

## “Crossing the River”

IF you are new to Self-Parenting sessions, then ideally your first major goal will be what I call “Crossing the River.” This means that you will do what it takes as an Inner Parent for your Inner Child to believe and trust that you will continue to do your Self-Parenting sessions.

The [Ten Steps to Intermediate Practitioner](#) represent a guided trail for the “Newbie Practitioner” of the SELF-PARENTING Program leading to the “Intermediate Practitioner Status” of the SPP. You need to know that even though this path is clearly marked and seems straightforward there are many potential pitfalls. I can recall many practitioners who started out with the most glowing praise and experiences of Self-Parenting that you could ever believe.

If I showed you their early testimonials, you would be certain that these people would never stop Self-Parenting. And guess what, they did. They got caught by a deeper Inner Parent pattern and disappeared into what I call the raging river. I wouldn’t be surprised if I even got the blame.

Self-Parenting is simple in that there is a clear and defined path, however it is not that easy because you actually have to “do something” which for many people is not what they want. They want to be handed advanced skills and experience on a silver platter and arrive where they think they want to go, without earning their way. The SELF-PARENTING Program is not a 7-day cruise in the Bahamas. It is a lifetime journey when you apply yourself and work the required steps to gain the value.

However, if you are willing to commit to 30 minutes a day, there is a well-marked, safe trail for “Crossing the River” which has never existed before. But if you are not careful, it’s also pretty easy to get lost on the way. Unfortunately I can give you many recent examples of initially excited Self-Parenting practitioners who fell by the wayside because their Inner Parent got cocky and didn’t want to “stay on the marked trail.”

Self-Parenting is tricky. You are actually doing battle with yourself. When even a slightly dysfunctional Inner Parent pattern swirls up in you, you have no idea that it’s your own pattern. And you blame anyone or anything except your own dysfunctional Self-Parenting issues and off you go looking for another outer person or solution to do your work for you. Most people have several deeper patterns they must uncover and correct before they reach the Self-Parenting Promised Land.

“Crossing the River” represents the metaphorical travels of the SELF-PARENTING Practitioner that underlies the SELF-PARENTING Program. If I were good at fiction writing I would probably write a fable and put all the details in a nice simple story format. However, I’m more a “how-to” guy and like to outline healing processes in a step-by-step approach so people can just follow the steps.

With this article I’m hoping to give you a greater understanding of the trials you face when you begin the SELF-PARENTING Program. You don’t need to know these concepts to actually cross the river, but if you don’t make it “across the river” successfully, this will be the reason why. I hope to warn you as a cautionary tale.

I know because I've been watching you. This is my 27<sup>th</sup> year (2013) teaching Self-Parenting to the world. It took me 16 years (1970-1986) prior to that to conceive and birth the concept of Self-Parenting. The ACA people, who I taught this work to (and their "leaders") are stuck in exactly the same place they were when I introduced Self-Parenting to them in 1987. All the copycats who studied my discovery have moved on. When I'm gone I assume Self-Parenting will just fade away the same way that the true Huna (discovered and created by Max Freedom Long) and Living Love (by Ken Keyes) systems did when their creators died.

So I'm not playing games when I say that getting to the Intermediate Practitioner status is not easy. These ten steps act like a bridge of ten huge boulders perfectly placed just for you to walk easily right across the raging river. All you have to do is just step from boulder to boulder. Take your time, be careful, and you will easily get to the other side. If you don't take these steps, or dawdle, or think you can stop any time or go for a swim in the river, you will be swept away so fast you will never know what happened.

Since I live over here in the "Intermediate Land" and have helped many people to cross this raging river, I know how to make it easy if you just trust me to follow my guidance. When you do, you'll find it so safe, tranquil, and pleasant that you won't believe anyone couldn't make this journey.

### **"Living on the Island" Surrounded by the "River of Life"**

Imagine that we all live on a big island. It is a big island so there is no reason for people to know that they actually on an island. Most people live here involved with their family and social relationships living their happy normal lives without any indication there is any other reality.

Surrounding our island on all sides there is a river, called the "River of Life." When we individuals venture beyond their family of origin to explore other activities they enter the "River of Life." This river involves activities such as going to school, dating, getting a job, etc. There's nothing really bad about the island or the river, other than they represent unconscious participation in life. People on the island never go inward to explore their own mind. They only focus on outward activities and thus live and die on the island totally happy with just being part of the bustling island and river of life surrounding it.

If you are just a "normal person" then you are happy to live on this island and participate in the "river of life" as per your preferences and inclinations and there would be nothing wrong with this at all. However, you would have never sought any deeper meaning or purpose other than to live life on the surface level. If your parents were basically positive and you had a basically positive life then you would never need to question any other way of living.

### **The "ACA Swamp"**

"Crossing the River", what does that mean exactly? As a member of a dysfunctional family, you began life in what I call the "ACA Swamp."

This is much more difficult location on the island. This is where people find themselves when they have experienced the type of problems that are created by dysfunctional family dynamics. Parents who are drug, work, and/or fame addicted can make their

children's lives a very difficult place to be. If you come from this kind of family on the island, your outer parenting was very likely dysfunctional based on the rules and ideal roles of outer parenting.

As the child family member growing up, you may have had a vague idea at the time that something wasn't quite right. However, it usually takes getting away from your immediate family environment, by jumping in the river of life to see that the way "most people live" is not what you went through. It's very likely that you may immerse yourself in outer dysfunctional behaviors as a way of "solving" your inner angst. If you are lucky you will survive this phase to eventually begin seeking to understand why you feel so messed up in the head.

Living in the "ACA Swamp" is a terrible experience on the island. It appears to everyone else that you are living just like them, but in fact you are, not unlike a real swamp, living in mud and guck, with all kinds of negative factors. It's a bitter ugly place, smelly, dark, and dirty, and you can be up to your nose in it sloshing around trying to find a dry clean place to rest your head. If someone is not in the "ACA Swamp" then they have no idea what you are going through. And if they are, they probably don't have any more likely tools to help you than themselves, but at least they share your pain.

However, you are constantly tripped up by external behaviors that become excessive for you that don't seem to trouble other people. For example, many people on the island drink alcohol, but when you do you seem to drink more often and get in trouble because of it. Many people enjoy a sexual relationship on the island, but your experiences seem to be trickier and more convoluted than other people experience. In fact, any "normal behavior" for you, has the potential of escalating into a destructive problem that causes problems for you and the people around you. This can cause problems within your family, your community, or even your governmental systems. Because they are "normal" you now become a strange creature, a freak living in the ACA Swamp.

Because everyone else on the island is seeking and living based on external events, you (and other people in your life) want to help you to change your outer life on the island to conform more to what people are looking for. By getting involved in the "river of life" you use the energy and motivations you have to alter family, social, and work experiences so that you'll feel happier.

If you are lucky, you eventually get to the discovery that the way you were parented was dysfunctional based on "normal" and what you need to do is become your own loving parent. However, there's no guarantee that says you must discover this. Many people spend the majority of their time and energy, even their whole life on the island, seeking "outer solutions" such as enough money, fame, power, etc to compensate for the inner turmoil created by dysfunctional family dynamics.

For you, whatever family dynamics you grew up within as a child is "normal" for you. It's not until you study and seek outside help that you may get to the point where you realize you need to make some changes. Many people spend a lifetime working to achieve their "outer solution of choice" before they find out that even this doesn't help. Eventually they realize they must seek a solution inside themselves.

Of course, there are many external systems of inner discovery, since this is a fairly common problem for the "ACA Swamp" problem, which people in all cultures have experienced throughout time. Many systems with both good and bad aspects have developed to help a citizen of the island to live a happier life. Unfortunately, on this island, no one really understands that it was your outer parenting dynamics that are the key cause of your problems (unless you become aware of ACA dynamics).

One of these "external systems" is called the SELF-PARENTING Program. The purpose of this system is to provide your most direct way to restore loving, supporting and nurturing to the Inner Child. It provides the exact functionality not provided by your outer parents in your "family of origin." Because positive self-parenting is provided directly by the person him/herself, it is a direct solution that does not require outer aspects of the island or river.

### **"Crossing the River"**

The point of this description is that you need to get out of the "ACA Swamp" by "Crossing the River" which means without getting caught up and swept away by outer life.

IF you haven't completed each of the Ten Steps (thus "Crossing the River") then you don't really know what this program is about. Wherever your last completed step was, take the next one, and get over here as soon as you can.

You can escape the swamp if you jump in the river, but it's not a permanent solution as you will be swept along wherever the river takes you and it could be good or bad, depending on luck and your ability to swim.

With the SELF-PARENTING Program "Crossing the River" will get you out of the "ACA Swamp," where there is solid ground, and you can live consciously and comfortably. In fact, this is where most people from functional families live, and they often wonder what's wrong with those people who live in the "ACA Swamp."

By definition as a dysfunctional Inner Parent following the rules is not your best skill. What the Ten Steps to Intermediate do is implant the techniques and experience of positive parenting dynamics within your Inner Parent without you really knowing it at the time. Practicing the program with this gentle progression teaches you to give your Inner Child "healthy parenting." This happens without you really knowing what's happening. It is so natural and progressive that you internalize the skills during the process and arrive on the other side an accomplished Inner Parent.

Once you've taken all ten steps, you are now in a new land. As a dysfunctional Inner Parent, you don't know how to do this on your own. Because you just followed the steps, you got there easy as pie.

As you have figured out by now, I don't do your Self-Parenting for you. I coach you. I'll do whatever I can from my side of the seesaw. If I see you drowning, I will throw you a lifesaver, but I won't jump in and let you drown us both. The people who make it to Intermediate Status do so because they earned it on their own.

## One Last Thing

The step I find most of you gloss over is learning how to manage Inner Conflicts. When I first began teaching Self-Parenting “live” we would get into right away. It takes about 20 “inner conflict resolutions” until you start to see how the process works and what you are up against. About half of your initial attempts typically go badly and this itself is part of the teaching progression.

The whole of Part II of the yellow book is designed for you to parse out each step of Inner Conflict resolution. It’s all there, but if you don’t follow each step, you won’t derive the value of why it’s there.

The end result of your “Crossing the River” is that now your Inner Child is happy it is being recognized and acknowledged as a voice and co-creator in your internal decision-making. This is a very unusual state of mind prior to anything you were doing before you began half-hour sessions of positive Self-Parenting.