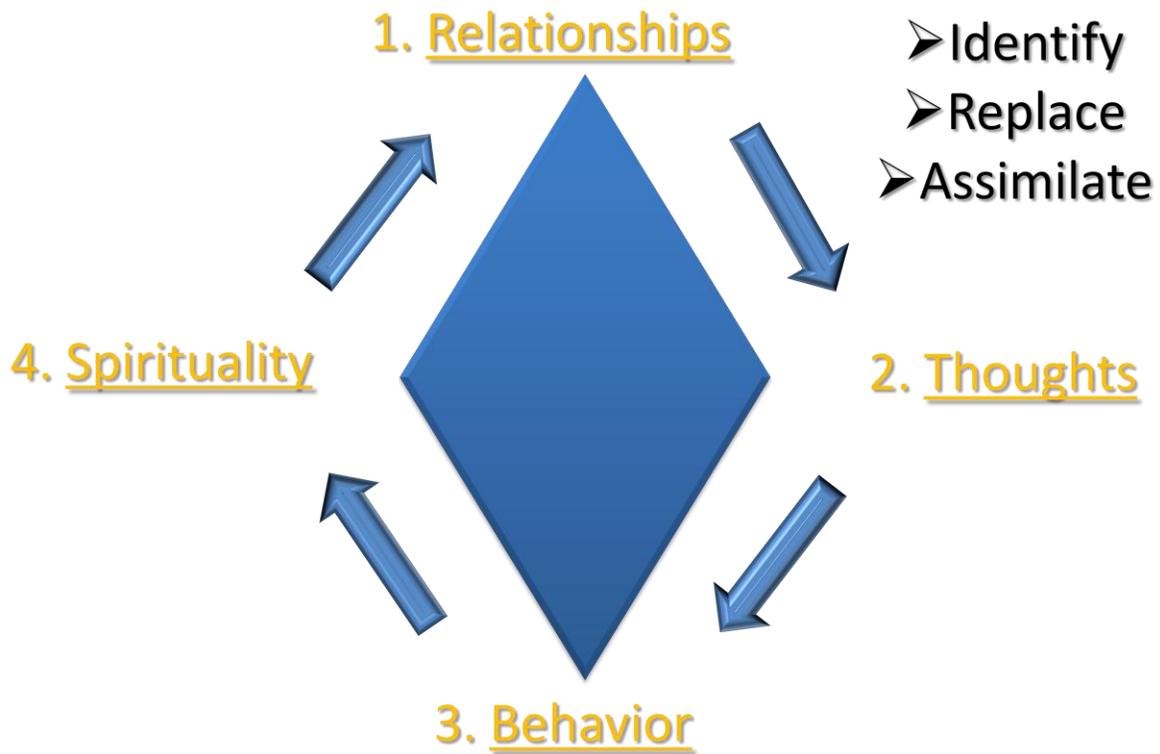


# *The Diamond Model :*

*For Assessment, Treatment, and Prevention of Depression and Other Emotional Disorders*



## Triggers:

- *Grief*
- *Conflict*
- *Transition*
- *Lack of Interpersonal Skills*

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- *Abuse*
- *Loss*
- *Disappointment*

## *The Diamond Model : Identifying and Stopping “The Distress Cycle”*

The Diamond is a comprehensive way of looking at depression and other emotional disorders. It first identifies triggers and contributors to emotional distress; then identifies practical solutions to resolve each of these factors, and to prevent further episodes of such distress. *The Diamond is useful, then, for **three basic functions** in intervening with problem emotions:*

- 1) **Assessment** (*Identifying the blend of factors creating and maintaining the distress*)
- 2) **Treatment** (*Guiding recovery and rehabilitation of each of these factors*)
- 3) **Prevention** (*Preventing future episodes of emotional distress by attention to these factors*)

The points of the Diamond represent the **four factors** that create and maintain the distress cycle:

- 1) **Relationships** – *Emotional distress tends to be triggered by one or more situations in the individual’s life* – most often in the context of relationships. Such **relationship triggers** may include:
  - **Grief** – Losing a significant other, through death, divorce, separation, disability, etc.
  - **Conflict** – Either with a significant other (most often one’s spouse), or within oneself.
  - **Transition** – Even positive changes (graduation, retirement, etc.) can trigger distress.
  - **Lack of Interpersonal Skills** – Interferes, over and over, with effective relationships.
  - **Abuse** – Sexual, physical, verbal, or emotional – all very potent triggers for distress.
  - **Loss** – Losing something you valued – an opportunity, a treasured possession, etc.
  - **Disappointment** – Reality falling short of cherished hopes and expectations.
- 2) **Thoughts** – *How a person interprets the trigger experience/s determines how long and in what way it will affect them.* Negative thoughts and beliefs about the experience can produce enduring negative effects, prolonging the painful impact of the trigger – sometimes even for years or decades.
- 3) **Behavior** – Beliefs are inevitably expressed in behavior; and *negative thoughts provoke negative behavior that inevitably expand the scope of the original distress, and make it worse.*
- 4) **Spirituality** – *Negative thoughts and behavior create negative spiritual impact* – loss of meaning; loss of trust in God; isolating from God and others; religious inactivity; spiritual self-doubt, etc.
- 5) **Relationships** – *The distress cycle ends where it began – in relationships.* Now, however, the pain of the trigger experience, negative thoughts and behavior, and spiritual disruption create **relationship effects** that obstruct effective relationships – most often, through the distressed individual **turning against** or **turning away** from others. *If uninterrupted, the distress cycle then continues and deepens – in that individual, and often in family members and others impacted by the “relationship effects.”*

**To stop the distress cycle, each factor must be carefully attended to.** Trigger experiences must be identified and resolved. Negative thoughts and behaviors must be identified and replaced with healthier alternatives. Spirituality and relationships must be healed. These modifications occur through **three steps of change**:  
1) **Identify** (*a problem situation, trigger, thought, behavior, etc.*) 2) **Replace** (*with a healthier alternative*);  
3) **Assimilate** (*until the healthier habit becomes natural and comfortable*). This **“IRA”** process, dealing with one element after another over the process of time, contributes to step-by-step, sustainable improvement.