



YELR™

Your Extraordinary Liminal Retreat
Client Handbook





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Introduction

I am so glad to see you here and to know that you are ready for change! This Handbook accompanies the overall treatment program; you will receive a separate Retreat Workbook through snail mail.

Chapter 1 of this Handbook contains background information about this amazing journey on which you are about to embark, Your Extraordinary Liminal Retreat (YELR). You will read about the typical characteristics of people who benefit from YELR (YELR'ers) and the expected outcomes of the program.

Chapters 2-6 are to be read and completed after sessions 2-6. The format in each of these sections is generally:

Overview

A few words to help remind you of the major topics of the day - this will be helpful when you do the homework.

Homework

Homework will always include writing notes about the session because chances are very high that you will forget what happened and how you felt. This should take about 15 minutes. If there is additional homework, the object is to help you further explore what was discussed in that session or to prepare you for the next session. All homework will likely take about one hour to complete.

Preparing for the Next Session

You are expected to review your homework right before going into session so that you can dive into discussion and Dr. Dug can address your questions or confusions. Sessions are intentionally scheduled at 15 minutes past the hour so that you can take that time to review and reflect. This preparation will help you take full advantage of the session.

Chapter 7 covers the YELR'ing Together ongoing therapy group that you will be welcome to join after you have completed the retreat.



Chapter 1

Mission

YELR's mission is to creatively and effectively use assessment, education, guidance, and knowledge to help empower clients to achieve mental wellness.

Goal

YELR's goal is for clients to regain mental clarity, emotional capacity, and physical energy and to have a clear and specific vision of a life that is meaningful, authentic, and content.

Who Does This Help?

YELR was created to specifically empower communities of color but can be effective for anyone who used to be a high performer, feel confident, and be proud of their ability to multi-task. On the outside, typical YELR'ers may still look as if they are still functioning at that high level, but on the inside, they sometimes feel like they are breaking down and do not recognize themselves anymore.

Common complaints include:

- I overthink so much that it can stop me from making a choice or a plan
- I thought I used to know my purpose in life, but now I think maybe that has changed
- I wish I felt passion and drive, but don't have anything to work toward that I care about
- For some reason, I've lost a lot of self-confidence
- I spend a lot of energy arguing with myself
- I am tired and overwhelmed most of the time
- I have a hard time solving problems, no matter how simple
- I would love to be more creative, but for some reason can't access it
- I feel incredibly busy, but at the end of the day have nothing to show
- I don't know how to change the situation I've created for myself
- I have a hard time focusing and can easily be distracted
- I feel like I have less empathy and when people ask me for help, I feel overwhelmed

Deliverables

The YELR program uses assessment, education, guidance, and knowledge to help clients experience restored clarity of mind, which will directly contribute to improved:

- Mental well-being and confidence
- Energy
- Planning and problem-solving abilities
- Management of stress
- Capacity to emotionally connect with others

Additionally, clients will walk away with specific:

- Coping tools
- Productivity guidance
- Flourishing strategies
- Self-Identity guideposts
- Life vision parameters

About the Program

The YELR program follows a brief and intense treatment model, consisting of 4 assessment sessions, an individual retreat, and one follow-up session. After the retreat, YELR'ers have the option of participating in online group sessions where the members of the community support each other in their journeys.

The program has four stages:

1. Assessment - Using assessments and discussion, you and Dr. Dug will conceptualize how to best use the program in order to achieve your goals
2. Restoration – Restoration of resources happens in the early part of the retreat when the client is provided with information and exercises to help them regain mental clarity, emotional capacity, and physical energy
3. Clarity and Vision - With the aforementioned resources restored, clients are then guided to identify who they really are and what they want, so that they can achieve a life that is meaningful, authentic, and content
4. Plan – You will meet with Dr. Dug after the retreat to further clarify and understand your accomplishments and discuss next steps

The online group sessions are an optional fifth stage, where clients can have accountability to peers and Dr. Dug for their continuing work on well-being.

What About Other Programs?

Long-term therapy is appropriate for many people. Others, though, do not currently want that type of treatment and instead lean toward coaching or short-term therapy. However, the problem with some short-term programs is that they may only focus on short-term problems (e.g., arguing with my boss), rather than address the systemic issues (e.g., wanting to start my own company) that will likely continue to cause difficulties (e.g., arguing with others at work).

Here is another way of thinking about this... Imagine that you have an office chair with a worn spot in the seat that has ripped. You can address this problem in a few ways. Option 1 is to ignore it – this may work for a short period of time, depending on how often you use the chair, but of course, this option has not solved the problem. Option 2 is to tape it – this may also work for a short period of time but will likely need repeated replacement and reinforcement. Given that chairs normally only get worn spots when they are old, there is a good chance that other rips will form and will need tape themselves. Option 3 is to reupholster the chair – this is the only option that addresses the deeper issue of the chair being old and worn out.

The aim of long-term therapy is to be like that third option – getting at the heart of the problem so that you do not have to continue to chase and repair rips.

Similarly, rather than just examining your rip-of-the-day, YELR challenges you to examine your life, the bigger picture, and the patterns and themes that cause related problems to persist. In other words, instead of focusing on what you do not want and working anxiously on chasing and getting rid of “rips,” you will be focusing on what you do want (and will know what you want!) and working confidently on those things that bring meaning, authenticity, and contentment to your life.

YELR is different from long-term therapy in its higher level of intensity and pace. It is designed for people who are really ready for change and willing to put in the work. YELR sets you on the path to self-empowerment, but you have to want to walk that path.

At the beginning of the retreat, Dr. Dug provides you with information and exercises that help you regain the mental clarity, emotional capacity, and physical energy that you have been losing. It is imperative to have those resources restored before trying to create a vision or plan or solutions. Without the former in place, the latter would merely be overwhelming.

You will learn that there is a reason why your old strategies of “rest and recovery” have only had limited and short-term benefit and how to stop the cycle of stress and exhaustion so that you can create long-lasting change.

Chapter 2

Overview

Session 2 Theme: ORIGIN STORY. The agenda for today was to create a genogram (visual representation of your Family of Origin) and discuss both the Client Handbook and the outcomes of the questionnaires you completed.

Homework

- Write notes about what happened during Session 2, including updated goals. Be sure to indicate whether there was anything confusing that you want Dr. Dug to clarify next session or any questions that come up as you reflect on that session. (15 minutes)

- Create a timeline of your life's significant events, starting from birth and ending today. Significant events should cover a wide range of realms – biological, educational, occupational, social, romantic, sexual, self-discovery, important people, etc. (30 minutes)

Birth



Today



Preparing for the Next Session

Right before Session 3, reflect on your notes and questions about the previous session and reflect on your homework. (15 minutes)

Chapter 3

Overview

Session 3 Theme: PREQUEL. The agenda for today was to review your timeline, do a sentence completion activity, talk about the stories we tell ourselves, and discuss the adaptive quality of symptoms.

Homework

- Write notes about what happened during Session 3, including updated goals. Be sure to indicate whether there was anything confusing that you want Dr. Dug to clarify next session or any questions that come up as you reflect on that session. (15 minutes)

- Write up a character profile of the Problem you are discussing in treatment. (30 minutes)

What are Problem's goals? Why does Problem do what it does? What is it trying to accomplish?

Who would Problem say is its arch nemesis? What is the history of the relationship between them?

What does Problem assume (whether correctly or not correctly)?

If Problem could have its way, how would things be different for you?

Have there been times in the past when Problem has been stronger or weaker? Explain.

Who/what does Problem consider to be allies? What actually helps Problem to stick around or make it more powerful?

When do you think Problem was born? Was there an event or a time period in your life when Problem came into existence?

If Problem was a live being, what would it look like?

What does Problem's home look like?

What does Problem do all day?

What are Problem's deepest fears?

Preparing for the Next Session

Right before Session 4, reflect on your notes and questions about the previous session and reflect on your homework. (15 minutes)



Chapter 4

Overview

Session 4 Theme: RELATIONSHIP WITH THE STRUGGLE. The agenda for today was to further explore your relationship with the struggle and your resources (and how you use them).

Homework

- Write notes about what happened during Session 4, including updated goals. Be sure to indicate whether there was anything confusing that you want Dr. Dug to clarify next session or any questions that come up as you reflect on that session. (15 minutes)

- Take a look at the Retreat Workbook and write down any confusions or concerns you may have. What are you most looking forward to and what are you least looking forward to? (15 minutes)

- Imagine that you have are the leader of a small (10 houses) community in a distant land. The people have decided that they want you to unilaterally create the culture of this land. List the ten VALUES that will guide all other decisions and protocols for this community. (To assist, you may want to look online for a few lists of values.) Are these values any different than the values you hold dear for yourself? If so, how? (15 minutes)

Preparing for the Next Session

Right before Session 5, reflect on your notes and questions about the previous session and reflect on your homework. (15 minutes)

Chapter 5

Overview

Session 5 Theme: RETREAT PREPARATION. The agenda for today was to overview what has happened in treatment and Dr. Dug's assessment, update your goals, and discuss the retreat.

Homework

Write notes about what happened during Session 5, including updated goals. Be sure to indicate whether there was anything confusing that you want Dr. Dug to clarify next session or any questions that come up as you reflect on that session. (15 minutes)

Preparing for the Next Session

Right before Session 6, reflect on your notes and questions about the previous session and reflect on the Fruits I'm Bringing Home. (15 minutes)



Chapter 6

Overview

Session 6 Theme: RETREAT POST-PROCESSING. The agenda for today was to discuss the retreat, next steps, and the YELR'ing Together therapy group.

Homework

Write down any ideas that you want to make sure you remember going into the future, including updated goals.





Chapter 7

For clients who have completed the YELR retreat and program, YELR'ing Together is the ongoing therapy group that helps YELR'ers continue along their path toward a life that is meaningful, authentic, and content.

Groups take place once every week for one hour. Clients reserve space in the group at least 48 hours in advance and the group size is capped at eight people. (If there is consistent demand beyond eight people, another group may be started to accommodate more people.)

(Note: Group participants are welcome to interact outside of group, if mutually desired, and may even decide to create a social media group to stay connected.)

The group participants may change, but the format will be consistent.

Welcome – Group participants will be reminded of group rules and expectations (5 minutes)

Check-In – In this brief check-in, group participants will answer the question, “How are you feeling right now?” Each person will speak for approximately one minute. (10 minutes)

Grounding exercise – Dr. Dug will facilitate an exercise to help participants feel present and grounded in the group. (10 minutes)

Inquiry and Discussion – Group participants will discuss the wins and challenges they are encountering along their continuing journey. Group participants can also discuss any other related topic, such as the status of the intention they made in the last group session. Educational moments will be interspersed during this segment. (25 minutes)

Intention and Closing – Group participants will each make one intention to accomplish before the next group session. Participants can also share what they appreciated about this session. Dr. Dug will confirm the date and time of the next session, remind participants to reserve a spot in the next session, and then the session will conclude. (10 minutes)

Use the space starting on the next page in this Handbook to log the sessions you attend and record your take-aways. (Print more log pages, as needed.)

Date:

What am I planning to discuss?

Intention I set during group

What I appreciated about the group today

Notes to remember



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