed.	I have safe people and places in my life.
Don't Be Sane	Parents (parental figures) make (have made) me feel crazy.	I feel love for me and forgiveness for them (parental figures).
Don't Be Important	I feel I must respond to everything (and with equal energy).	I know to whom I matter and what matters in my life.

Table 3 Diagnosis Table for the Attachment Injunctions						
The Injunctive Message	The Despairing Decision (what the person fears to be the truth)	The Defiant Decision (the person's best attempt at health)	The Coping Behavior (which stems from the defiant decision)	The Redecision (the new belief)	The Resolving Activity (a process to strengthen the rededecision)	The Parental Stance that Heals
Don't Be Close	I'm abandoned (and I'll await your return)	I'll find it (perfect love) out there	Looking for love ("in all the wrong places")	I can survive living with an open heart	Giving love (being verbally and physically affectionate)	You can say "I love you" (the words out loud) from your heart
Don't Feel Attached	I don't exist (in relation to anyone)	I won't be denied (whatever/whomever I seek)	Determined to make focus relationship(s) work (feels possessive, controlling, manipulative)	I don't get to choose or determine who likes me	Consciously recognize your possessiveness (envy) and replace it with protectiveness	You must know what brings pain to those you love (and refrain from those behaviors)
Don't Belong	I can't show how much I care	I don't care (about others)	A pattern of isolating oneself (being "shy")	To forswear using anger to create distance in relationships	Giving invitations to people and inviting self in	Affection is more powerful than hostility
Don't Be A Child	There is no one (I can depend on)	I don't need anyone	Super responsible (always a giver, never a receiver)	I am not a machine	Contemplate the "sweetness of dependency"	Receiving sweetness is not a weakness
Don't Want	I always try to please (but I never can)	I won't want anything from my heart	Always putting the real or imagined wants of others first	I can survive the displeasure of others	Make requests daily	You can ask for/request anything
Don't Invest	No love is unconditional	I'll keep my distance (from people)	Always involved in multiple options (and/or people)	I can be "all in" (with certain people)	Consciously turning toward loved ones (not away)	Your love is (can be) a source of reassurance

Table 4 Self-Diagnostic Thoughts for the Attachment Injunctions		
The Injunctive Message	The Bitter (Self-Destructive Response)	The Healing (Self-Protective) Response
Don't Be Close	In relationships I am watchful and try to leave (physically and/or emotionally) before others leave me.	Instead of trying to be invulnerable, I let people love me.
Don't Feel Attached	If I am honest with myself, I know I withhold compassion and understanding.	I am protective of the people who have true affection for me (especially myself).
Don't Belong	I feel as if no one likes me.	I surround myself with people I love very much.
Don't Be A Child	I'm always the caretaker, not the one cared for.	I am so thankful for those on whom I can depend.
Don't Want	I give up easily (and adapt to the desires of others).	I am clear: My yes is yes and my no is no, and I am deeply loyal to myself and my principles.
Don't Invest	I don't know of anyone for whom I would be willing to die.	I would be bereft beyond words if I were to lose certain people

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one's perceived shortcomings or vulnerabilities is replaced by a willingness to be known in vulnerability and to learn more about oneself through the eyes of others. A certain adaptive shyness gives way to assertiveness in meeting

one's own needs. Table 5 provides diagnostic information for the identity injunctions, and Table 6 shows the self-diagnostic thoughts for the identity injunctions.

The Injunctive Message	The Despairing Decision (what the person fears to be the truth)	The Defiant Decision (the person's best attempt at health)	The Coping Behavior (which stems from the defiant decision)	The Redecision (the new belief)	The Resolving Activity (a process to strengthen the rededecision)	The Parental Stance that Heals
Don't Be You	Someone important doesn't like me	I'll be perfect	Trying to be someone imagined, dissociating from certain aspects of one's personality	There is a real person here I never allowed you (and/or me) to know	Consciously love the gifts that you (or others) have hated	You are precious and beautiful: I love all aspects of you
Don't Be Separate	I'm not supposed to have a persona of my own	I'll be careful to be just what you want (I'll make <i>you</i> OK)	Submissive, passively angry, and conflict avoidant	Conflict is a precious opportunity for learning/ sharing/ individuating	Seeking opportunities to define (not defend) oneself	You must make it easier for people to criticize you (give you feedback)
Don't Be Visible	I'm ashamed of me (or my family)	I'll hide in plain sight	Appearing supremely confident or as having no problems	I don't have to be ashamed of being vulnerable	Reveal your hidden self (in safety)	What you keep hidden can harm you
Don't (be engaged in your own life)	Whatever I do seems wrong	I won't move until it (the world) feels safe	Controlled by a fear of future outcome (always dreaming of a "risk-free" future)	It is not possible to remove risk from life by being "frozen"	Seek daily to do something that was previously postponed due to anxiety	You are not here to be comfortable but to live your life

The Injunctive Message	The Bitter (Self-Destructive) Response	The Healing (Self-Protective) Response
Don't Be You	I fear being exposed as an imposter.	I'm fascinated to be discovering myself, warts, gifts, and all.
Don't Be Separate	I feel I exist in the opinions of others and try my best to create a pleasing image.	I'm curious to know my own thoughts and values as opposed to those of others.
Don't Be Visible	Other people don't really know me at all (only my public self).	I allow others to see my private (vulnerable) self and know I am worthy of this attention.
Don't (be engaged in your own life)	There are many things in life I won't do (but would like to do).	Characteristically, if something makes me anxious (but is actually safe), I do it.

The Competence Injunctions

The injunctive messages in this category are: Don't Make It, Don't Grow Up, Don't Think, and Don't Feel Successful. The handicaps created by these messages often do not appear to be disadvantages at all. People with these messages are often focused on being fixers of problems large and small. They are determined to prove themselves in all situations and are strong minded, even overbearing. But these are the manifestations of the coping behaviors that cover their sense of failure for not realizing all of their expectations, blame for not making all situations better, being lost underneath their bravado, or not being very intelligent (even if gifted with a high IQ). Everything is subject to the tyranny of expectation.

For these individuals, the key to finding greater

balance is to create a more accurate perspective about life in general and about one's own capacities in particular. This is accomplished by placing learning at the center of life, allowing old prejudices and the habits that came from them to fall away, and adopting good models of competence to learn from and emulate. People with these injunctive messages must allow themselves to surrender the unrealistic expectations that have created their sense of failure even when they have observable successes in life. The goal is to allow the way life is conducted with its intentions and direction to be the measure of their self-esteem, not its results.

Table 7 provides diagnostic information for the competence injunctions, and Table 8 offers the self-diagnostic thoughts for the competence injunctions.

Table 7 Diagnostic Table for the Competence Injunctions						
The Injunctive Message	The Despairing Decision (what the person fears to be the truth)	The Defiant Decision (the person's best attempt at health)	The Coping Behavior (which stems from the defiant decision)	The Redecision (the new belief)	The Resolving Activity (a process to strengthen the rededecision)	The Parental Stance that Heals
Don't Make It	I'm sorry (guilty) I'm not good enough	I'll show you and I'll prove myself better than everyone else (arrogant)	Striving for the ideal in everything (but preoccupied with failure)	There is no failure or mistakes, only learning, and I love learning	Consciously record all personal victories and accomplishments	Your (many) accomplishments belong to you
Don't Grow Up	I don't know what to do	I have to fend for myself in the world	Pseudo independence (a "little person" trying to look grown up)	It's good (and necessary) to imitate those I admire	Look for and integrate advice and instruction	Choose good models for your life
Don't Think	I'm not very smart and feel inferior (ignorant)	I can/must impose my beliefs on others (be dominant)	Iron-clad habits, prejudices, views, and behaviors	I can learn and change my views (tolerate ambiguity)	Intentionally learn about and respect the views, wisdom, and skill of others	Life is too complex to get it right (to know absolute truth)
Don't Feel Successful	I always feel blamed	I must take care of (fix) everyone (and everything)	Immediate blame of self or others for anything wrong	(Human) pain is not my fault and is not an indictment of me	To consciously enjoy efforts made on behalf of others	The person you seek to be makes you successful

Table 8 Self-Diagnostic Thoughts for the Competence Injunctions		
The Injunctive Message	The Bitter (Self-Destructive) Response	The Healing (Self-Protective) Response
Don't Make It	(Secretly) I feel a failure about my life.	It's remarkable how much I've achieved.
Don't Grow Up	While growing up, no one told me (or showed me) what to do.	There are many people I admire and from whom I continue to learn.
Don't Think	My way is (and has to be) the only right way, for I possess the truth.	Change is inevitable (including my view of life) and ambiguity is my friend.
Don't Feel Successful	If only I had been different or done differently, I wouldn't feel so burdened by regret.	I love the effort I put into my life.

The Security Injunctions

The injunctive messages in this category are: Don't Enjoy, Don't Be Thankful, Don't Feel, Don't Relax (Feel Safe), Don't Share Your Life, and Don't Touch. Taken together, this set of messages negatively affects the level of internal security a person feels in life and creates a distorted view. Subject to these influences, people create a deeply flawed model of security demonstrated by almost superhuman qualities. They aspire to be someone who is more Teflon than human, thus not harmed by slights or adversity. They have a response for any situation and are master of their feelings. Through vigilance, they believe they should be able to keep any unfortunate event from happening. Unconsciously, such individuals seek security by controlling events so that bad never befalls them or those close to them. Lacking good models for what healthy security looks like, their eye is drawn toward other "superman" types whom they aspire to imitate (or conquer), never recognizing the core of insecurity that such behavior actually reveals. They expect that their quest for more of whatever holds their focus will bring them the internal peace and security that continues to elude them.

Paradoxically, a major element in the resolution of these injunctive messages is the acceptance of suffering as a natural force in life, one that visits prince and pauper alike. This relieves a terrible burden. Instead of a headlong pursuit of false riches, individuals with security injunctions begin to understand that the truly secure person uses gratitude, memory, compassion, the care of other people, and empathy for themselves as sources of assurance during periods of

vulnerability. Rather than feeling set apart from other human beings with a smug sense of superiority, they see some likeness of themselves in all they meet. It is possible for them to relax, enjoy, and be grateful for all the blessings in the current moment. Security is a state attained in the present, with all its flaws, as opposed to a dreamed-of future event.

Table 9 provides diagnostic information for the security injunctions, and Table 10 offers self-diagnostic thoughts for the security injunctions (see page 169).

Conclusion

The recent death of Mary Goulding reminds all of us who knew her and had the privilege to work and train with the Gouldings of the remarkable legacy she and Bob left behind. First and foremost, they were advocates for the client and believed that everyone should have the opportunity to reach his or her highest potential. They were courageous in their pioneering efforts to create a more efficient psychotherapy. I hope that the material contained in this article will add in some significant way to the rededication therapy literature and to the theory of injunctions, in particular.

The contents of this article are admittedly subjective, although based on years of studious observation and a remarkable number of hours of debate and theoretical thinking. It is easy to imagine that one could take issue with the defined categories of injunctive messages as well as with the selection of the specific injunctive messages in each category. Likewise, one could debate the interpretive material contained in the tables. The single most outstanding ele-

ment of the entire process was discovering over and over again the nonlinear effect of the injunctive messages. What made intuitive sense as a logical decision did not turn out to be the words that actually captured the true sense of the injunctive message and its impact. It was fascinating to track through them and discover the elements that resolved them. It was heartening to find that affection, trust, expressed love, curiosity, gratitude, admiration, forgiveness, removing perfectionism, accepting one's humanity, discovering one's unique gifts, healthy dependency, memory, consciously directing one's life, and forming a philosophy of life based on wisdom rather than wishes were the core of resolution for the damage inflicted by these life-limiting messages.

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UNDERSTANDING THE POWER OF INJUNCTIVE MESSAGES

The Injunctive Message	The Despairing Decision (what the person fears to be the truth)	The Defiant Decision (the person's best attempt at health)	The Coping Behavior (which stems from the defiant decision)	The Redecision (the new belief)	The Resolving Activity (a process to strengthen the rededication)	The Parental Stance that Heals
Don't Enjoy	I feel empty	I'll do more than everyone (and became legend)	Life is full of lots of events (great and otherwise)	There is joy in life, but I can't create it by being busy	Saying "no" to extraneous opportunities and events	You don't have to be famous or even great to enjoy your life
Don't Be Thankful	I (we) have nothing	I'll have everything	Insatiable (for things, power, attention, privilege, access)	More never, never, never leads to enough	Being thankful for what has previously been taken for granted	Happiness comes from feeling/being thankful
Don't Feel	No one cares (what I feel)	I will defend myself (by hiding my feelings)	Being very NICE or proper (but evincing little or no empathy for others or self)	Being nice is not being tender or compassionate	Monitor and eliminate the intensity of reaction that covers compassion	You have an entire emotional world inside of you
Don't Relax (don't feel safe)	I'm overwhelmed and afraid	I must be vigilant (to keep bad things from happening)	Mind always in motion anticipating and suggesting future negative events	Suffering is not failure (but part of life)	Create a memory bank of hardships faced and overcome	You can (and will) handle what comes up, so calm yourself
Don't Share Your Life	There is something wrong with (inferior about) me	I'll emphasize and/or enact my vast superiority	A certain quickness of response to all ambiguity or challenge	My life story (unedited) is a gift to be shared with those I love	Listen with curiosity to know the essence of others' lives, let them know yours	You must not be remote (or god like) but giving of your life
Don't Touch	There is no protection in the world	I'll be bullet proof	An attitude of "nothing hurts me"	I actually need (and like) affection	Allow, encourage people to (safely) physically, verbally touch you	There is great goodness in expressed warmth

The Injunctive Message	The Bitter (Self-Destructive) Response	The Healing (Self-Protective) Response
Don't Enjoy	I comfort myself with being busy and often in a hurry toward the future.	When alone I enjoy my own company (without chemical assistance or hectic activity).
Don't Be Thankful	It is difficult for me to reflect on what may be my blessings.	I am thankful for what is in my life, especially what I may have taken for granted.
Don't Feel	I feel envious of those who are well cared for.	I am well cared for.
Don't Relax (don't feel safe)	I strive to be constantly proactive (to never fail, let down, or allow bad things to happen).	I know suffering is part of life and so is being comforted.
Don't Share Your Life	I tend to feel either inferior or superior to others and often superior.	I feel a common humanity with people.
Don't Touch	I feel proud of the harshness I endured during my childhood.	I feel great empathy for my young self.