



INTRODUCTION TO THE GENESIS PROCESS

an Envision Mission Workshop



**IS THIS THE RIGHT
BOOK FOR YOU?**

Trying to control an addictive behavior without changing the faulty belief systems that support it is an exercise in futility. Every behavior, good or bad, is supported by your beliefs. The Bible tells us in order to change what you do, you must change who you are. In other words, change comes from the inside out. Read John 3:1-21, where Jesus teaches that you must be born again.

If you are willing to change, Genesis will make you able to change. We all have addictions. We do things that we know are self-destructive, but we continue to do them in spite of the consequences. Recovery means changing your life, by dealing with your beliefs, identity, behavior, and relationships with God and others. The word Genesis means a new beginning. Your willingness to be transparent and honest will be a reflection of your motivation to change.

*“Oh God, You are my God;
Early will I seek You;
My soul thirsts for You;
My flesh longs for You
In a dry and thirsty land
Where there is no water.”*

Psalm 63:1

Lack of intimacy

...• pain

...• anesthetics

...• **addictions**

KEY *thought*

THE LAW OF PAIN 1.0

If I had an accident and hurt my back, it might be several months before I would be able to have surgery to correct the condition. in the meantime, my back would be getting progressively more painful. I'd start out taking plain old aspirin, and then extra strength aspirin. Then I'd go to the doctor, and he'd prescribe drugs such as valium, codeine, or Percodan.

THE LAW OF PAIN 1.0

Finally, the pain might get so bad I'd have to take morphine. Then, after being on morphine for several weeks, I'd finally go into the hospital and have the surgery. The surgery would fix the problem so I would no longer experience pain. After coming out of the rehabilitation process, even though the pain was diminished, I would still desire the morphine.

THE LAW OF PAIN 1.0

Trying to get off the morphine while still experiencing the pain would have been difficult. My urges and my thoughts would crave that anesthetic. Emotional pain works the same way. You have pain in your life, from the things you've done to yourself, things you've done to others, and things others have done to you.

THE LAW OF PAIN 1.0

Much of that pain has become subconscious, resulting in self-destructive coping behaviors. Avoiding subconscious pain is what drives an addiction. All addictions are anesthetics that do primarily the same thing: they push unwanted thoughts, feelings, and memories temporarily out of your awareness.

THE LAW OF PAIN 2.0

Addictions are anesthetics. They do one thing: they temporarily anesthetize the awareness of pain. It is reasonable to assume that when you give up the anesthetic, you will feel the pain, discomfort and uneasiness. Knowing what to do when this occurs is a critical skill in relapse prevention.

THE LAW OF PAIN 2.0

Relapse prevention is finding new appropriate ways to respond to painful situations. You may have used a variety of emotional responses (anger, anxiety, depression) for the purpose of coping with emotional pain.

THE LAW OF PAIN 2.0

In order to learn appropriate responses to pain, you have to allow yourself to feel. This is very scary, especially since you deny fear. Fear is avoided through anger, anxiety, depression, relationships, and substance abuse. Painful memories can feel like real events but are only the shadow of the original trauma.

*“Yea, though I walk
through the valley of the
shadow of death, I will
fear no evil, for Thou
art with me.”*

Psalm 23:4 KJV

THE LAW OF PAIN 2.0

Like David, you can face fears or painful memories because God is with you. Ask God to help you face your fears and feelings, and to help you change your destructive coping behaviors. Remember the process of change. Change comes from taking risk; risk comes from faith.

All compulsive/destructive
behavior comes from an
inappropriate response to
..... pain

KEY *thought*

*“Those who wait upon
the Lord will renew
their strength, they shall
mount up with wings
as eagles, they shall
run and not be weary,
they shall walk and
not faint.”*

Isaiah 40:31 KJV

THE BRAIN AND ADDICTIONS

In very simplistic terms, we have two parts to our brains. The first part is the ***neocortex***. It is located in the front of the head and ***receives and stores information for decision making and remembering***. The other part is called the ***limbic system***, ***which controls all of the automatic systems of the body and the emotions. Most importantly, the limbic system controls the survival responses, i.e., “fight or flight.”***

THE BRAIN AND ADDICTIONS

When you feel threatened, these protective responses tell you either to defend yourself or to run away. The limbic system doesn't have a memory like the neocortex. It doesn't know the difference between yesterday and thirty years ago, which explains why some of our childhood traumas still trigger us so powerfully today. It is the limbic system that is most affected by our beliefs, behaviors, and addictions.

THE BRAIN AND ADDICTIONS

The limbic system can be negatively programmed through traumatic experiences, such as growing up in a dysfunctional family. Drugs, alcohol, and other compulsive behaviors have programmed the limbic system to avoid awareness of uncomfortable thoughts and feelings, instead of making healthy responses to resolve fear.

The following chart explains how the limbic system tags or colors current events according to deep memories of past traumas.

THE BRAIN WHEN NORMAL	THE BRAIN WHEN TRAUMATIZED, STRESSED, OR ADDICTED
Sets emotional responses	OVER-REACTIVE / UNDER-REACTIVE Extreme mood swings Increases stress
Controls survival responses to real or imagined danger with FLIGHT, FIGHT, or FREEZE	HYPERVIGILANT Looking for ways to avoid fear
The three survival areas the limbic system responds to are FOOD, SEX, and SAFETY	Easily addicted to anything that reduces stress, fear, anxiety, or pain Problems in the 3 areas (FOOD, SEX, and SAFETY)
STORES highly charged emotional memories	Easily TRIGGERED by events similar to past hurts, traumas, fears, pleasures
Can OVERRIDE and even shut down the CONSCIOUS MIND	Overrides morals, values, good intentions with survival COMPULSIVE BEHAVIORS or reactions
Controls appetite, sex drive, sleep, mood, positive & negative outlook, motivation	ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, ISOLATION Problems with food, relationships, moods, addictions
Promotes BONDING (larger in women than men)	Problems with FEAR of TRUST, INTIMACY, RELATIONSHIPS, SEX Isolation, depression, codependency

* Adapted from Daniel Amen's book, *Change Your Brain, Change Your Life*. Times Books, 1988.

THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN/REWARD DEFICIENCY BRAIN

Events come through our senses and are fed into various parts of the brain. The limbic system colors or tags these events with degrees of response as either safe or dangerous. If tagged “dangerous” because of past trauma, either real or imagined, it reacts by creating anxiety or depression.

THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN/REWARD DEFICIENCY BRAIN

If the event is tagged as having to do with survival, the limbic system can create a focused craving for a behavior that has been associated with survival in the past. The craving focuses our attention on that behavior until we feel safe or normal again, thus, an addiction is created. Addiction is not about getting high, but a way to feel normal (free of stress).

THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN/REWARD DEFICIENCY BRAIN

The conscious mind, or cortex, learns to cooperate with the survival behavior (addiction) and protects it from being challenged by a filtering process called denial. The result is the addictive brain. When in a state of fear, the limbic system can act independently from your conscious mind. This explains why we do things we don't want to do.

THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN OVERVIEW

The limbic (addictive) part of the brain basically controls these areas: emotion, experiential learning and memory, dreaming, attention, pleasure, reward and arousal. It also controls the way we perceive emotional, motivational, sexual, and social behavior, including the formation of loving attachments. The limbic system not only controls the capacity to experience love and sorrow, but it governs and monitors our basic needs.

THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN OVERVIEW

This includes hunger and thirst, cravings for pleasure-inducing experiences such as drugs, food, sex, and other real or imagined needs. Anything that has to do with survival (our ability to cope) can become an addiction. The three main areas the survival part of our brain (the limbic system) is in control of and can become addicted to by creating cravings are: food, sex, and safety. Which of these areas do you struggle with?

THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN OVERVIEW

In our formative years, abuse, neglect, accidents, poverty, or any condition or chronic inescapable stress or fear can cause limbic problems and reactions. The three limbic responses to real or imagined survival (fear) are: fight (aggression) flight (running away) and freeze (going numb). Which do you tend to respond with?

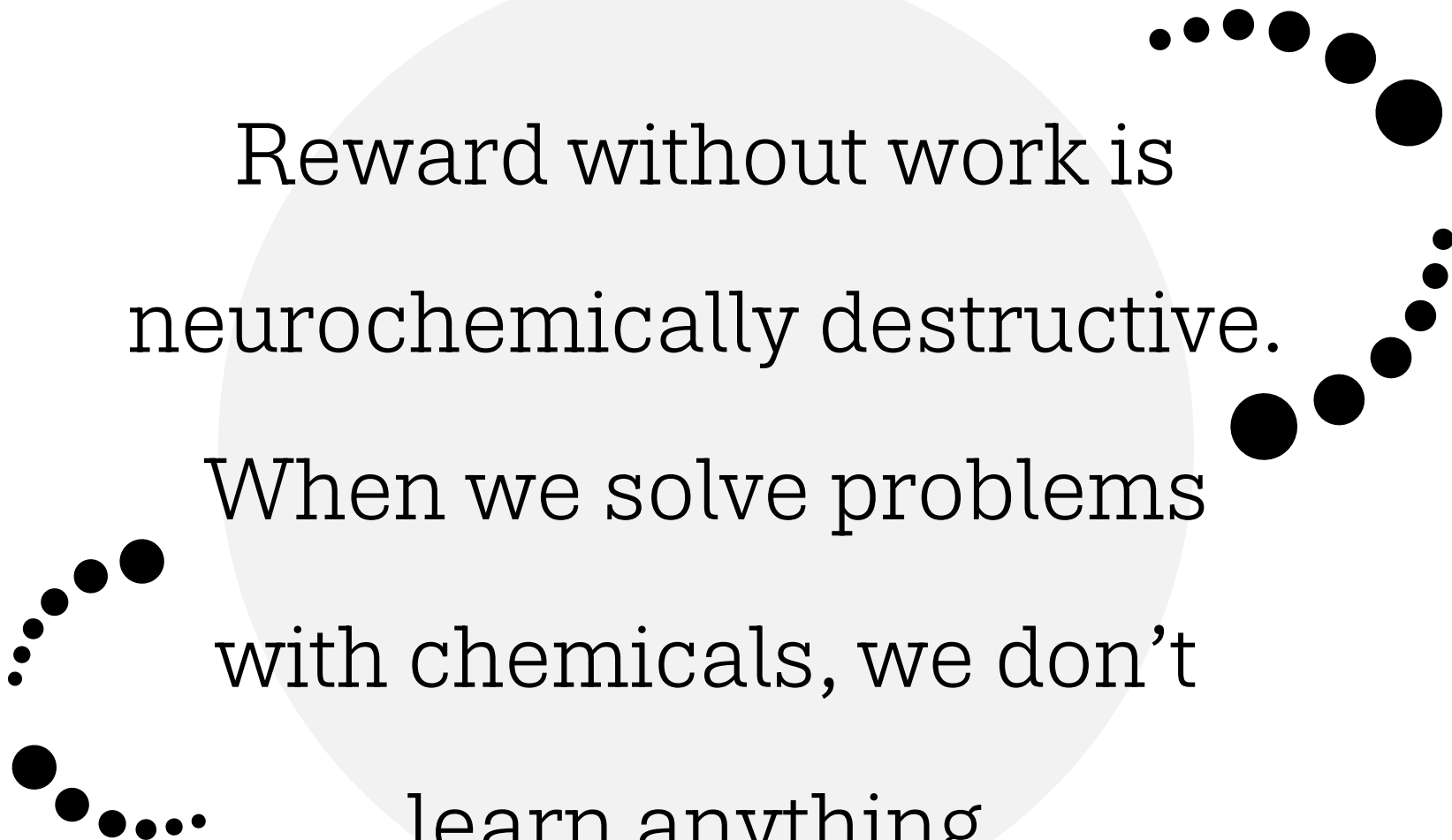
THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN OVERVIEW

The Limbic System is part of what the Bible calls the heart.

If you want to change destructive behaviors and emotions, you
must change your Heart.

THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN OVERVIEW

The Limbic System (the heart) is negatively programmed through painful experiences with people we trusted, especially in our formative years. Not trusting or being able to bond with others leads to fear, anxiety, loneliness, isolation and self gratification. Since the heart is negatively programmed through hurtful experiences with others, it must be healed through opposite experiences.



Reward without work is
neurochemically destructive.

When we solve problems
with chemicals, we don't
learn anything.

KEY *thought*

THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN OVERVIEW

Our brain can become conditioned to be hyper vigilant (super focused) on anything that can create a real or imagined feeling of well being or safety (freedom from stress and fear). The bottom line is that addicts don't chronically use to get high, they use to feel normal. Addiction is about feeling normal and being able to cope.

THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN OVERVIEW

When this survival part of the brain is damaged, the ability to concentrate, handle stress, and experience reward and pleasure is diminished. People with limbic problems are at high risk to become addicted to anything that can help them to function, feel safe, normal, or a sense of pleasure.

THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN OVERVIEW

So anything that makes us feel safe and reduces stress, raises coping neurochemicals in the Limbic System, causing the brain to associate it with survival, or feeling normal. The limbic system can equate painful or fearful emotions with death (the ability to cope and survive) and create a focused attention (craving) for what we did in the past to feel ok again.

THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN OVERVIEW

Cravings can become difficult or impossible to say no to. This whole process is mostly subconscious which is why we can't control addictive behaviors. The more the survival behavior is repeated, the more ingrained it becomes, resulting in a loss of control, thus an addiction. This why we do the very thing we don't want to do. Read Romans 7.

THE ADDICTIVE BRAIN OVERVIEW

The Limbic System has a memory system that records experiences that have to do with pleasure and reward and fear and pain. It sets up systems of thoughts, emotions, and reactions to avoid what ever caused fear and pain in the past. It also sets up systems to repeat whatever reduced fear and pain and produce a feeling of pleasure. Fear and pain, avoid it; pleasure and reward, do it again. Thus, the addictive brain.

DALE NEAL

ASCENT PROGRAM GRADUATE

INTERMISSION

EAT,
GO TO THE BATHROOM,
S T R E T C H

BELIEF SYSTEMS

**What you do comes out of your beliefs about yourself,
others, and God.**

BELIEF SYSTEMS

In order to have a new life, not just a change of destructive behavior, you must examine your current belief systems. The foundation of who you are and what you do comes out of your belief system, which includes those beliefs that drive destructive behaviors. So if you want to change your destructive behaviors, you must understand what emotions they are anesthetizing and what you believe that creates the emotion.

- Beliefs create emotions.

Emotions drive behaviors. ••

KEY *thought*

FALSE BELIEF SYSTEMS

Belief systems are important. Webster's Dictionary gives this definition for the word "belief": "to have trust in or confidence in what is true." When you have confidence and trust in something you thought was true but was actually a lie, you have a False Belief System (FBS). If you have a belief system that is true, and reality bears witness to it as truth, then you have a True Belief System (TBS).

FALSE BELIEF SYSTEMS

So, how do you know a true belief from a false one?

Look at the following chart to help you answer this question.

TRUE BELIEFS	FALSE BELIEFS
Are based on the WORD OF GOD: TRUTH and REALITY	Are based on FEAR or arise out of LOSS or PAIN
Increase the value and growth of an individual	Demean and diminish the value and growth of an individual
Are proven true through life experiences that edify both self and others	Are proven false by destructive, defensive behaviors and painful relationships
Result in SAFE, HEALTHY relationships	Result in SEPARATION and ISOLATION from others
Create PEACE and CONFIDENCE	Create ANXIETY and EXHAUSTION
Result in true emotions	Result in false emotions

While the above differences look easy to recognize,
separating **TRUE BELIEFS** from **FALSE BELIEFS** is very difficult.

FALSE BELIEF SYSTEMS

Some of your belief systems have developed long before you became conscious of them. You will believe your false beliefs to be true especially if you were told they were true by someone you trusted. False beliefs will not stand up to being challenged by others or by biblical truth, and you may become defensive when others challenge them.

PERSPECTIVES ON FALSE BELIEF SYSTEMS

Let's examine false beliefs from three different perspectives:

- 1. Where they come from**
- 2. The effect a false belief has on you and others**
- 3. How to change belief systems**

PROJECTED LIES

The False Belief Systems or lies that seem to affect people most are the ones from their childhood. These can come from two different sources, the first being lies that other people told you, either about yourself or your life. These are called “***projected lies.***” For example, your Mom told you: “You’re no good. You’re bad. You’re just like your drunken father. You’ll never amount to anything. You’re unattractive.”

PROJECTED LIES

**Projected lies are when others take their own hurts and fears
and project them onto someone else.**

PROJECTED LIES

As a child, you had no defenses for the projected lies told to you by an authority figure or a caregiver. Those lies went right into your heart and became truths or self-fulfilling prophecies that can continue to sabotage your attempts at success. If you were told you were bad and you believed you were bad, then you thought it was normal to do bad things through childhood, adolescence, and as an adult.

PROJECTED LIES

Lies told to you in childhood can make you unable to distinguish between having done something that is morally bad or having made an honest mistake. Projected lies can result in an inability to tell the difference between what you did and who you are, between having made a mistake and being stupid or a bad person.

Projected lies are what other
people tell you.

Survival lies are what you
tell yourself.

KEY *thought*

SURVIVAL LIES

The second source of lies that create False Belief Systems are **“*survival lies.*”** These are the lies people tell themselves as a **way to survive.** If you grew up in a family that was abusive, your needs may have been neglected. The very act of having a need made you vulnerable. As a vulnerable child, if you continued to have needs that did not get met, you got hurt over and over.

SURVIVAL LIES

In time, you came up with a way to stop being vulnerable in order to survive the hurt. You may have told yourself, “I don’t need anybody.” As a child, your needs were denied or punished, so you probably developed a belief to protect yourself that said, “I don’t need anyone or anything.” That survival lie developed into a False Belief System that may still control your adult life.

SURVIVAL LIES

Growing up with a belief system that says, “I don’t need anybody” can cause you to isolate yourself. Refusing to be vulnerable may make life less painful now, but will undermine your relationships in the future.

EFFECTS OF FALSE BELIEFS

Believing you don't need anyone results in loneliness and causes a pain dep in your heart and soul. This kind of pain results in some kind of compulsive behavior such as drugs, alcoholism, overeating, overspending, gambling, overworking, or acting out sexually. The list of coping behaviors is long and unique to each individual.

EFFECTS OF FALSE BELIEFS

If you subconsciously believe, “I don’t need anybody,” you will not be able to be close to people. If you’re not able to be close to people, you won’t be able to trust people. If you’re not able to trust people, you will be lonely, isolated, and angry.

Consequently, you will probably find a way to cope with the pain that may become compulsive.

EFFECTS OF FALSE BELIEFS

Many painful experiences in life are caused by both conscious and subconscious lies that you tell yourself. On page 43 of his book, Victory Over the Darkness, Neil T. Anderson says, “*No person can consistently behave in a way that is inconsistent with the way he perceives himself.*”

EFFECTS OF FALSE BELIEFS

In other words, if you have a belief system that says, “I’m a bad person,” your behavior will end up being consistent with that perception. It’s difficult to try to control a destructive behavior when the driving force beneath it is a subconscious False Belief System.

EXERCISE

COMMON FALSE BELIEF SYSTEMS WORKSHEET

TORRANCE ATKINSON

ASCENT PROGRAM GRADUATE

IDENTITY – THE DYNAMICS OF A CHANGED LIFE

As a human being, you are unique because you were created in the image of God. This is both a blessing and a responsibility. The blessing is that you were created to have intimate communion with God. He gave you the ability to choose right from wrong. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve rebelled and chose to go their own way.

IDENTITY – THE DYNAMICS OF A CHANGED LIFE

God is holy and therefore, rebellion separates you from Him and leaves you with an inability to communicate with God. God created you uniquely for intimacy, with others and with Him. It's not possible to have an intimate relationship without two-way communication.

IDENTITY – THE DYNAMICS OF A CHANGED LIFE

The central theme of the whole Bible is God's effort to communicate with us intimately and to guide our lives because He loves us.

IDENTITY – THE DYNAMICS OF A CHANGED LIFE

How does God communicate with you?

What's the last thing He said to you?

The Old Testament points out the futility of man's own efforts to live without God. The New Testament says God loves you and created a way for you to be restored to intimacy with God through the sacrifice of Jesus.

IDENTITY – THE DYNAMICS OF A CHANGED LIFE

Your own efforts to be free from guilt and obey His laws always end up as futile. The reality is that Jesus' death on the cross is the price God paid for rebellion so that you might have intimate communion and communication with Him again, restoring direction to your life.

“Out of God’s glorious riches, may He strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. Being rooted and established in love may you know His power together with the saints to grasp how high and deep is the love of Christ. To know his love that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory forever.”

Ephesians 3:16-20 NKJV

IDENTITY – THE DYNAMICS OF A CHANGED LIFE

Consciously or subconsciously, guilt deserves punishment and can sabotage success. When you start to be successful, you may not be able to receive it because you may believe you don't deserve it. It's hard to forgive ourselves. **Forgiveness is a gift from God represented by the cross of Christ.**

*“Be gracious to me, O God,
according to Thy lovingkindness;
according to the greatness of Thy
compassion blot out my
transgressions. Create in me a
clean heart, O God, and renew a
steadfast spirit within me.”*

Psalms 51:1, 10 NAS

THE PROBLEM OF CONTROL

If you're doing this workbook, you have demonstrated that when you're in control of your life, you end up being very destructive to yourself and to others. The key to your recovery is in understanding how this statement affects you:

If you're in control of your life, it ends up poorly. Therefore, you have to give up control.

THE PROBLEM OF CONTROL

To whom or what are you going to give control? That's the question. Before your spirit is alive and directed by God, it is easy to give control to things that you think will make you somebody and solve your problems. Fame, money, relationships, or image-makers such as fast cars or big houses have all failed. These cannot make you the kind of person you always wanted to be, nor can they free you from your addictions.

THE PROBLEM OF CONTROL

Remember this basic premise: “What you do comes out of who you are.” The material things you give your life may change your image on the outside, but how do you change on the inside? When the Spirit of the living God reunites with your spirit, God will begin to change your life. God loves you, cares about you, and has a plan for your life, which His Spirit will help you accomplish if you give Him control.

THE PROBLEM OF CONTROL

Jesus came so that God could intimately guide your life again. The Bible calls the false things that you've attached to "idols". Process Three identifies those false idols and how they have controlled your life, leading you into a path of destruction and addiction.

“Then God spoke all these words: ‘I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me.’”

Exodus 20:1-3 NAS

WHO/WHAT DO YOU LIVE FOR?

Recovery is a process of replacing those idols with the True God. He can enable you to become the kind of person He created you to be. In this Process, you will acknowledge and name the things that have replaced God in your life. These attachments are powerful because they are probably subconscious. You cannot pray or ask for help about things that you can't name.

WHO/WHAT DO YOU LIVE FOR?

By working with your counselor to identify both the conscious and subconscious things that you have attached your identity to, much of their power will be broken. Whatever you use to come can become an idol.

WHO/WHAT DO YOU LIVE FOR?

The good news is that where you have given power away, you can take it back. The bad news is that these attachments can become your primary relationship in life. In other words, you choose people, places and things that will not interfere with, but will support, your addictive behavior.

FIN

GENESIS COACH TRAINING



Livestream on Zoom
May 4 - 8, 2026

with

Dean Perry

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



www.genesisprocess.org/events

The *Genesis* Process



**Live Stream
Genesis Coach Training**

May 4 - 8, 2026

Mon – Thurs: 7:30 – 3:30
Fri: 7:30 – 11:30

Times are PACIFIC DAYLIGHT
TIME
Start times for other time zones:

10:30 EDT
9:30 CDT
8:30 MDT