



# Why We Suffer: A Western Way to Understand and Let Go of Unhappiness

*Peter Michaelson*

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The human mind is hungry for truth and the human spirit is starving for consciousness. This book is a big mouthful of high-protein mental nutrition. People are ready now to acquire the knowledge that puts an end to misery and failure.

Psychotherapist Peter Michaelson's insightful book reveals and explains the human tendency to recycle and replay unresolved negative emotions that produce suffering and self-defeat.

Most readers will immediately realize that this deep psychological knowledge is entirely new to them.

We are, in a sense, addicted to our suffering. How is that possible? The notion seems preposterous.

Unfortunately, it's true—and this book shows exactly how most adults, in varying degrees, continue unwittingly and compulsively to experience and recycle unresolved emotions.

Whatever form your unhappiness takes, the knowledge in *Why We Suffer* can save you from failure, self-defeat, and misery. Are you depressed? Do you feel confused, overwhelmed, disappointed, angry, and dispirited? Perhaps you're failing at some of your endeavors and feel you can't get your intelligence into high gear. Are you lacking in self-regulation? Some of us just feel like we're stranded on the wrong planet.

*Why We Suffer* makes it possible to see exactly how we produce this suffering. The book brings our psyche into sharp focus, revealing the precise psychological mechanisms at the heart of human dysfunction.

This book also disputes the psychological establishment's contention that emotional suffering is caused mainly by such factors as cultural clashes, human malice, genetic anomalies, and brain biochemistry. The knowledge in *Why We Suffer* empowers individuals to resolve their suffering by showing precisely how inner conflict operates in our psyche.

The content is practical, specific, and scientific, and it popularizes the most powerful knowledge from psychology. The writing is polished and the ideas simplified, and the material, while intellectually stimulating, can be read and understood by a high-school student.

The knowledge in this book is based mainly on the work of Edmund Bergler M.D. (1899-1962), a psychoanalytic psychiatrist who wrote 25 books and almost 300 articles published in professional journals. He is largely unknown because the deep knowledge he produced is covered up by our psychological defenses.

Bergler's writing, which is laden with clinical terminology, does put difficult demands on readers. In a sense, Michaelson, a former journalist and science writer, is his translator. He communicates Bergler's ideas with a skill he has honed over many years of teaching these concepts and writing about them. (Revised and updated, December, 2014.)

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