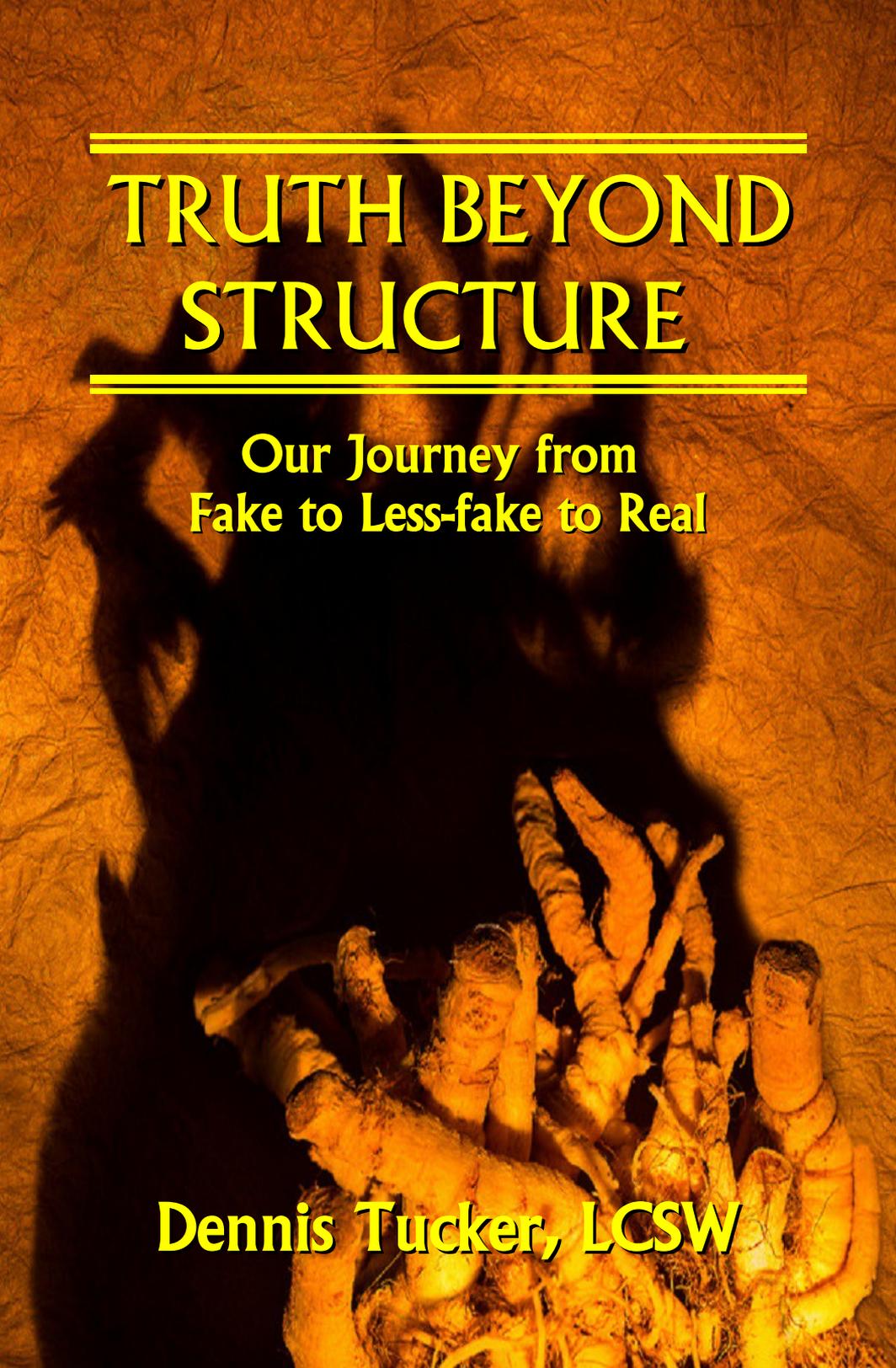

TRUTH BEYOND STRUCTURE

**Our Journey from
Fake to Less-fake to Real**

Dennis Tucker, LCSW

The background of the cover is a textured, brownish-gold surface, possibly paper or fabric. A large, dark shadow of a hand is cast across the upper and middle portions of the cover. The hand is positioned as if holding a bundle of sticks or roots, which are visible in the lower half of the image. The sticks are light brown and appear to be bundled together. The overall lighting is warm and dramatic, with the shadow of the hand being the most prominent feature.

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LESS-FAKE TO REAL**

*By
Dennis Tucker, LCSW*

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INTRODUCTION

How do you get someone from point A to point B in their journey of life? As a therapist this is a question that I have had to review for my entire professional career. It is a very important question, and demands serious contemplation. In addition to this question, sometimes I find that I have to talk to my clients about how they can help someone else make needed changes, whether that person is a family member, friend, partner, or another individual who is dear to them. I can generally give pointers pretty easily, but I find it hard to give them a very larger over-reaching perspective – that is, until now.

Recently I came across an old analogy which hit me like a ton of bricks. I was contemplating the differences between 'real' and 'fake' when I was meeting with a client. I will talk about her in a later chapter, but she was perplexed about her ex-husband and whether or not she was crazy for not forgiving him. As I strained over trying to understand her dilemma I realized even though he 'looked' responsible that he really wasn't. You see, there is a difference between outward looks and inward truth. Her ex-partner looked good, but really wasn't. No doubt, I am being overly harsh on him, which is not fair or right, but for the sake of simplification I am speaking this way. Her mind couldn't see the difference, but her heart could. We spent the session trying to sort through this confusion of what to accept. Believe it or not, what I am saying here is that we were seeking to judge between real and fake. I told her what was real, but I didn't have any great model through which to communicate my awareness to her. Furthermore, I was also certain that her former husband completely thought he was being sincere. You see, I worked with him too as the couple was trying to get back together. I realized that what he thought was real actually wasn't; rather, it was an illusion appearing to be real.

While the experience was fresh in my mind and I was excited about having such a starkly obvious (to me) example of the 'real' versus 'fake' dilemma, I remembered an old analogy called 'Plato's Cave'. I looked it up again, and I saw that it fit precisely with my experience. Voila! I found the schema that I was looking for.

You may be asking 'What is this Plato's Cave you are talking about?' Allow me to explain. Plato was a philosopher and a writer of

dialogues on truth, politics, and how life ought to be lived. He was the student of Socrates, though he had his own views and opinions. Plato was very interested in what was deemed to be 'real' and 'fake' and had his own ideas on determining what they were through his theory of Forms. That theory basically says non-physical forms (or ideas) are the most accurate representations of reality. He taught that much of what we see around us isn't real, but we don't know it. (Doesn't this sound like what I was just describing about the ex-husband?) One way he taught this was through an analogy, which goes something like this:

PLATO'S CAVE

Imagine a world of people who have their heads fastened in clamps, gazing endlessly at the wall of a large dark cave. This is our world! The masses watch images projected onto the cave wall from an unseen fire which is somewhere behind them. The multitudes see the images as mere shadows without connection to other things of substance; yet, they think the images are real. So the people watch the movement of the shadows and act according to what they see. But, on occasion, a few among the masses are able to break away from their clamps. Somehow they escape the vices which hold their heads to look only in one direction. These few then wander around in the cave. To their amazement, they see a fire which blazes brightly. They also see that the shadows projected on the wall are the result of objects between the fire and the cave's wall. For the first time, they witness that the shadows are not what is real and that the lighted objects are. Once they see this, their view of reality changes!

The eyes of the liberated few at first hurt due to the intense luster of the flames as they are not used to its light. Some of them even wander back to their head clamps as the pain of the flame is too much. Others adjust to their new reality and find satisfaction in the knowledge that shadows come from the objects lighted by the fire, rather than existing of their own accord. Yet, over time some of these few begin to question whether or not the objects are indeed 'real'. After obtaining these objects for themselves, handling them, and seeing their connection to both the shadows and the flame, they begin to look for something else - something less hollow, empty, and more inwardly satisfying. These few then begin to search for what is 'real'. They wander further and further away from the flames, even exploring side tunnels till at last they see an outer light. Sensing this other light, they follow it till they see an exit to the cave. A light, far brighter than fire,

lies beyond the cave! What could be its source? As they draw nearer to the exit their eyes burn. Some turn back into the caves darkness to avoid the pain, but others continue forward till they burst forth to an outer world, a world brilliantly illuminated by the light of the sun. Then they see things as they really are! Not just things satisfying to the eyes, but satisfying to the heart as well; things with form and substance, different than the shadows and the objects found in the cave; yet, also strangely similar. For the first time, they see that much within the cave is illusion and pretense. As they see these things, their view of reality changes yet again!

Over time, these few desire to go back into the cave. Not out of pain from the light, but out of desire to bring others forward to the brilliant radiance. In this way, others may also break free from the deceits of the cave and find the reality of an outer world. Be that as it may, when these few return they are often hated, called crazy, and are even attacked or punished. Such is the nature of the dark cavern!

In this book, I will use Plato's Cave, to show a depiction for helping people get from point A to point B in their lives. Point A and point B represent a place where someone is, and where they need to be for their own happiness; yes, but also for the benefit of others, including society. Point A also represent something believed that is 'fake', where point B is seen as reality's truth. To do this, I will use the cave analogy to show that what is 'fake' is often perceived to be 'real'. In fact, I will show three different views of reality, all of which are perceived to be real by those experiencing them, but where only one of them actually is. These dissimilar paradigms seem to have a progressive, ladder-climbing aspect to them, where one 'transcends' to the next level when they are ready for it. I think the stair stepping nature of these realities occur because there is something inside us which is seeking for 'truth', and at some point an individual becomes aware that what they have known has been a 'lie'. In other words, there is something within us that has the capacity to discern 'real' from 'fake'. Thus, we are on a journey which takes us from fake, to less-fake, and finally to what is real.

These diverging views of reality emotionally separate people from each other as they have fairly rigid dividers between them. Occasionally, individuals can break free of these dividers, but there is always great pain involved. Often times, the pain of crossing the dividers sends some people back to their former views, though others actually

crossover. In addition, many may be stuck in transition between the different worlds.

I will discuss the need for 'structure' in helping people bridge their first major crossing from one reality to the next. Such transition frees us from the imprisonment of merely looking at shadows on the wall, and shows us our first glance at 'real' objects. After exploring the meaning of the cave's flames and objects, we will see that something important is missing; yet, this missing something cannot be seen with the eyes. Despite the luster of the objects, over time, a sense of hollowness increases, causing some to explore the borders of the cave till at last a way out is perceived. Then, I will discuss the need of perceiving with the heart to help people bridge their second major crossing in reality. In this new reality, the flame is replaced by the light of the sun. The sun will reveal the missing element not found in the cave, which allows those of the outer world to see reality without illusion. Such sight is a game changer! It is the 'truth beyond structure' for which this book is named. It is the point C, which lies beyond both point A, and point B, where A and B, though once seeming to be real, were all along just illusion.

Now, let's go to the first chapter. In it, I address the 'shadows on the wall' of Plato's Cave. The dark vestiges suggest certain things about the nature of reality and what to expect from the world at large. It is a reality of 'dog eat dog', and where people use each-other in one-sided relationships. Such views have long lasting results and can hardly be shaken once they are believed. Over time these people, believing such shadows, will destroy themselves and others around them unless they are somehow able to break free from their confining head clamps and see something more.