

Autobiographical Time Line

Go to the Art Room and get a large sheet of butcher or art paper and use felt tip markers to write legibly.

On the paper, draw a long line that takes up most of the paper.

In increments of 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, etc., every five years/put a short vertical line through the long line.

Begin with the earliest event you can remember from early childhood and mark that on your time line. You can use a symbol or word phrase to denote that memory. Continue to add events throughout the various phases of your life:

- Preschool
- Elementary school
- Teenage years
- Up to age 17.

Only include adult trauma if you perceive it as especially severe.

Take your time and give yourself some breaks if necessary. Talk with peers and staff if you begin to feel overwhelmed.

Things to include will represent themes of neglect, abandonment, abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, intellectual, spiritual), being put down, etc.

At the bottom of the page, list the following:

- Positive and negative characteristics about Mom, Dad or Major Caregiver

- Your family rules (be perfect, etc.)

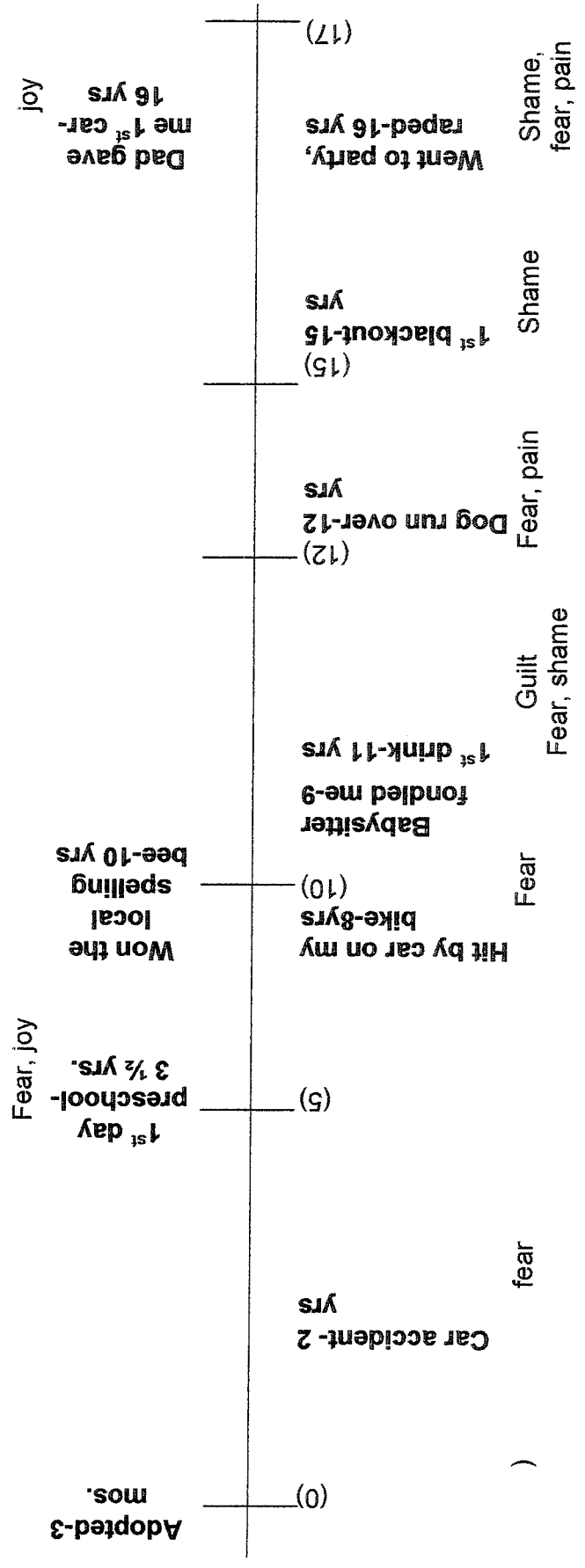
- Your family roles (hero, scapegoat, caretaker, etc.)

- Your "marching orders" - what you believe your family "wanted you to do with your life".

Dad: Monday

Time Line

Mom Kind Loving Alcoholic Raged Dad Funny Unavailable Distant
 My Family Role Hero Scapegoat Lost Child
 Marching Orders "do as we say, not as we do" "get good grades and get married"
 Birth Order 1st born Out of three



The timeline is asking you to look at you life, ages 0 – 17 yrs, and indicate memorable events in your life. These events may be positive as well as negative. It is helpful if you indicate any feelings that you remember having at the time of the event. We want you to indicate any patterns of use/abuse with regard to your addiction of choice. As you present, describe your parent's reaction(s) to these events.