



## Outside In

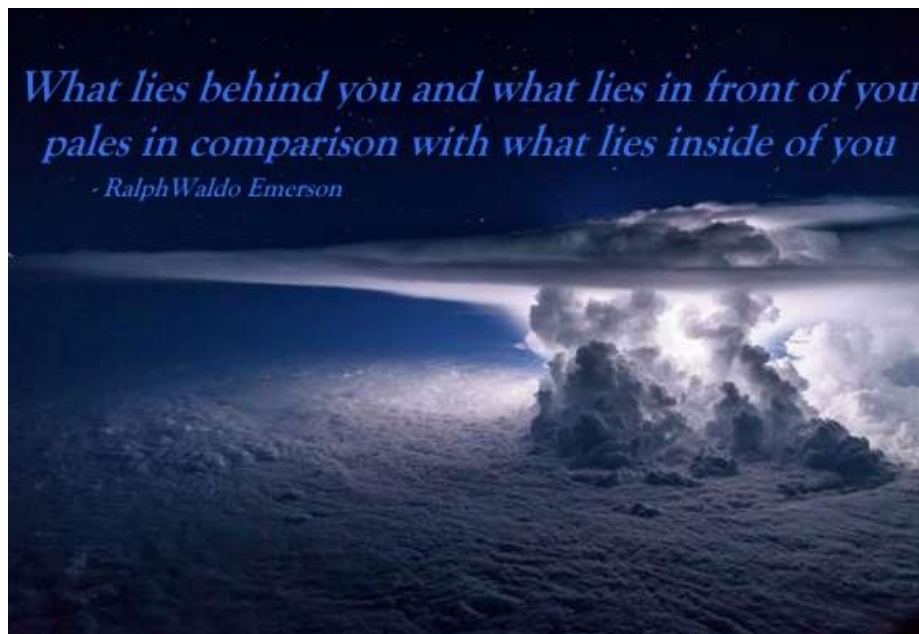
To get started, think about a situation in your life where you were doing everything right on the outside, following the rules and listening to suggestions, but at the same time inside you were dying to do what you knew is wrong. Some examples:

- ❖ *Staying faithful in a relationship but inside thinking about leaving or cheating*
- ❖ *Being a valued employee at work, but inside hating the job and fantasizing about quitting*
- ❖ *Abstaining from using a substance or other behavior but still inside yearning to go back to your old life again*

These examples highlight the difference between what someone can show on the outside while what is really still going on ***inside***.

Change on the outside is an excellent start and should be commended. It is better to be doing the right thing even if part of you still leans toward the wrong thing. However, real, lasting change, eventually requires change to happen with the person who you are *inside*.

- ❖ **Changing on the inside: Discuss: What does that mean to you?**



Changing on the inside is not easy, especially when it comes to substance use issues and addiction.

Coming up with a plan ahead of time can be a lifesaver.

Complete and the following three point plan on the following page:



## Changing from the Inside: *Plan ABC*



**Plan A: STOP - Break the pattern of negative thinking** – Thoughts and desires can be strong and at times relentless. It takes practice and persistence but it is so important to learn to quit entertaining ideas and fantasies that you know deep down are no good for you

- ❖ **Distractions** – What thoughts, might still pop up in your head that may not be so good for you?

**PLAN** - What can you do to get those thoughts out of your head?



**Plan B: THINK - If you can't escape a negative thought or desire then think it all the way through to the end** – You probably have surely heard this before but that is because it works: If you were to follow through with the desire to do something you know is not good, where might it lead?

*Regret?....Guilt?...Consequences?....All of the above?*

- ❖ **Looking Backward** – Do you ever feel yourself romanticizing the “good old days” of getting high?
- ❖ **Future Fantasies** – Do you ever catch yourself allowing your mind to think about scenarios where you could get high again and not get caught?

**PLAN** – *If you allow yourself to go down the wrong path, where will it lead you?*



**Plan C: GET HELP - Don't do this alone** - This plan is so well known but so underutilized. Countless individuals have had the experience of how critical it can be to get help before it's too late. *Talk to someone who has a clear head before you do something you regret.*

- ❖ **Obstacles** - What might get in the way of you seeking help when you need it?

**PLAN** – *Who can you turn to for help before it's too late? How can you remove obstacles?*