

Self-Harm: A Single Construct?

Dr. Richard Booth



...And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!



Invitation to notice



MINI MOVIE

THE
MARSHMALLOW
TEST



Self control (such as delaying gratification
or resisting urges)

Can be learned

CHANGE ORIENTATION

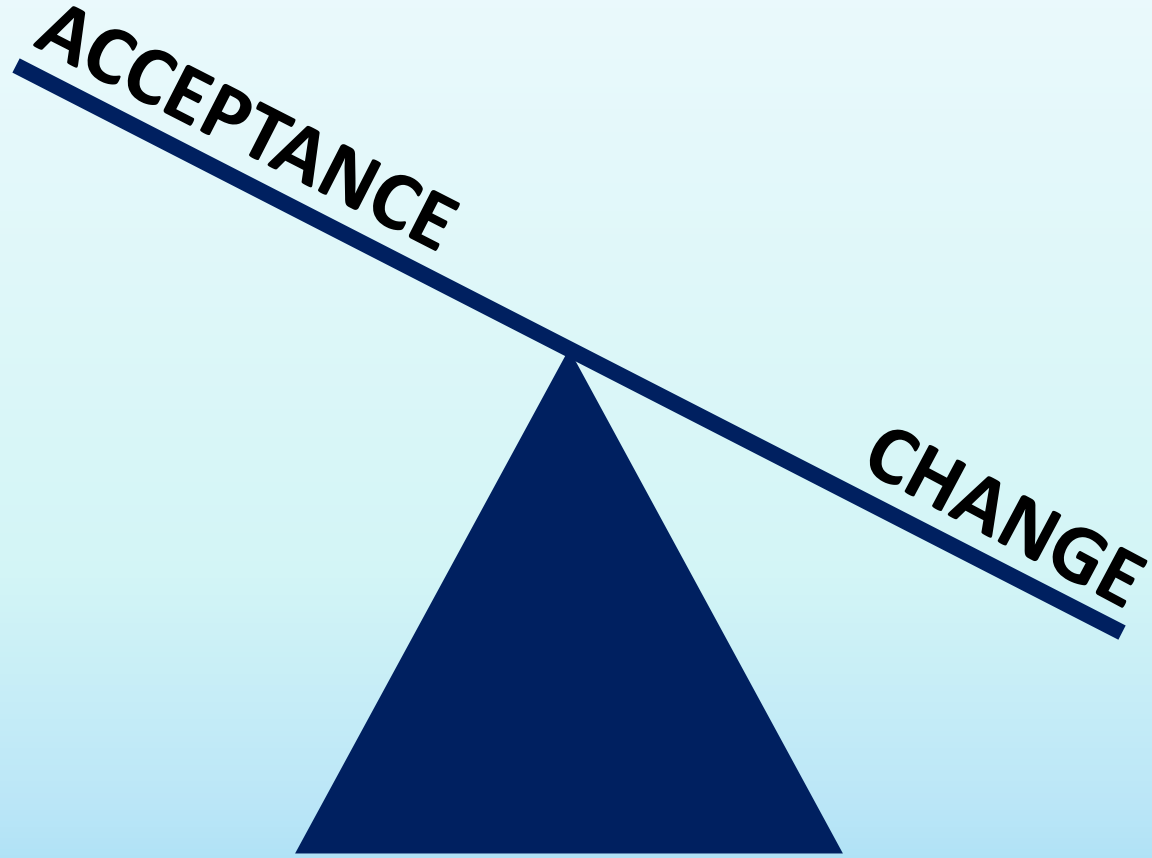
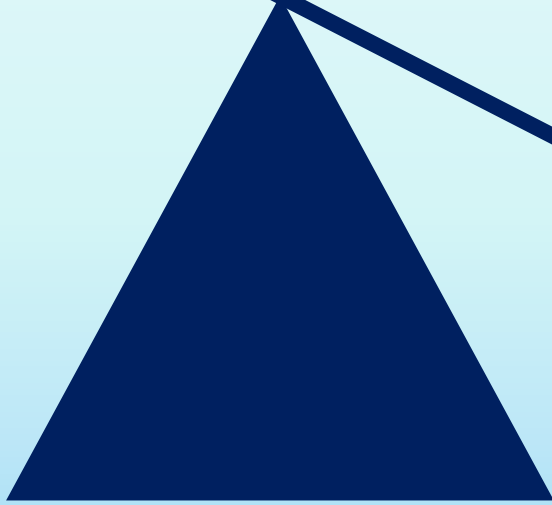
“I am the problem”

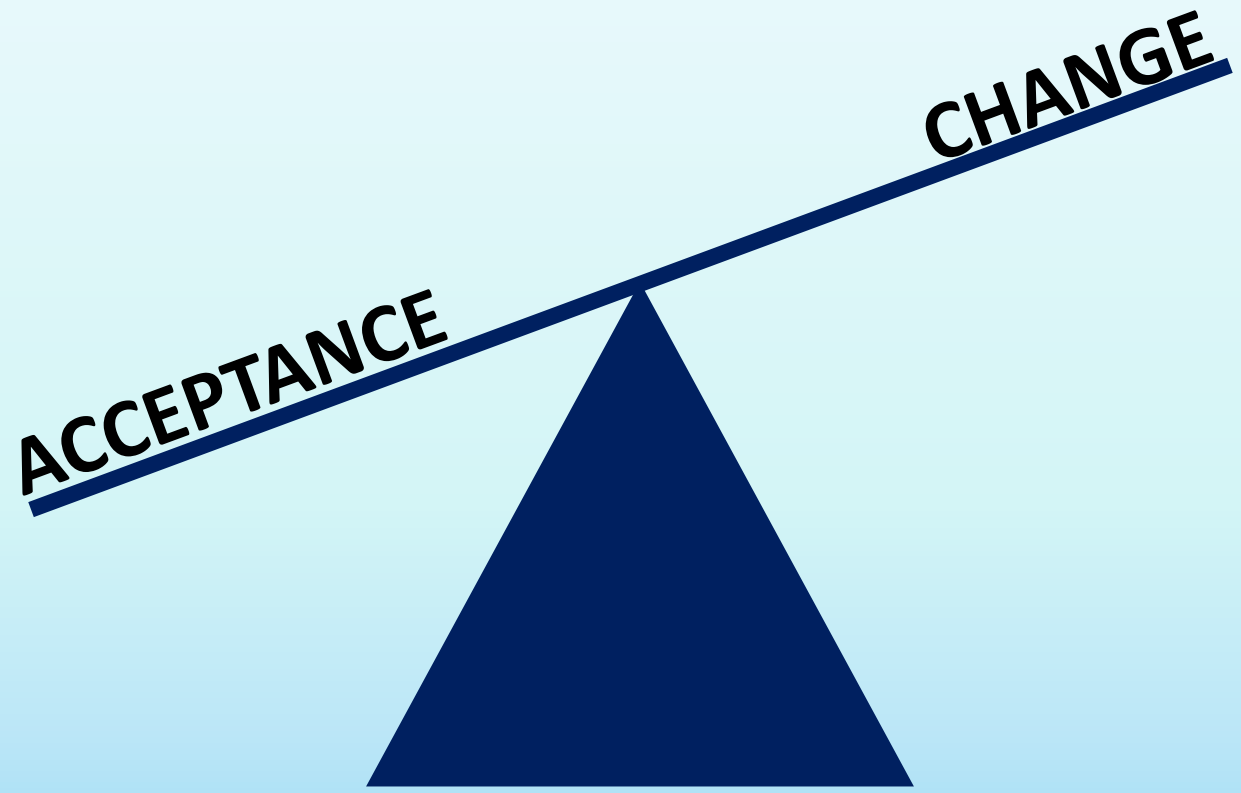
ACCEPTANCE ORIENTATION

“I came here to get help”

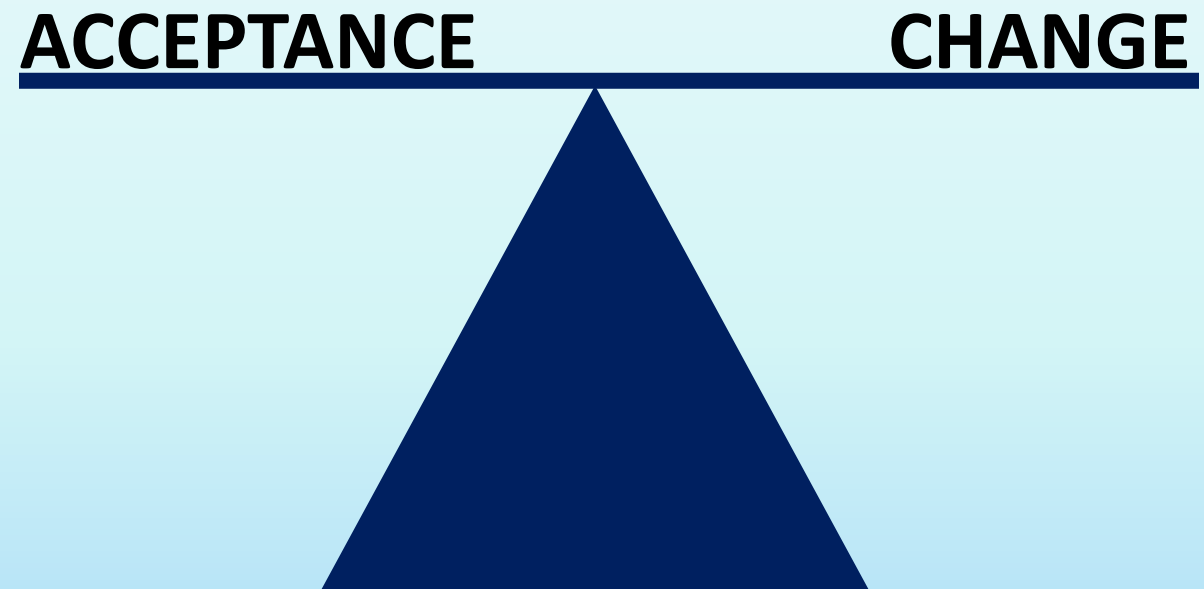
ACCEPTANCE

CHANGE





Finding a Middle Path



The person is doing the best they can

.....and at the same time

They need to do better, try harder and be more motivated to change

St. Pat's

Skills only

Input of the group

Self harm: A self-control deficit?

Undercontrol

Overcontrol

Excessive Intimacy



Aloof & Distant

Overwhelming Emotion



Inhibited Emotion

Out of Control

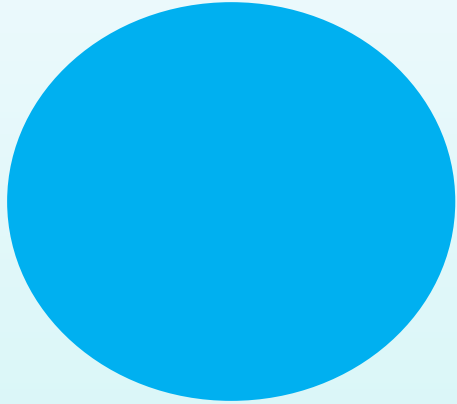


Rigid Control

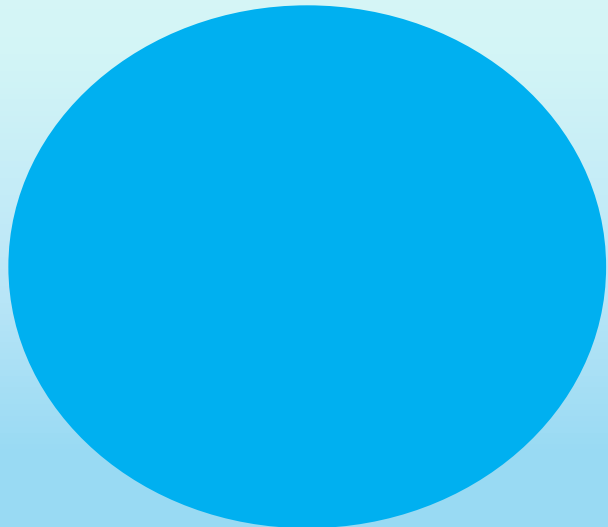


= experienced emotion

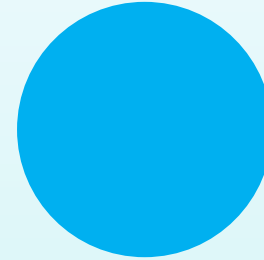
ANGER



SADNESS



FEAR



JOY



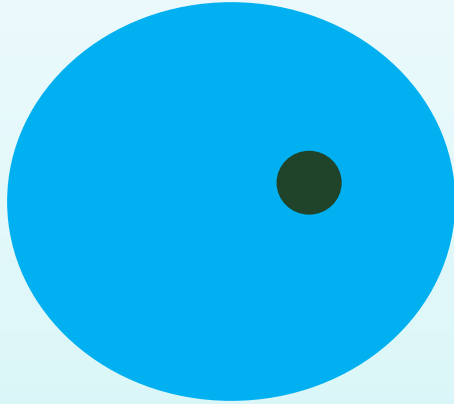


= experienced emotion

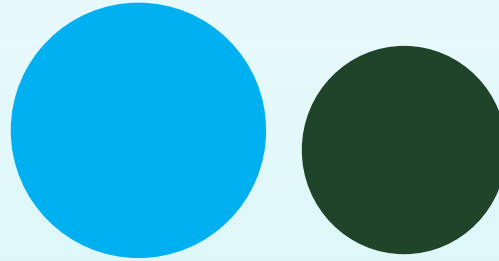


= expressed emotion

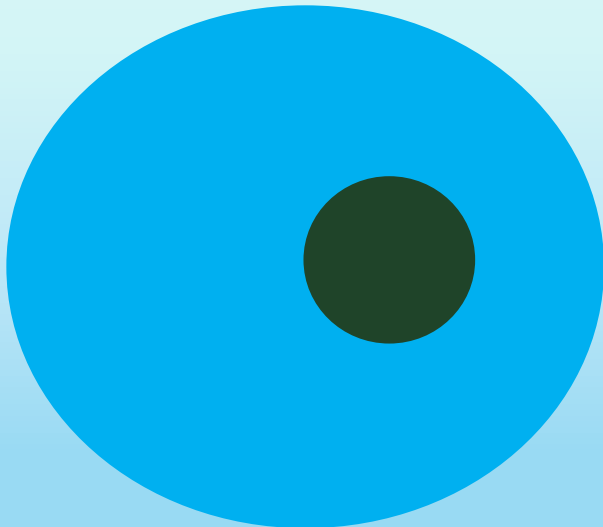
ANGER



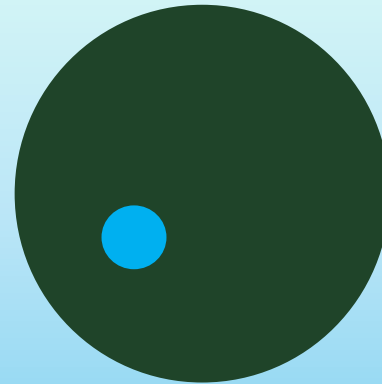
FEAR



SADNESS



JOY



How many are self-harming?

Undercontrol → 80%

Overcontrol → 20% Private

Often Planned

Follows period of overcontrol

Super risky

Undercontrol

Crisis → Big stuff

Overcontrol

Just big stuff



- Self harm serves different functions for different people at different times

- The main function of self harm is to manage unbearable emotion

- Always consider the seesaw

- Start to think of distinctions such as emotional overcontrol and emotional undercontrol

- Self harm is hard for all involved

