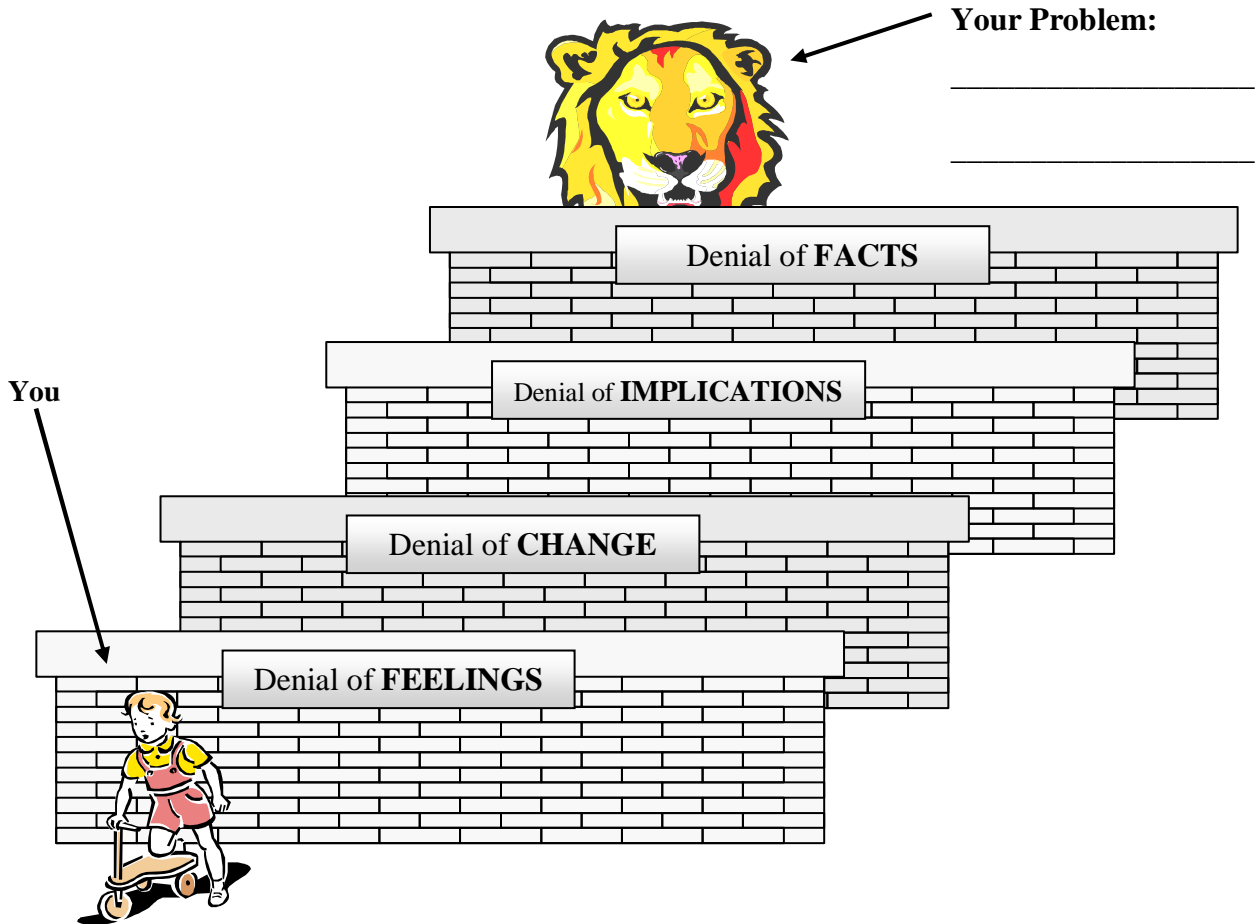


# Denial Defense System



## Describing the walls of denial:

1. Denial of **FACTS**: Most conscious form of denial. *"No, Officer I haven't been drinking."*
2. Denial of **IMPLICATION**: Less fully conscious. *"The doctor says I do have an inflamed liver but it doesn't mean I'm an alcoholic. It just means I need to slow down on the drinking."*
3. Denial of **CHANGE**: Less conscious. Main strategy is to shift responsibility, to side step blame. *"If you want me, this is the way I am! Take it or leave it."* *"I come from a family that drinks hard, you knew that when you met me."* Etc. The idea is to have others drop all expectations for changes
4. Denial of **FEELINGS**: This is the least conscious level of denial and the last line of defense between the person and emotional crisis. Underlying feelings of fear, despair, shame, guilt etc., are avoided by defensive behaviors (shutting down, repression and primary denial, dissociating, splitting). We can use other strategies that create chaos and powerful distractions that block out disturbing feelings. Getting angry or raging chronically can protect us from disturbing feelings as well.

## Positive Features of Denial:

1. It puts off the problem thereby buying us extra time to get ready to face it. We need to put our finger on external and internal resources.
2. It helps us hold it together. The precipitating problem is bad enough. If we fall apart the problem can turn into a crisis. It is important to stay internally organized (put together).
3. Remember, everyone uses healthy levels of denial every day. We all use filters to block out things that would otherwise disable us from even going to the grocery stores in our cars.
4. Denial is not our home; it is just a temporary blink to help us prepare to face the problem.