

DARK PSYCHOLOGY

7 Books in 1

Everything You Need to Know About Manipulation, Mind Control, Brainwashing, NLP, Persuasion, Hypnosis, Emotional Influence

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DARK PSYCHOLOGY AND MANIPULATION

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INTRODUCTION



The combination of dark psychology and manipulation is perhaps the most sinister, malevolent, evil, and damaging form of controlling behavior. It can be life-threatening to the victim. It is characterized by extreme harmfulness and premeditated deception.

This book aims to give some understanding of the dark psychology and manipulation process. It explains how people can be induced into doing things that are harmful to themselves or others. Understanding what is happening in such situations can help break the cycle of control. It will also help prevent such situations from happening to another person again if it has happened to you at some stage in your life.

There is mounting concern about the rise in controlling behavior by people in positions of trust such as teachers, religious leaders, politicians, and employers. Some unscrupulous people use creative mind games to control others for their own gain. This can include forcing someone to do things against their will or stealing their money or property. It can also include more serious abuse such as rape or even murder.

Such acts go way beyond bullying, which can be a passing phase for some perpetrators. Dark psychology and manipulation instead involves long-term abuse and the deliberate use of false information to deceive a victim into believing that they are immune to being exploited by another person.

Many forms of mind control involve the suppression or blocking of information to the conscious mind of the victim. This enables them to be exploited by unscrupulous people.

Examples of Dark Psychology and Manipulation Include:

a) Being forced into doing things against your will for no apparent reason
b) Having your money or possessions stolen by manipulating you into giving them to another person for no apparent reason
c) Being exploited for sex by a person that claims to love you but in reality does not care at all about you
d) Being forced to take illegal drugs by being told that they will help you with an illness
e) Being forced into illegal activities or being forced to keep silent about them
f) Being deceived into going along with something because you are led to believe it is for your own good or the good of others
g) Being forced to not tell anyone about a situation because you are being told that it is for a good and noble cause
h) Being deceived into thinking that a certain person would never manipulate you because they are your friend, relation, or religious leader
i) Being told that if you leave a bad situation or relationship, then something worse may happen to you
j) Being denied help because of such things as your age, gender, religion, or culture
k) Being told that you are the only person that can save yourself
l) Being encouraged to stay in a bad situation because it is less stressful than leaving it

If you are involved in any of these situations, then this book may be able to help you. It explains some of the techniques that can be used in these situations.

This book will mainly describe dark psychology and manipulation from the victim's point of view. However, there are also examples of how such methods can be used by perpetrators to exploit others for their own gain.

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CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS DARK PSYCHOLOGY AND HOW DOES IT WORKS



What is Dark Psychology?

Psychology underpins everything in our lives, from advertising to finance, crime to religion, and even from hate to love. Someone who can understand these psychological principles holds the key to human influence.

Learning all the different principles of psychology is not necessary. Start with the lessons on these pages, and you'll have a solid foundation. You have to be able to read people, understand what makes them tick, and understand why they may react in ways that may not be normally expected.

If only a few people understand psychology and how the human mind works, why is it so important to understand? Those who know how the human mind works can use that power and knowledge against you.

Dark Psychology Tactics That Are Used Regularly

Love Flooding

This includes buttering up, praising, or complimenting people to get them to comply with what you want. If you want someone to help you move some items into your home, you may use love flooding to make them feel good, making it more likely that they will help you. A dark manipulator could also make the other person feel attached to them and then get them to do things they may not normally do.

Lying

Recounting a fictitious version of the situation. It can also involve a partial truth or exaggeration.

Love denial

This one can be particularly hard on the victim because it can make them feel lost and abandoned by the manipulator. This includes withholding affection and love until you can get what you want out of the victim.

Withdrawal

This is when the victim is given the silent treatment or is avoided until they meet the other person's needs.

Restricting choices

The manipulator may give their victims access to some options, but they do this to distract them from the options they don't want the victim to make.

Semantic manipulation

This is a technique where the manipulator will use some commonly known words that have accepted meanings by both parties in a conversation. But then they will tell the victim, later on, that they had meant something completely different when they used it.

Reverse psychology

This is when you tell someone to do something in one manner, knowing that they will do the opposite. But the opposite action is what the manipulator wanted to happen in the first place.

Who Will Deliberately Use Dark Tactics?

Many different people may choose to use these dark tactics against you. They can be found in various aspects of your life, which is why it is so important to learn how to stay away from them. Some of the people who may use some of these dark psychology tactics deliberately include:

Narcissists

These individuals will have a bloated sense of self-worth, and have a need to make others believe that they are superior. To meet their desires of being worshipped and adored by everyone they meet, they will use persuasion and dark psychology.

Sociopaths

Sociopaths are charming, intelligent, and persuasive. But they only act this way to get what they want. They lack any emotions, and they are not able to feel any remorse. This means they have no issue using dark psychology tactics to get what they want, including creating superficial relationships.

Politicians

With the help of dark psychology, a politician could convince someone to cast votes for them merely by convincing them that their point of view is the right one.

Salespeople

Not all salespeople will use shady tactics against you. But it is possible that some, especially those who are regularly

getting high sales numbers, will not think twice about using dark persuasion to manipulate people.

Leaders

Throughout history, there have been plenty of leaders who have used dark psychology to get their team members, subordinates, and citizens to do what they want.

Selfish people

This could be any person you come across who will make sure that their own needs are put before anyone else's. They aren't concerned about others, and they will let others forego their benefits so that they can benefit themselves. If the situation helps them, it is okay if it helps someone else. But if someone will be the loser, it will be the other person and not them.

How Is Dark Psychology Used Today?

- When you were a child, you would see how adults, especially those close to you, behaved.
- When you were a teenager, the mind and your ability to understand the behaviors around you were expanded substantially.
- You were able to watch others use dark psychology tactics and succeed.
- Using these tactics may have been unintentional in the beginning, but when you found that it worked to get you what you wanted, you would start to use those tactics intentionally.
- Some people, such as politicians, public speakers, and salespeople, are trained to use these types of tactics to get what they want.

Broad, Practical and Theoretical Observations

Murder, rape, incest, and abuse are all words that can send chills up your spine. As a culture, we have saturated ourselves with contrary ideals for

entertainment purposes. We sit and watch horror movies, crime shows, and reality shows, diving into the deviants’ minds. The darkness within becomes an obsession for some, and though they don't re-enact or find the actions preferable, there is a connection that few want to recognize outwardly. While most human beings have a buffer in their mind, which helps us know fact from fiction and right from wrong, some lack it.

Imagination is one thing. Combining people's worst fears to find what scenario can be the scariest and most grabbing is something fiction writers and creators often do. Often, though, when watching these dark psyches at work on the screen in front of you, the human mind finds a specific recognition of why the predator or villain does what they do. Some movies and books even prey on the idea of the worst parts of the human condition. Depraved and distraught, the father who witnessed his family's murders climbs out of his ominous depression to wreak havoc on those that committed the acts to begin with. There is satisfaction for people in the revenge of heinous acts. But then, doesn't that apply the same dark psyche to the perpetrator, regardless of the reasoning behind it?

Dark psychology has no pointed targets and cares little for the reasoning behind the actions. It is the actual act of manipulation, deceit, and harm that carries the dark psyche's weight. The idea of revenge has been around for a very long time. Prominent examples of the "eye for an eye" concept are still in existence today. The death penalty is one such example, though its root is broad and doesn't currently encourage one person's private actions to another. The government is in charge of carrying out the punishment. But long before that, laws were erected in civilizations that based themselves on the idea of revenge.

Psychological Definition

The human condition is studied continuously, broken down, dissected, and used in the psychological community. Dark psychology subscribes to this as well. However, in dark psychology studies, its focus relates to the nature of the predator vs. prey relationship of the human condition. Psychologists focusing on the dark psyche move their research toward people who perpetrate crimes or abnormal activity with little or no instinct or care for

the social norms. Most people have that buffer protecting others from these ideals, while the perpetrators lack this ability to keep control of their most basic instincts.

You may be thinking that basic instincts do not include the often-heinous acts performed by someone with a dark psyche. And while you are correct, there is a significant difference to the .01% of criminal acts performed by dark minds, and if you think about the most primal humans from millions of years ago, they lacked one major player that we all deem reasonable. The very early primitive human beings did not have a societal construct that had been bored into them from birth, augmented with religious ideals, and regulated by high functioning governments. Their most primal instinct was survival.

In a world fraught with danger, both natural and nurturing, the human mind protected the body at all costs. There were most likely times that manipulation and deceit were committed in an uncalled-for situation. However, our brains are wired to perceive danger and either act on that or flee. Survival back then had more to do with the ability to fight off animals and find food, water, and shelter. There were no other societal norms.

Since our brains are the same brains inside the Neanderthal man, our perception of danger is the only thing that has changed. In a world where almost everyone has food, water, and shelter at their disposal, the fight for those types of situations is less frequent. In today's society, we see the instinct of survival manipulated into a course where we fight for better, and more. Frequently the crimes committed outside of the realm of revenge or the .01% are based solely on those theories.

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CHAPTER 2: HOW TO USE DARK PSYCHOLOGY IN YOUR DAILY LIFE



How Psychology Can Improve Your Life

The Following Are Some of the Top Ten Realistic Uses for Psychology in Regular Life

1. **Get Motivated**

Whether your goal is to stop smoking, lose weight, or learn a new language, some training from psychology provides pointers for staying motivated. To maintain your motivation, make use of some of the tips derived from research in cognitive and educational psychology:

- Introduce new or novel factors to keep your interest high.
- Vary the order of things to help stave off boredom.
- Study new matters that build on your present understanding.
- Set clear goals that might be at related to the assignment.

2. **Enhance Your Management Abilities**

Having true leadership abilities will, in all likelihood, be vital sometime in your existence. Now, not all of us are born leaders, but some easy suggestions taken from mental studies can help you improve your leadership capabilities.

One of the most famous research papers on this topic looked at three distinct management styles. Primarily based on the findings of this and subsequent studies, here are several tips for when you are in a management position:

- Offer clear steering but permit group contributors to voice opinions.
- Communicate possible answers to troubles with contributors in the group.
- Focus on stimulating ideas and praise creativity.

3. **Be a Better Communicator**

Conversation involves a whole lot more than just the way you speak or write. Research indicates that nonverbal indicators make up a big portion of our interpersonal communications.

Some key strategies encompass the following:

- Use proper eye contact.
- Start noticing nonverbal indicators in others.
- Use your tone of voice to boost your message.

4. **Learn to Better Understand Others**

Just like nonverbal communication, your capacity to comprehend your emotions and the feelings of those around you perform an essential role in your relationships and professional lifestyle. The term ‘emotional intelligence’ refers to your potential to comprehend each of your emotions in addition to those of other human beings.

What can you do to become more emotionally stable? Recall a few of the following techniques:

- Cautiously assess your own emotional reactions.
- Record your enjoyment and emotions in a journal.
- Try to see situations from the perspective of a different person.

5. **Make Wise Choices**

Studies in cognitive psychology supply a wealth of statistics about decision making. By making use of these techniques, you can discover ways to make wiser choices. Next time you have to make a huge decision, consider the following techniques:

- Try using the “Six Thinking Hats” technique, which involves seeing the situation from multiple points of view, including rational, emotional, intuitive, creative, advantageous, and dark.
- Recall the negatives and positives of each choice.
- Appoint a grid evaluation approach that offers a score for how a selected decision will fulfill unique requirements you may have.

6. **Enhance Your Memory**

Have you ever wondered why you can remember the precise information of childhood events yet forget the call of the new customer you met yesterday? Research on how we form new memories and how and why we forget has caused some of the findings that can be implemented without delay in your daily life.

What are some methods you can use to improve your memory?

- Develop an awareness of the data.
- Rehearse what you have discovered.
- Do away with distractions.

7. **Make Wiser Financial Decisions**

Nobel Prize-winning psychologist Daniel Kahneman and his colleague Amos Tversky performed a chain of research that looked at how humans manipulate uncertainty and danger while making decisions.

One study looks at how workers could more than triple their financial savings by making use of some of the following strategies:

- Don’t procrastinate. Start saving now.
- Commit earlier to dedicating your future profits to your retirement savings.
- Try to be aware of non-public biases that may result in dark money choices.

8. **Get Higher Grades**

The next time you are tempted to whine about pop quizzes, midterms, or finals, consider that research has confirmed that taking exams honestly helps you better consider what you have learned, even if the material in question wasn't on the test.

Studies discovered that repeated test-taking might be a higher memory aid than studying. College students who were tested again and again were able to remember 61% of the content while the ones within the control group recalled an average of 40%. How can you observe those findings to your lifestyles? When researching new data, test yourself frequently to cement what you have learned into your memory.

9. **Become More Effective**

It sometimes looks as if there are hundreds of books, blogs, and magazine articles telling us how to get more completed in an afternoon. But how much of this advice is based on real studies? As an example, think about the variety of times you have heard that multitasking can help you become more productive. Studies have discovered that trying to carry out multiple missions at the same time severely impairs pace, accuracy and productivity.

What lessons from psychology can you use to increase your productivity? Consider the following:

- Avoid multitasking while completing complicated or dangerous obligations.
- Focus on at the task at hand.
- Eliminate distractions.

10. **Be Healthier**

Psychology also can be a useful device for improving your day-to-day health. From approaches that encourage workouts and better nutrition to new remedies for depression, the sector of fitness psychology gives a wealth of beneficial strategies that can help you to be healthier and happier.

- Research has shown that both daylight and synthetic light can reduce the symptoms of seasonal affective disorder.
- Studies have demonstrated that exercise can contribute to better mental well-being.
- Studies have determined that helping people understand the dangers of bad behaviors can lead to healthier choices.

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CHAPTER 3: DANGEROUS DARK PERSONALITIES



What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the dark triad? Probably some fictional realm created by Hollywood, right? Well, this is a crucial concept that ties together all aspects of dark psychology. The dark triad, in a nutshell, is the theme that houses the three most destructive and harmful psychological personality traits known to man. In the following pages, we shall seek to bring these traits to light and better understand them for adequate preparation against them. By the time we are done, you will realize that all other themes of dark psychology stem from this same theme.

These traits are psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism. The majority of individuals will associate the description of a psychopath as a murderous person, and a narcissist as a human who is obsessed with themselves. There is, however, much more to these antisocial disorders than just the stereotypes. These concepts must be respected and understood for their power to become apparent.

Machiavellianism

This is a technique that traces its origins from the famous political philosopher known as Machiavelli. In his established work on influence and political power, *The Prince*, Machiavelli shares his ideas, principles, and tactics serve as a sort of blueprint for those individuals who might be seeking to understand influence throughout history. We then ask ourselves what this Machiavellian person is and how he comes about.

What puts this particular trait on the map is the manipulator's affinity to only focus on one's self-interest at all times, the exercise of ruthless power and cruelty, one's understanding of the importance of image. In a nutshell, Machiavellian individuals are people whose approach to life is widely strategic, meaning that their actions are usually well thought out and assessed. You may simply identify a Machiavellian by their speech, which often revolves around something like, “How will this benefit me, and how will this result impact my public reputation?”

Psychopathy

To tell you in black and white what psychopathy is would be difficult, but the fundamental definition of what psychopathy is, or rather who a psychopath is, is that particular individual who seems to be suffering from a type of psychological disorder that heavily involves a superficial charm, impulsivity and a lack of commonly held “human” emotions such as empathy and remorse. These psychopaths can be regarded as the most dangerous people on the face of the earth as they are the best examples of two-faced sons of bitches. Pardon my language. When most people hear the mention of a psychopath, the first image that usually comes to mind is of a haggard-looking individual wielding a machete and wearing a mask. But the reality is far from this.

They are most likely to be very handsome strangers who win over their victims by being just the right amount of charming before eventually ruining or even ending their victim’s lives. Surprisingly, based on a series of tests, experiments, and observations, it has been discovered that a large number of these individuals exist at the helm of the business world. The majority of people are just now beginning to view psychopathy as more of a problem to the whole of society. Psychopaths are usually programmed in such a way that they can survive in any field they chose to go into. This is mainly attributed to the indifferent views they have regarding normal human feelings of love, compassion, and so forth.

Narcissism

If you ask anyone who they think a narcissist is, I can bet that the most likely answer you is that of an individual who simply loves themselves. This is along the correct lines but not accurate enough, particularly when narcissism is viewed through the dark triad lens. You can have self-love without being a narcissist. What are some of the differences between a highly self-esteemed individual and someone selfish to the extent that they are regarded in the dark triad range? Someone who meets narcissism's medical diagnostic requirements, to the point that they are deemed to have a psychological disorder, is likely to display a variety of the following characteristics continuously:

They are usually have an inflated sense of self-worth, which manifests itself in several ways. These include seeing themselves as the most special and important person to have ever existed, believing themselves of a higher status than “normal people.” This behavior is often reflected in their sense of self-worth.

Sadism

Those who exhibit sadism enjoy hurting other people. Physical or mental, it does not matter—either is enjoyable for the sadist. These people will manipulate others just for the fun of it, and enjoy watching the fallout after the fact. For example, someone who constantly causes problems between friends, telling one friend one thing while telling the other friend the opposite just to cause issues and watch the fallout could be a sadist.

Characteristics of Dark Psychology Traits

Machiavellian

We know that a Machiavellian person is a political schemer who is obsessed with his public image. These individuals are considered the most cold-hearted in their pursuit of self-interest above all else. What then could be said about the behavior of these types of individuals? Due to their master level skill of masking their true intentions from the public eye, their behaviors can be hard to decipher.

For most individuals who do not fulfill Machiavellianism's clinical definition, their public persona is generally a reflection of their true personal self. Everyone polishes their image and conduct in public a little, but in general, the outward persona of most people is nothing more than a polished portrait of who they are. There is often have a fine line between what they truly are and the person they mold themselves to be in the public eye. Perhaps the best example to be given here is that of serial killers.

Examples of such a distinction between intent and appearance can be found in areas less extreme than serial murder. There are countless tales of business leaders who ruthlessly cut jobs and pursue profit over people whenever possible. In terms of Machiavellianism, the very best of these bosses can get individuals to buy into the idea that they are behaving by necessity or even compassion! Such leaders can become almost role models for those who only want to serve their wishes, while appearing to be a "person of the people."

A willingness to exploit people is another hallmark of Machiavellian individuals. Let us look at an example to have a better understanding of this. A newcomer in a particular office who possesses these Machiavellian traits would see each colleague, boss, or team member as a resource or piece of a puzzle to utilize. The Machiavellian person would see a sequence of strategic threats and weaknesses to handle, exploit, or neutralize instead of seeing others as fellow human beings. This is a big reason why Machiavellians are so conscious of how they are viewed. They understand that this outward depiction is the key to making an impact and effectively exploiting everybody they encounter.

Psychopathic

It is necessary to know how this group of individuals manifest themselves in order to detect them early and put up the necessary defenses against them. Charm is one of a psychopathic person's most prevalent behaviors. It must be understood that this charm is superficial rather than real. If you think of a genuinely charming individual from your lifetime, you will probably acknowledge that they have favorable characteristics that underpin outward behavioral displays. However, if an individual genuinely displays a charming personality as an expression of kindness, they should not be labeled as a psychopath.

Psychopaths can show all the outward indications of charm such as physical appeal, obvious warmth, and interest in others. The inward motive behind these outward displays is why it's such a red flag. Psychopaths see charm as part of an equation. The manipulator usually asks himself if displaying a particular emotion towards the victim will prove to be advantageous for themselves. They are very calculative people who are numb to normal human feelings.

Lying is another trait that makes psychopaths stand out. We all lie in our day-to-day lives. This doesn’t necessarily mean that we are all psychopaths. However, it can show a psychopathic personality when coupled with other characteristics.

A psychopath can convincingly present lies as reality. Also, psychopaths do not demonstrate outward indications of lying because they do not have any emotional attachment or emotions of shame, guilt, or excitement about their lies. Lying is just "doing what's required at the moment" for psychopaths.

Another signature aspect of psychopathy is a lack of impulse control. Most individuals have processes and internal controls that stop them from acting rashly. These mechanisms of prevention are lacking in a psychopath. If a psychopath sees a chance to exploit, they will act without hesitation. This may be murdering someone they want to kill, violating someone they want to rape, or stealing something they want to steal. This cruel impulsiveness makes psychopaths in areas such as the army some of the most dangerous individuals.

Narcissistic

One of the most prevalent characteristics in almost all narcissists is the fantasies of their absolute power and an elevated sense of importance. Most of these individuals lay blame on the constant praise they got as children while talking about these fantasies. As adults, these individuals will still demand praise from all around them since they have nurtured the feeling of being the most important of their peers to the maximum.

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CHAPTER 4: THE DARK TRIAD AND DARK TETRAD



The Dark Tetrad is the name given to a "suite" of personality traits and their combinations that have been suggested to possess predictive qualities about adverse psychopathy-like behavior. The description is based on research on human psychology and the construct of psychopathy. The term "suite" indicates that the traits may be independent of one another yet related and not necessarily found together in all individuals who are characterized as having psychopathy.

Both psychologists and the general public have been fascinated by the dark side of human beings for ages. And the only thing that is common among these three traits is that there is a certain level of evil to all of them. These personality traits make it challenging to have a conversation with someone who exhibits them, or deal with them, in general. Things become disagreeable very quickly, and these people are usually very arrogant, volatile, and domineering.

Now, coming to the triad, the three constituents are as follows—psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism. The people who have these qualities often have a toxic personality, and having intimate relationships with them is not only complicated but also dangerous to the partner. The personality profiles of these people are created when the three qualities of the Dark Personality Triad overlap.

Here is an example that might help you understand better:

A woman was once the subject of identity fraud. All her financial instruments like the credit card and her bank accounts were compromised in the process. She lived with her boyfriend in an apartment where she had to pay monthly rent. Naturally, she was under a lot of stress as she was questioned regularly by the FBI, and this caused a tremendous amount of

anxiety too. But even after all of this, the culprit couldn't be caught. But she thought that at least her boyfriend was with her in all of this. He was very supportive of her. He also took on the responsibility of paying monthly rent but from the money that the woman gave him. To cheer her up, he brought her gifts from time to time. After a few days, the landlord of the apartment called the woman. He informed her about all the rent that was overdue. It was at that moment that she realized that the actual culprit in all of this was her boyfriend. He was taking the money for the rent but spending it on gifts. She was in complete denial because this was a case of extreme gaslighting. She couldn't believe the fact that it was her lover who was doing this to her.

What Does the Dark Triad Mean?

So, let us have a more in-depth look into the Dark Triad and what it means. It was in the year 2002 when this term came into existence, and it was coined by Williams and Paulhus. You already know about the three characteristics that constitute this triad, but in this section, we will go into the details.

It is said that anyone who has the traits belonging to the Dark Triad is showing subclinical symptoms. If we simplify this, it means that the person is not fully suffering from ASPD—Anti-Social Personality Disorder—or NPD—Narcissistic Personality Disorder—but they are showing some symptoms.

You probably all have an idea of what narcissism means, but here is a simplified description of it—it is a state where the person has a feeling of grandiosity, superiority, or entitlement. The person simply thinks that they are superior to everyone around them, and they try to dominate everyone they meet. They are forever in the pursuit of ego gratification.

The principal characteristic of Machiavellianism is a manipulatory attitude. People who have this trait are always focused on their own gain in any circumstance whatsoever, and they always focus on their self-interest. They are also very duplicitous and calculating.

Lastly, if we are to explain psychopathy in simpler terms, then I would say that it is marked by bold behavior where the person is anti-social and

repulsive and shows a lot of callousness.

What are the Characteristic Traits of People Belonging to the Dark Triad?

I have already explained the three traits of the Dark Triad separately, but it is time that you understand the overall traits of a person who belongs to the Dark Triad.

a) **Deception:** The first characteristic that can be easily spotted in these people is their deceptive nature. They do not have any humility or honesty. They are greedy and are not sincere at all. When research was conducted on the three personality traits individually, it was found that all those with these traits tend to cheat on their partners or family members when they think they are not going to get caught. On the contrary, when the risk factors were high, it was found that Machiavellians and psychopaths continued to cheat. They are in the habit of continuous lying. On the other hand, if we are talking about narcissists, then instead of being dishonest intentionally, they are more prone to self-deception.

b) **Callousness:** As you must have understood by now, people who belong to the Dark Triad lack empathy. Research was conducted focusing specifically on affective empathy. Affective empathy simply means the power to respond to the emotions of others properly. The research concluded that Dark Triad personalities lacked affective empathy as well. People with these personalities felt good when they looked at sad people. Similarly, they automatically became sad or angry whenever they saw someone who was positive or happy in their life. Psychopaths were also found to be happy whenever they saw someone in fear. Similarly, both psychopaths and narcissists were found to be happy when they saw the expression of anger on people's faces.

c) **Big Five Personality Test:** This test focused on the qualities of openness, conscientiousness, agreeableness,

neuroticism, and extraversion (Lewis R. Goldberg, 1992). Now, I just want to clarify something here because most people tend to get it wrong. Charisma and agreeableness are not the same things. Agreeableness is more like compliance, straightforwardness, and trustworthiness. All of these qualities are of the utmost importance when you want to form strong relationships. Conscientiousness was something that was found to be lacking in both psychopaths and Machiavellians. The level of neuroticism was the lowest in the case of psychopaths, and so that is how you conclude them to be the most sinister of all. When it came to extraversion, narcissists were the ones who excelled in this criterion, and that is quite predictable too.

Tips to Deal with People Who Have Dark Triad Traits

If you think that someone in your life has the traits belonging to the Dark Triad, it can be hectic dealing with them. You have to understand that the process is not easy, but it is possible with patience and the willingness to address these negative behaviors.

d) **Handle the Anger:** The first step will be to manage their aggression because this is something that is very often seen in people belonging to the Dark Triad. If these situations are not controlled, they can easily defuse into something bigger. It is quite easy to spot when someone is angry, even if it means that they are showing signs of passive-aggressive behavior (ignoring you or sulking). You can talk to them or distance yourself from them for a while, or you can figure out where all of that rage is coming from.

e) **Don't Let Them Bully You:** This is extremely important. It is not right or healthy if you have to withstand verbal or physical abuse. If you are in such a situation, you have to take a stand against it and take some action. Even if the abuse is indirect, for example, if the person is belittling you or criticizing you unnecessarily, you have to find a way to hold them accountable for their behavior.

f) **Identify the Manipulators:** We will go into greater detail about identifying manipulators in the next part of the book. But for now, you should know that when someone's Machiavellianism traits take the upper hand, they become manipulators. They will always find some excuse or another for their hurtful behavior and try to make you say yes to things you don't want to do.

g) **Learn New Skills:** Dealing with people with Dark Triad traits is no cakewalk, and so, you need special skills. It includes increasing your emotional intelligence, and you will learn about it in the latter part of this book. Once you acquire these skills, managing these people becomes easier, and you can spot any kind of unwanted behavior at once.

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CHAPTER 5: MANIPULATION AND DECEPTION



This chapter delves deeper into the world of dark manipulation and its cohort ‘deception.’ There is always a bit of deceit in every manipulation. We see manipulation every day, and we are familiar with manipulating circumstances to our advantage. Everyone manipulates in a small fashion here or there; it is part of the human condition. Parents are probably the guiltiest in this endeavor. My mother manipulated me into eating green veggies most of my life. But remember, intent always plays an essential role in any interaction. You should always be observant of what motivates this person to manipulate you. What do they want? Manipulations are not as destructive as long as there is balance. So, when does manipulation grow into deception-based manipulation?

If manipulation twists the truth, deception breaks it. Deception changes someone’s perception of reality with lies to some gain of the deceiver. This deception is where we enter the realm of dark psychology, and its first tools are deception and manipulation. Dark psychology refers to the skills of manipulation, deception, coercion, and dark persuasions that predators use to get what they want.

Covert Manipulation

There are many ways covert manipulation tactics can be used to keep power with the manipulator in a relationship. You could fill a stadium with all the tactics and skills out there, but these are the most common:

1. **Love Flooding**

The manipulator showers you with gifts, attention, compliments, and affection to the point that you are almost drowning. This love flooding creates and strengthens the bond between you. Remember, the manipulator is after power, always power, so giving you all of this love and attention, it will be tough for you to say ‘no’, and you will become dependent on it, as well as feel its absence when it is gone. These are tools to bind you to them and make you dependent and compliant.

2. **No Love for You**

Now that you are enticed by the romance and gifts, it is time to take that away. If you do not behave appropriately in a manipulator’s mind and abide by their rules, they will pull out or become absent altogether until you ‘earn’ their attention back. This restriction of love furthers your bond with them as you give up other things to pay special attention to them to win back their devotions.

3. **Guilt is the Weapon**

Manipulators will play upon your emotions and use passive-aggressive behavior. They will not quite confront or argue with you but rather leave subtle hints to get you to behave accordingly. Manipulators will use your empathy and feed it guilt and sarcasm to get you to do what they want.

4. **Semantic Manipulation**

Semantic manipulation refers to the manipulator saying words and then later saying they don’t share the same

definition of those words as you do. In this way, they didn't break the agreement because they simply had a different understanding of it. We all remember that Bill Clinton's definition of "sexual relations" was not the same as the American public's definition of "sexual relations," so, in his mind, he did not commit what he was accused of because the descriptions didn't match up.

5. **Social Embarrassment/Mind Games**

Social embarrassment is when you are in public with the manipulator, and they demonstrate their superiority through domination tactics to make you look simple or embarrass you. This mind game is part of taking down your self-esteem.

6. **Gaslighting**

Gaslighting is when you know that something occurred, and the other person immediately says "it is all in your mind," or "that never happened" to make you doubt what you have seen or heard. Nothing rocks self-doubt like gaslighting. It makes you depend on the manipulator to interpret what you see and hear. This behavior is especially insidious and cruel.

Those with dark triad personality traits are not the only people that use covert manipulation. It is around us every day. We see it in politicians, lawyers, teachers, you name it. What I am getting at here is there is no real way to stop dark manipulation; the practice of these things isn't illegal. Knowing about the tactics is only half the battle. The key is to not allow yourself to be manipulated and have the tools to fight back. Now, where does deception fit into this?

Deception

Deception is hidden behind a mask. It is hard to spot, and you must look at the intent as you receive the information. Deception is getting someone to accept something that is not their accurate belief. Deception has the victim believing in a false reality that the manipulator created.

Levels of Deception

1. **Advanced. (Run).** Advanced deception is used by psychopaths, serial killers, sociopaths, and others with a criminal mindset. They are skilled deceivers with years and years of practice and a persona that is quite likable because they can be whatever they need to be to get what they want. They are social chameleons. They have no problem using you for whatever purpose they need and have no empathy for how you feel about it. This group contains smooth operators that can navigate your emotions as if they live in your head. They are mastery level ninjas at the abuse techniques. If you feel that someone is in your head, they usually are.

2. **Above Average. (Run).** This group contains narcissists, those with personality disorders, and love-them-and-leave-them types (without the love). They have an established record of using covert manipulation to get what they want; however, you will not know about it because they are very good at hiding who they really are. Their reality is a bit off, and they want to pull you in with them to see things the way that they do. They are also fans of abusive techniques and have little to no empathy for how you feel about things.

3. **Slightly Above Average. (Proceed with caution).** These are usually people who have personality traits that lead to deception. They typically don’t know that they are behaving deceptively. They don’t seem to connect with why their actions would be considered deceptive. When these deceivers are wrong, they will argue strictly from a place of emotion rather than logic because they understand they can get their way by merely exhausting the person they are talking with. Slightly above-average deceivers are incredibly persistent.

4. **Average. (The usual suspects).** This group includes the average, everyday Joe. For example, teenage rebels trying to create autonomy and get away with as much as possible. Defiant people fall into this category. They like identifying as rebels, so their deception is far more apparent. They are not nearly as skilled as the advanced or above average deceivers and are usually spotted reasonably quickly if you are looking.

Knowing these levels of deception, you help you to recognize what you are dealing with. The University of Florida created a Dirty Dozen rating scale that is a 12-point methodology test that measures the personality traits of the dark psychology triad. The higher the score, the more likely the person is to have those personality traits.

We have established how emotional intelligence can play a significant role in progressing yourself and others in the workplace and other areas of life. The Dark Triad operates in direct conflict to that, setting out to unravel everything accomplished through positive goals and twisting it with greed, bullying, and self-indulgence.

Michael Douglas in *Wall Street* is the epitome of a selfish wolf chanting ‘Greed is Good.’ He doesn’t care who he takes down, and any relationship with him is toxic. The movie is fantastic and a must-see, but the character he plays is lethal to any business or association.

Remember, these types of people hide who they are and can operate with extreme efficiency, damaging relationships within the workplace and other areas of life. If you see this type of behavior, it should be dealt with quickly before the wolf's teeth are allowed to sink in.

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CHAPTER 6: MANIPULATIVE PERSONALITIES



You may wonder; what are manipulators trying to do? Why do they put so much work into manipulating others instead of just focusing on improving themselves?

The fact is, manipulators have a deep-seated psychological need to control others, and they seek to "weaken" their victims to gain dominance over them. When they manipulate others, they are trying to erase their willpower, to destroy their self-esteem, to seek passive-aggressive revenge against them, or to confuse their reality so that they become more malleable. Let’s look at how and why manipulators do those four things.

Cancellation of Willpower

It’s because of our willpower that we can retain control over our lives and resist people’s attempts to dominate us and force us to do their bidding. That is why one of the primary intentions of manipulative people is to obliterate our willpower.

So, how can someone take away your willpower? Well, first, you have to understand that willpower isn’t unlimited. We can lose our willpower through a process that psychologists refer to as "ego depletion." To understand this, think of willpower as a resource that can only be renewed at a slow pace. So, if we spend that resource on one thing, we have less of it to spend on another thing that demands it. So, ego depletion occurs when we spend all the willpower that we have, and we are left without adequate willpower in the face of subsequent challenges.

Manipulative people know that willpower doesn’t come from a bottomless pit, so they tend to overload us with scenarios where we are forced to use our willpower until it gets depleted. For example, a malicious person may keep trying to agitate you while you keep trying to stay calm and keep your cool. However, if he keeps doing it for a prolonged period, chances are you will get to a point where you snap and react with anger.

Psychologists believe that willpower is like a muscle; it gets stronger when you exercise it, but during the moment of exertion, it can fail if it’s pushed past a certain point. Malicious people can erase your willpower by forcing you to overexert it.

Willpower makes it possible for us to make the right decisions in the face of serious temptation or pressure. It’s what makes us spend time studying for an exam instead of watching videos online. Without willpower, we become highly suggestible, and people can get us to do their bidding with little resistance.

Ego depletion is sometimes also referred to as "decision fatigue." The idea behind this concept is that the more decisions we make, the more tired we become, and as a result, we are unable to make good decisions. When manipulative people put us in situations where we have to keep making decisions, they can eventually wear us out.

Several other factors have been known to destroy willpower. The first one is scarcity. When something is scarce, we are tempted to act in a more impulsive way to acquire it, abandoning our principles in the process. For instance, when you are hungry, you might be forced to abandon the “thou shalt not steal” principle just to feed yourself.

People who are adept at emotional manipulation can chip away at your willpower by introducing the element of scarcity. For example, when a person gives you the silent treatment, she is essentially withholding human interaction and affection, thus making it a scarcity for you. This increases the likelihood that you will abandon your stand and comply with her request.

Another way to cancel someone’s willpower is by threatening their wellbeing or livelihood. Malicious people can compromise your willpower by doing things that jeopardize your job, your relationships, or your

happiness. When a colleague does something that puts your job security in jeopardy, or if your partner does something that makes your life a living hell, you will become somewhat desperate, and at that moment, your willpower is more likely to be compromised, leading you to either surrender or do something detrimental to yourself.

Stress is another factor that can cause the depletion of one's willpower. When we are constantly stressed, our minds are filled with worries that cloud our judgment, and we end up making bad decisions. Malicious people will work both overtly and covertly to introduce stressors into our lives, hoping that the resultant stress will take up all our energy, and we will be left more susceptible to their manipulation.

When manipulators succeed in canceling our willpower, they gain the power to control us and tell us what to do. We will start deferring our judgment to them, and we will lose our identities.

Destroy Self-Esteem

Apart from depleting your willpower, malicious people also want to destroy your self-esteem. Unfortunately, there are dozens of different ways that they can do this. In as much as we try to draw our self-esteem from within, the fact remains that as social beings, we put a lot of stock in what other people say about us, and that is where manipulative people draw their strength.

Manipulators can chip away at your self-esteem by using carefully worded phrases aimed at attacking and belittling you. Their words are usually carefully calculated to either upset you or confuse you so that you spend a lot of time thinking about what they mean. We have already looked at the kinds of manipulative techniques that can cause you to start questioning yourself or thinking that your own emotions aren’t valid.

Manipulators also chip away at your self-esteem by continually blaming you for all sorts of problems. When someone keeps telling you that certain things are your fault, a seed of self-doubt will start growing in you, and as this idea is reinforced, you will get to a point where you start internalizing the person’s criticism, and this ruins your self-esteem.

Sometimes, manipulative people can pass the blame onto you without even saying a word. When something bad happens, they'll give you a look that says everything you need to know about how they feel, and even in the absence of an accusation, you will start questioning yourself.

Another way manipulative people destroy your self-esteem is by flooding you with negative information. We all know that self-esteem can be affected by the company we keep. If we surround ourselves with negative people, and they keep saying bad things, we start internalizing those things. Manipulative people, especially Machiavellians, can dupe us by feeding us negative information.

For example, a colleague at work could keep pouring cold water on all your ideas until you get to a point where you start believing that you can't get things done. In relationships, manipulators can destroy your self-esteem by neglecting you emotionally until you start thinking that you don't deserve love and affection.

Manipulative people can also destroy your self-esteem by feeding your fears. Once they discover that you have certain fears, they'll start nurturing those fears in you so they can use them against you. The more afraid we are, the more our self-esteem diminishes.

Manipulative people like it when their victims have low self-esteem, for many reasons. You have probably heard the saying that if you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything. That is what manipulators are counting on. They know that if you don't have a strong view of yourself, they can gain the power to control how you view yourself. If you start doubting who you are, they'll take over and create a version of you that they can push around.

Manipulators also know that when we have low self-esteem, we become very agreeable because we want to please other people to gain some positive attention and win the approval of others. They want their victims to turn into people-pleasers, and they want to put themselves at the center of the victims' lives so that they are the ones benefiting from it.

At work, manipulators may want to destroy your self-esteem to make you feel like you are not up to the job so they can climb over you on their way to the top. If they can't completely convince you that that you are a loser,

they'll settle for making you so afraid of failure that you are unable to gather the strength to compete with them.

Manipulators may also want to destroy your self-esteem so you are unable to maintain your boundaries, and they can get in and take advantage of you. Like we have mentioned, when your self-esteem is destroyed, you are unable to stand up for what you believe in, so you can't enforce your principles. You may feel like you don't even have the basic right to assert your preferences, so manipulators will be at liberty to walk all over you.

Passive-Aggressive Revenge

If you have ever slighted a narcissistic person, a sadist, or a psychopath in any way, they are probably holding some sort of grudge against you, and they may manipulate you because they want to get even.

Now, ordinary people hold grudges or go after each other for clear reasons that both parties are aware of. However, people with dark personality traits can target you for pretty much any reason, as long as it makes sense to them. There is no logical threshold that you have to meet for them to set their sights on you. They could hold a grudge for years because of a statement that you made in passing. They could make you their target because your boss complimented you instead of them. They could even target you because of deep psychological issues that even they cannot comprehend.

For instance, a psychopath may seek to victimize you and destroy your life because you look like the girl who rejected him way back when he was a teenager. The point is, you don't have to do anything specific for a malicious person to decide to seek passive-aggressive revenge against you. It's possible that you just have the misfortune of reminding them of a mean parent, or in the case of Machiavellians, it could just be that you are in their way, and they have to destroy you to get ahead. It could also be that they think you are weak, and therefore you are an easy target for them.

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CHAPTER 7: PERSONALITY TRAITS OF VICTIMS



According to George Simon, a psychology writer, there are distinct qualities that define a manipulative person. If someone possesses these traits, their chances of being successful manipulators are extremely high. In the same way, if one lacks these traits, they cannot use other people to attain their selfish goals. I bet this is one of those qualifications none of us want!

According to Simon, a successful manipulator must:

> h) Have the ability to hide their aggressive nature and intentions from the public, especially their potential targets.
>
> i) Have the ability to identify the vulnerable aspects of their potential victims in order to decide which approach to use for efficient manipulation.
>
> j) Have an extraordinary level of ruthlessness that enables them to overcome the qualms that might arise from the harm they cause to their subjects. Cruelty can be emotional or physical.

As we can see, the first trait that a manipulator needs to successfully influence other people is the ability to cover up their aggressive intentions and behaviors. Imagine if they went around talking about their dark secrets and plans – nobody would dare to befriend them for fear of being manipulated. Due to this, the manipulator develops a camouflage that hides their thoughts and plans from other people, ending up appearing normal. Often, the victim walks into the trap with the least suspicion. The oppressor will come off as a Good Samaritan, a best friend, or a random person acting

sweet. By the time the target becomes suspicious, the manipulator already has enough information to successfully coerce them as they please.

Next, the controller must have the skill to observe and determine the vulnerable traits of their victims. This is a typical proverb application that if you must cut down a tree, you better take your time to sharpen your ax. From the identified weak points, they can decide on the best approach to effectively manipulate them. At times, the manipulator will use observation to identify the vulnerabilities, while in others, they need to interact with their subjects for a certain period.

The final trait is that ruthlessness must be applied. It would be pointless for the manipulator to put in the work required in the above steps only to start worrying about what their victims will feel or what will happen to them. If they cared about anyone at all, they would not come up with these plans in the first place. The manipulator ignores any emotional or physical harm that may occur to the victim. To them, what matters is that they achieve their end goals.

From these three traits, we can tell why manipulators succeed most of the time. The amount of planning and trickery they use is bound to catch anyone off guard. Due to this, the subject will not be quick to realize that they are in the middle of a manipulative process until the effects begin to show up. They might assume that the oppressor wishes them well, making them drop all defenses. By the time they come to their senses and want to get out, they are already stuck.

The Behaviors of Manipulative People

We already know the traits that define a manipulative person. These are the requirements that one needs to possess before being a potential manipulator. Let us discuss a few of them.

1. **Reinforcing**

In psychology, reinforcement is a stimulus, positive or negative, that increases or strengthens the probability of a certain outcome. When we talk

of positive reinforcement, it is a tactic that a manipulator will use in public to pick their subjects. The manipulator will fake some moves such as loud laughter, random smiles, giving gifts, crocodile tears, excess apologies, exaggerated praise, and temporary charm, to mention but a few. Positive reinforcement places the manipulator above random strangers and draws attention to them. The point of fake behavior is to make people want to befriend them. Often, if a person offers us a gift or starts a friendly chat, our minds immediately soften, and we want to return the favor. If we find an innocent-looking lady crying by herself at the park, we genuinely want to know how we can help. Unbeknownst to us, some of these people are out there hunting for victims.

In negative reinforcement, the manipulator will offer to “rescue” the victim from a negative situation if they agree to do something in return. For example, a teacher might offer to grant a student pass grades after they have failed if the student offers sex in return. This is a tricky situation because the victim is usually in a fix, and at times, the offer by the manipulator might be their only way out.

There is also intermittent reinforcement. This is a behavior where the manipulator creates a climate of doubt, hope, and fear. The victim, caught up in a maze of hope and doubt or fear, falls into a dilemma. Take gambling at the casino for an example. The odds at any game are set that in as much as the gambler will lose some money, they will have intermittent wins in between the losses to blind them. If they take the bait, they continue playing for extended periods and only realize they have been on a losing streak when their funds dry up. In the same way, a manipulator will throw regular rewards at the victim while manipulating them so they can keep them long enough to achieve their goals.

2. **Rationalizing**

Rationalization is the act of making up excuses to make one appear innocent. Even if a manipulator were caught red-handed in the act of negatively influencing others, they would not accept it. Instead, they would come up with convincing reasons as to why they committed the act. In most cases, they claim to have been trying to help the victims.

3. **Punishing**

Punishing, in this case, is not necessarily the use of a cane to flog someone. It is a method of control where the manipulator will deploy a set of behaviors to influence the victim. Some of these punishment tactics include the silent treatment, playing the victim, nagging, yelling, crying, threatening, and sulking, among others. These actions aim to make the victim feel guilty for something they might not have done. If the victim plays along, they start apologizing, throwing themselves deep into the manipulator's trap.

4. **Minimizing**

Minimization is a combination of denial and rationalization. If caught, they defend themselves by stating that their behavior is not as negative as it appears. We have all met people who throw bad-tasting jokes at us, only to claim that they were mere jokes and should be taken lightly.

5. **Explosiveness**

Explosive behavior, also known as traumatic one-trial learning, is the act where the manipulator will throw tantrums at the slightest provocation. The sudden reactions, which might include verbal abuse and explosive anger, are meant to discourage the subject from upsetting, confronting, or contradicting the oppressor. Beneath the skin, the manipulator is playing a game of dominance, intimidation, and superiority over the victim.

6. **Diverting Issues**

When a manipulator is asked a question, especially ones related to their conduct, they are excellent at diverting the question. Instead of giving real or straight-to-the-point answers, they give confusing responses. They aim to distract from the question, especially if it might expose their negative behavior. In most cases, they will respond vaguely then come up with a

diversion tactic such as introducing another topic, asking a question of their own, or exploding.

7. **Lying**

Manipulators are masters at telling lies. Because their intentions and actions are generally unpleasant, they know that nobody would fall for them if they were to tell the truth. As such, they come up with lies. The lies that they fabricate are so complex that it is usually impossible to tell when they are false or not. While the truth might ultimately come out, it will usually be too late for the victim to respond. A manipulator will use any form of lies to convince their subjects and get their way.

8. **Intimidation**

A manipulator likes to keep their victims on the defensive or in fear. They pile threats and blame on the victim so it appears that the victim is at their mercy. Whenever the victim tries to get away from them, they are threatened, forcing them to obey the manipulator. No doubt you have heard of relationships where either of the lovers threatens to leak indecent photos of their partner if they try to walk out or report them. This is a common form of intimidation that is aided by the wide use of the internet.

9. **Lying by Omission**

Omission lying is closely related to lying, only that in the latter, everything the manipulator says is a lie. In omission lying, though, the controller will tell a truthful idea but omit important issues that needed to be highlighted. This is a form of manipulation that many parents are victims of today. A good example is when a child requests money to buy some treats but end up buying drugs with the money. In this case, the child told the truth about needing money to buy “treats” while, in reality, the treats were drugs. If the parent knew the real intent of the child, they would not have given them the money.

10. **Denial**

The whole life of a manipulator is lived in denial. They never see things for what they are, because if they did, they would have to face the bitter fact that their lives are messy. One of the reasons that a person will be okay with invading others' lives and destroying them is because they hate their own. Another behavior that is common with manipulators is that they will refuse to take responsibility for anything, regardless of whether there is evidence or not. They will reverse the blame and place it on the subject.

11. **Playing the Victim**

The final behavior we will discuss, which is common in manipulators, is playing the victim. No matter how ruthless these people can get, they always make the world think they are oppressed, despite being the oppressors. This method usually works in their favor because when they appear hurt, they easily evoke feelings of pity, sympathy, and compassion. The majority of people in the world are willing to help others who are suffering, and manipulators are fond of exploiting such people and using them to further their plans.

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CHAPTER 8: EMOTIONAL MANIPULATION TACTICS



Emotions are a core part of our existence as human beings. Regardless of the attempts made by most of us to construct a persona that is tough and formidable in this dog-eat-dog world, we still feel things. All of us do. And many people find themselves making decisions based more on their emotional states than hard, logical rationalization. It is this propensity that emotionally manipulative people exploit through several tactics, strategies, and techniques.

The most potent emotional manipulation techniques are covert; that is, they are designed in such a way that they change your behavior, character, and attitudes without you realizing it. They are underhanded methods that operate so deeply that they often penetrate your consciousness, burrowing so deep that they reach your subconscious. Don’t be fooled by individuals who are charming and likable around you. They could be your boss, a coworker, a friend, or even a relative, and your interactions with them could seem as normal as with any other person – but be on high alert.

Even harmless-seeming behavior can be very toxic. For instance, you may have a friend with whom you find it difficult to share negative feelings that you’re having or worries that keep you awake at night. This may be because this friend always projects a conscious positivity on everyone around her and maybe even frowns when you mention something negative around her like you’re staining her vibe or dampening everyone’s spirit. Your natural reaction may be to view this trait as positive or helpful. This friend is trying to make you focus on only the good stuff because, you know, life is too short to spend time complaining about bad things that may be out of your control anyway.

However, if you scrutinize this scenario deeply, you'll realize the intense manipulation that is happening underneath it all. Because of this friend, you find it difficult to speak your mind and express the things you truly feel. Incredibly enough, this exterior of eternal positivity may simply be a coping mechanism for this person, but because of their quest for mental and emotional stability, they box you into your headspace so they can feel good within themselves. That's manipulation.

Emotional manipulation exists in so many forms and can be employed through various techniques. Below are seven major emotional manipulation strategies.

Negative Reinforcement

Have you been in a scenario where someone did something to you that they knew you didn't like? At this point, did you feel the urge to do something to them that they wouldn't want in return? The guiding law behind this is that the manipulator understands that if they do something you wouldn't like as payback for what you have done, chances become higher that you will do something that favors them in the future.

Imagine a sibling who lets you use his car for a side hustle on the weekend. This sibling then does something that hurts you and, angry, you go for happy hour drinks at the bar without him. This sibling then becomes cold, refusing to let go of his car keys until you apologize and do something he likes, such as promising a larger cut of the pay you earn from using his car, or doing his laundry.

The trick is straightforward. The manipulator knows that if they persist with their hurtful actions, you'll give in eventually and do what they want. This way, they not only get you to do what they like; they further increase the likelihood that you'll do similarly in the future.

Premature Disclosure

Say you work in an office, and a new associate joins the team. As a professional, you want to be careful about the kinds of conversations you

have in the workplace and are very skeptical of non-work-related conversations. This new associate, however, having heard that you're the best on the team in a specialty that could greatly enhance her output, comes to you and engages you in an unexpected conversation. She invites you for coffee during lunch and then opens up to you about an intimate matter. She tells you personal stories and opens up about her dreams, goals, fears, embarrassments, likes, and dislikes. You are taken aback, shocked that someone you just met could let you in on matters so personal, but this false gesture of intimacy moves you, and you feel the burden of trust that she has placed on you become heavy on your shoulders.

This is what the manipulator is counting on. You are scared about opening up, but because she has exhibited such vulnerability toward you, you decide that it wouldn't hurt to tell her a few things. You are at first skeptical that she may not understand your perspective or accept your stories at face value, but she does, even going further to say that she has experienced similar things and feels the same way you feel.

What this manipulator has done, however, is build a false connection. She could have also done this by trying to impress you with her accolades and achievements so you see her as a worthy and valuable colleague. Ultimately, however, all she wants is to exploit this make-believe "relationship" to call in special favors with you on that expertise that only you possess.

Guilt

The capacity to feel guilt is a symbol that you still have a conscience. In your drive to remain a good person, you will make mistakes and feel guilty about this. Because guilt is a negative emotion with close ties to shame and anxiety, it can be very uncomfortable, but this doesn't make it a weakness. It is a part of you. It only becomes a problem when emotional manipulators use it to control you.

As family, society, religion, and many other forms of moral instruction have taught you to feel guilt, especially when you feel like you have harmed someone through your actions or/and inactions, manipulators seize this cow and milk it to death. When you feel guilty, you want to get back in a good

place with the offended party, usually using an apology or making amends. Manipulators divert this need for penance to make you do their bidding. Because your thought process has become clouded by guilt, you are instead focused on fixing things, and you fail to see that the manipulator is making you do something that you don’t want to.

Empty Words

Many emotional manipulators are skilled with the use of their tongues. They can build castles in the skies and take you across the galaxies, all through their words. These manipulators realize that most individuals have an inbuilt desire for verbal approval. People like to be told that they are loved, admired, respected, and appreciated. By using empty words to fill this need, manipulators get you to lower your guard so they can take over the reins of your life.

It’s not just enough for someone to tell you that they love you. If their actions don’t show this love, then there’s a problem. Chances are this person is merely inflating your head so you do what they want you to do. If you’re ever confused about someone’s true intentions, judge the person solely based on their actions. You’ll have your answer.

Gaslighting

If you’re in a relationship where you apologize all the time, feel endlessly bewildered or withdrawn, or find yourself having trouble making decisions, you may be a victim of gaslighting.

With gaslighting, the manipulator denies your perception so strongly that you begin to doubt your ideas and feelings. By denying an obvious reality, they render it invalid. Something happens, and they tell you it never did, or that it’s all in your head, or that your memory is playing tricks on you, or they even go as far as to question where you got the idea. By doing this, they undermine your understanding of events and perception of reality to the point where you begin questioning your sanity.

Gaslighting should be apparent to most folk, but because expert manipulators tend to start small and increase its severity over time, and also couple it with other subtle manipulation tactics, victims' perceptions are questioned so frequently and severely that they lose all trust in their perceptions. They lose the capability to function independently, relying on the manipulator's definitions of reality. At this stage, the manipulator has already won. Having rubbished every ounce of self-esteem in the victim, the manipulator finds it easy to exercise complete domination.

Rationalization

A man hits his wife only to come around minutes later to issue the following apology: "I'm so sorry I hit you. You just hit so many buttons, and I lost control. I'm sorry."

The above seems perfectly sincere and heartfelt but could very much be the words of an emotional manipulator. As humans, when we love or trust people, we always want to see them in the best possible light. As a result, even when they do the wrong things, as long as they come up with an explanation that makes some level of sense and tugs at a few heart strings, we will most likely overlook what they have done. Manipulators use this to their advantage.

Although what they have done is wrong, they find a justification that sounds logical and rational, so their bad behavior is minimized till it doesn't seem so bad anymore, and so that they can get you to stop talking about it and move on.

Creating Fear

You may observe this trait, especially with manipulative individuals close to you, such as family members or lovers. These individuals know how much you cherish the relationship you have with them and how special they are to you, so they'll use this to get you to do what they want. By sowing the idea in your mind that they will terminate their relationship with you or dilute it if you take certain actions, they manipulate you into doing things that you would not naturally do.

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CHAPTER 9: MIND CONTROL/BRAINWASHING



Defining Brainwashing

Brainwashing refers to thought reform. It involves several different techniques that, over time, sway a person to change their very thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and core beliefs. They change so much that they have essentially lost their ability to make free choices; they become obedient. The techniques that cause the change can vary greatly, but as a general rule, when brainwashing occurs, it is typically combined with some sort of danger and threat, with force frequently used.

Brainwashing is essentially the gradual process of replacing the ideas of a victim with new ideas that should adapt to a manipulator’s own needs. Often, brainwashing occurs when people believe they are being called for a higher purpose such as joining a terrorist organization. Most believe that brainwashing is a Hollywood fiction of someone who continually imposes certain concepts on their victims, and within a short period, the person becomes the manipulator for every bidding. More realistically, it is a process that generally changes an individual's perception of reality far from what they orginially had; a very gradual but voluntary process. The fundamental trick is to make the victim feel as though they are always in control.

The Process of Brainwashing

The starting point of brainwashing is the social circumstances and the mental state of the victim. These elements are the foundation for the rest of the process, and if the manipulator is not able to figure this part out, then

the brainwashing won’t be successful. Brainwashing is not a process that is going to work on everyone. It requires the identification of a person who has a void they are trying to fill.

This brings us to an important point. Who is the ideal victim for a brainwasher? People who have had their existing reality shaken up because of recent events are great targets for brainwashers. If you have lost someone you are close to or had another dramatic or traumatic event in your life, then you may be more susceptible to brainwashing.

Once the brainwasher has found their victim, either through the Internet or in person, the process of brainwashing can begin. Contrary to the popular image you may have in your mind about a brainwasher, this person will often come across as rational, friendly, and calm. Someone who seems to have their life together in a way the victim wishes they could have their own. Imagine how it would feel if you were homeless and a celebrity you admired befriended you. This is often how the process of meeting the brainwasher will feel for the victim.

The brainwasher will get to work right away. The first step for them is to create a level of rapport and trust between themselves and the victim. This will be done by identifying both superficial and deep similarities. The superficial similarities could involve some surface-level preferences, something like enjoying the same food or sport as the other person.

They will then move on to a deeper level of rapport, possibly involving a deeper shared experience that they had in the past. The brainwasher will most likely convincingly fake this to create these bonds. So, if the victim shares with the brainwasher that they lost a close relative in the past, then the brainwasher is all of a sudden going to have a story that is similar to share with the victim.

This false connection and emotional warmth are not the only things that are going to occur. The brainwasher wants to cement the new bond as quickly as possible. It is not uncommon for them to provide favors and gifts for their victim. They could send them a gadget or some other item they may find useful. They may treat the victim to a meal. The point of doing this is to create a sense of gratitude and indebtedness from the victim to the brainwasher. This will soften up a lot of the resistance that the victim may experience.

After the resistance has been stripped away a bit, the next step is a sort of utopian presentation. This involves the brainwasher slowly and increasingly offering a solution to all the problems that the victim previously opened up about. This is not going to be a big hard push or sell. Rather, the brainwasher knows how to do this in an offhand and casual way to make sure they don't deal with any negative experiences by pressing the victim. This solution is always going to be the personality, ideology, or cult that the brainwasher is working to make the victim convert to.

When these steps are done properly, the victim will be left wanting more; more information and more understanding of the solution that the brainwasher has hinted at. The brainwasher may even withhold some of this information in the beginning, treating it as something that the victim needs to work to attain. The point of doing this is to motivate the victim to seek out and accept the information they are eventually going to hear.

After the victim has had some time being spoon fed snippets of this belief system, and they have shown they will respond well to them, the brainwasher will carefully reveal the right information at the right time. This is a concept called a gradual revelation or "milk before meat." It includes the presentation of an easy-to-accept idea before the controversial idea is revealed.

For example, if the brainwasher is trying to convert the victim over to religious terrorism, they would not start with the terrorism part. They may initially focus on the fact that God loves the victim, something that the victim is likely to accept. The more objectionable ideas, such as God wants you to blow yourself up, are ones that are saved until much later in the process. Once the victim has accepted that last part, then this brainwashing session is at a point of no return.

At this point, you may be curious as to why the victim is still engaging with the brainwasher, especially when these more objectionable ideas start to become apparent. There are three main reasons:

a) The vulnerable victim has been worked on by the brainwasher. They feel a strong sense of liking toward the brainwasher, and they want to get their approval.

b) The victim has invested time, and in some cases, money, in the process up to this point. This is often known as the sunk cost fallacy. The victim is going to feel like it is a bad idea to throw away all the hard work and money they have put into the process.

c) During this process, the brainwasher has been amassing a lot of sensitive and secretive information on the victim. They are often willing to hold this information over the victim to keep them on the right path.

Undetectable Mind Control

The truth can be a destroyer of illusions. This is why it can be hard to hear, and you can use this fact to your advantage. You have heard about the law of attraction. If you think it, you attract it. That is the basic premise. Now, whether this works or not remains unseen, but you can modify this tactic to persuade others.

The first step is making sure that you have full control over your mind. This allows you to think efficiently and gain a greater understanding of how the human mind works. You must understand this before you can control the mind of another person without being detected. The following tips will help you gain control over your mind first:

d) Identify the troubles in your mind and sort them out.

e) Go into controlling your mind with a plan.

f) When working on this, be calm because it ensures an open mind.

g) Still your visceral responses.

h) Relax your muscles.

i) Utilize breathing exercises and meditation to get deeper into your mind.

j) Sense the physical symptoms that come with your thoughts.

k) Evaluate all of your thoughts for a source and reason.

Once you do this, you will know what all of your thoughts mean, and you can control them. Once you master controlling your mind, you will be able to seamlessly control the minds of others without being detected.

Mind Control in Society

You see mind control every day, and you have even fallen victim to it when is is used in advertising and marketing. For example, you see a television commercial that captures your attention. The product is not one you need, but the commercial captured your mind and essentially told you on a subconscious level that you need the product. So, you go and buy it. You had no idea your mind was being controlled. You probably did not realize it until reading this section right now.

When you master undetectable mind control, you will essentially be marketing yourself. The result will not be others buying you but giving you what you want.

Undetectable Mind Control Techniques

There are several techniques that you will use when you are working to control the minds of others. All of these are relatively simple to implement once you have gained control over your mind.

Think for Them

When you need something from someone, do not give them a chance to think it over. Tell them what they are thinking and what they are going to do. People are naturally busy and if you ask them to consider something, they are likely to either forget or not give it enough thought to give you your desired outcome. When you help them not have to think, they view it

as if you are helping them, making them more likely to give you what you want.

Ask for an Inch

When you are assessing how easy a person is to control, you want to take baby steps so that they never catch on to what you are doing. So, start with small things first, such as asking them to buy you a drink or making them take you to a movie. From here, you can persuade them to do larger things, such as paying a bill for you or buying you something on the pricey side. It is all about testing the waters and essentially priming your target.

Give Some Too

If all you do is take, no matter how naïve a person is, they are going to eventually catch on to what you are doing. So, on occasion, buy them a drink, compliment them or offer to pay for the movie. This makes the relationship seem balanced and even, but what you are doing is ensuring that they continue to be available for whatever you need from them.

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CHAPTER 10: NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING



Neuro-linguistic programming is a system of education and training based on an understanding of developmental, behavioral, and cognitive psychology. Education and training in NLP focus on three aspects of human psychology: the neurological system, which regulates the physical functioning of the human body; language function, which determines how we interact with other people; and “programming,” a term used to describe the beliefs, knowledge, and experiences we accumulate over time that together inform our worldview and determine how we behave.

NLP was originally founded in the 1970s by John Grinder and Richard Bandler. The theories behind their work are based on both the scientific study of linguistics, sociology, and political science, as well as New Age mysticism and the self-improvement movement that also began in the 1970s. Specifically, their claim that the “map is not the territory,” as a way of describing the disconnection between our subjective perception of the world and reality itself is taken directly from the work of Alfred Korzybski, who founded the school of general semantics in 1933.

They also reference Gregory Bateson’s work detailing the conflict between flaws in societal and governmental systems and how these can cause problems in human communication and government. Finally, the work of Noam Chomsky, whose theories of transformational and universal grammar linked the important influence language function has in areas as seemingly unrelated as world government and politics, is one of the primary theories used to support claims that NLP therapy can transform the lives of its followers.

NLP is also influenced by many non-scientific movements, including the mystical writings of Carlos Castenada. Many sociologists have categorized

NLP not only as pseudo-science but also as a quasi-religion that belongs to the large sphere of New Age and/or Human Potential movements. Some have criticized NLP as a form of folk magic that borrows the language and theories of science and medicine to validate completely non-scientific practices.

Carlos Castaneda wrote a series of novels in the 1970s portraying the power of shamanism among the indigenous tribes of North America, and many of the NLP modeling techniques borrow directly from Castaneda's novels, including "double induction" and "stopping the world." NLP behavior modification techniques based on modeling and the use of NLP language coaching use mimetics similar to the rituals of many New Age syncretic religions.

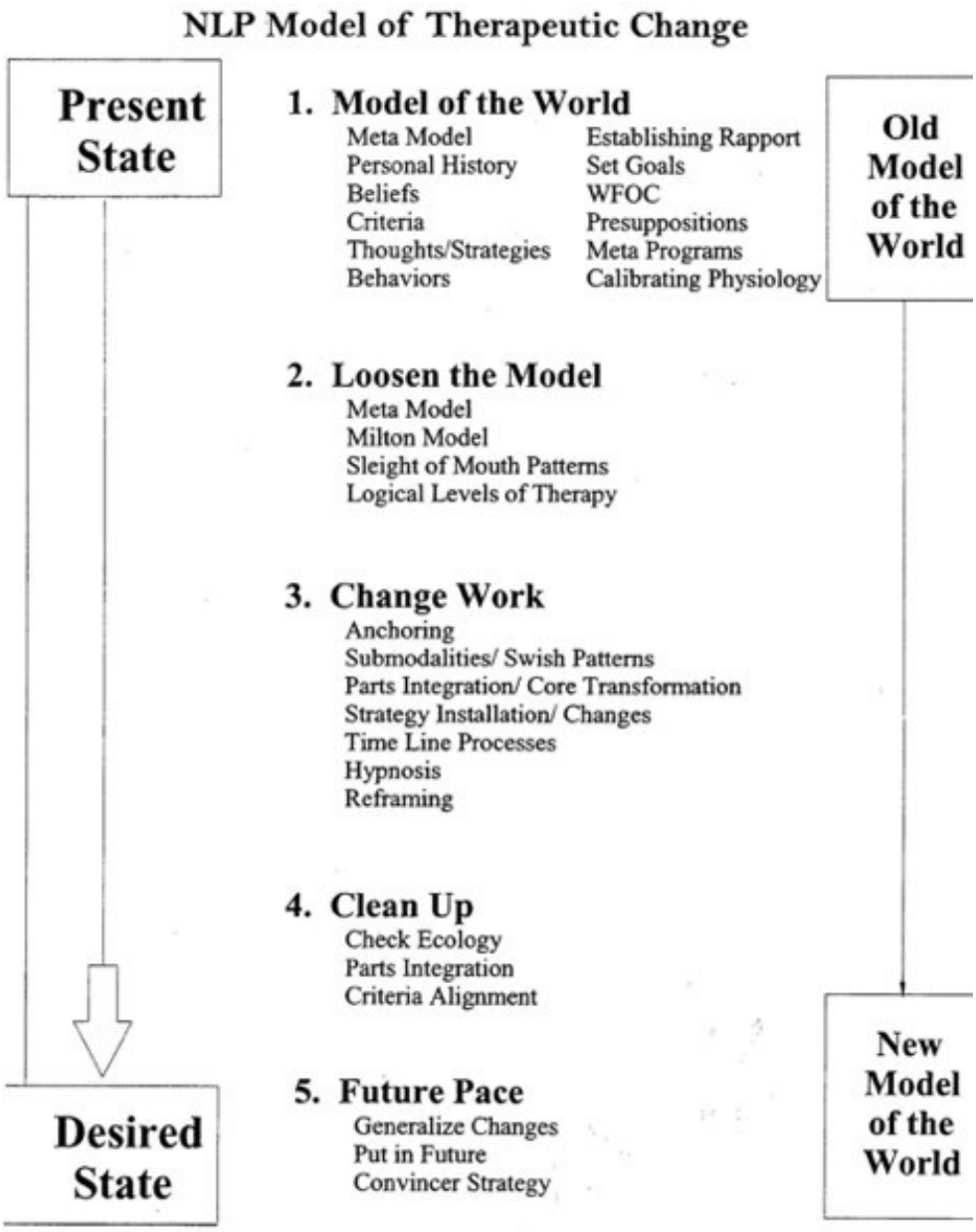
There is a basic philosophical assumption underlying all of the human potential and self-improvement programs that originated during the time NLP was developed. Objectivism is a philosophy based on the understanding that reality is a fundamental, physical fact—the material world that surrounds us is an objective reality, and we can come to an understanding of this reality through our senses. More importantly, objectivism insists that reality is the same for everyone because it is objective. Though individual perceptions may differ, the objective reality does not.

The philosophies upon which NLP is based take a radically different approach and may be regarded as subjectivism. The basic theory is that each of us is incapable of knowing, because we all perceive the world subjectively, filtered by what we have learned from previous experiences and cultural and traditional learning. Also, the part of the world we live in is governed by laws and customs we have come to know as "true." But these laws and customs differ from one geographical location to the next and from one demographic group to the next. Thus, for each of us, the world is limited because we can only perceive it from a limited and subjective perspective.

According to the founders of NLP, your thoughts, feelings, and beliefs are not things that exist; they are things you have learned to do. Because we have spent so many years of our lives learning how to do these things from the people around us, our neurological systems, at some point, accept them

as reality. We stop questioning whether other facts or perspectives exist, or, using the language of NLP, whether some other facts and perspectives would help us to do other things. In the language of NLP, this is known as an internal “map of the world” that we learn through sensory experience.

We learn to communicate using both verbal and non-verbal language. The words we use, the metaphors we are most comfortable with, the analogies that are most common in our speech, our vocabulary, our level of discipline in using correct grammar or pronunciation, the amount of slang we use, whether our language is casual or formal, the ideas we talk about, the accent we are most likely to use when speaking—all of these linguistic abilities follow directly from our map of the world. Although this dual form of communication is very complex and powerful, our ability to communicate is limited by this subjective reality experience. Together, these two elements, our neurological maps, which in turn form our patterns of linguistic expression, represent our “programming,” hence, neuro-linguistic programming. Below is a diagram illustrating the theory behind NLP:



(NLP model of therapeutic change, n.d.)

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CHAPTER 11: HOW TO DEAL WITH MANIPULATIVE PEOPLE



We all have been guilty at one time or another of resorting to manipulation to get something that we wanted. It is almost painful to never talk without any form of agenda. Every time we need a friend's favor, we might resort to slight manipulation or persuasion in trying to get them to go along with what we need them to do. If we need a colleague at work to go along with our agenda, we might need to resort to bribery or intimidation to get them to act. Leaders, managers, and supervisors rely on some techniques of manipulation to either inspire (persuasion) or play on your emotions and fears to get you to listen and follow their instructions. Manipulation is all around us, despite the negative association with this term. It is either that you are being manipulated, or you are the one who manipulates.

As we know by now, manipulators always want to be in charge, to put themselves above you and everyone else around them in order to feel superior. To be the one who pulls all the strings and lets everyone else dance to their drumbeat. To do this, they will do whatever they can to try and rattle your faith, making you second guess yourself. Even if you don't necessarily see yourself as a manipulator, you might have done something like this before. Have you ever met a new friend at work who was laughing and joking while you tried to get them to take a step back and tone it down? Maybe you felt a little jealous that everyone was starting to warm up so quickly to the new colleague, and you didn't like to feel your popularity could be threatened. That colleague might have been taken aback by your sudden remark, and what you would have done is to put in their minds a little seed of doubt that their behavior may not have been as acceptable as they thought it was. Or maybe there was a friend you were in danger of losing a promotion to, so you secretly pointed out all the "errors" they made, playing on their insecurities to throw them off their game.

Manipulators want those around them to feel as if they never are good enough. What's worse is that most of us already feel inadequate, and we're concerned that other people might notice it too. This feeling has now become so prevalent, with studies finding that 70% of the population is experiencing this feeling, that it has its own name—Imposter Syndrome. According to the California Institute of Technology, those who suffer from this syndrome continually feel incompetent or like a failure. Many who live with Imposter Syndrome tend to feel self-doubt and believe they are intellectual frauds, no matter how much evidence suggests their success. Another study found that people who regularly experienced this syndrome were often poorly performing (although they were able to do better) and were usually much more nervous than those who experienced Imposter Syndrome less often. Sufferers of Imposter Syndrome also experienced a higher, more significant loss of self-esteem after what they perceived as a failure. This sensation often hits them harder than anyone else, and several studies have shown a strong correlation between Impostor Syndrome and feelings of shame, humiliation, and self-sabotage.

Individuals with the Imposter Syndrome are just the kind of people that manipulators target. When they can tap into this psychological fear, you become easy targets for them to prey on, and they will make your insecurities worse by continually questioning your actions in a way that makes you doubt your self-worth. They do this purposefully to keep you as unfocused and off-balance as possible, making it easier for them to strike when the time is right.

Handling the Manipulators in Your Life

Manipulators are everywhere, and if you're sick of being a target of their mind games, it's time to put a stop to it. Nobody has the right to manipulate and take advantage of your insecurities, whether it’s your parents, siblings, uncles, aunts, friends, colleagues, bosses, supervisors, or customers. No one has the right to make you feel bad about yourself, and no one should force you to do something that you don't want to do. A relationship with a manipulator can continue for years, often within your own family. Cutting ties with manipulators you're not related to is more comfortable, but what do you do if they are your parents or siblings? Or friends that you have

known all your life? Remembering your fundamental rights is the first step towards learning how to deal with those people. You have the right to:

- Have value
- Express your emotions
- Express your views
- Express your wishes
- Set priorities
- Say no without feeling guilty
- Take what you are owed
- Take action to defend yourself from any form of moral, emotional, or physical harm
- Do what makes you happy

Your Basic Rights

These are the fundamental rights that belong to us all, and no one should be permitted to take them from you. Remembering those rights when dealing with manipulators will help you steel your resolve to fight off their attacks. Remember that you are responsible for your own life and your happiness, and you should never put those two things in someone else's hands, especially if that person happens to be a manipulator.

The next steps needed to manage manipulators are:

- **Stay Away From Them**: This is the only way to eliminate their power over you. If they aren't members of your immediate family, consider staying away from them altogether, even cutting ties with them if you can, because unless they change their ways, it's unlikely that the relationship will ever do you any good. If the manipulators are members of your family, you may not be able to cut ties with them completely, but you can minimize the time you spend with them. Avoid spending some time alone with them, remain "too busy" to have too long a chat, and be careful about how much time you allow yourself to spend about them. Don't forget the fundamental rights you hold.

- **Start Defending Yourself Against Their Bullying:** Some manipulators will resort to bullying if they know that their targets are weak. Manipulators whose personalities fall within the Dark Triad enjoy intimidating their victims mentally and emotionally, relishing the strength they feel when they realize they've struck fear in others' hearts. Defend yourself against their manipulation by recognizing that the manipulator clings to the vulnerabilities that they feel are yours. If you give in and play their game the way they want, you reinforce their belief that they are right. When you choose to stand up for yourself and confront them, they tend to retreat, as most manipulators are cowardly under all that bravado. They will never put themselves in a position that allows others to see their true colors.
- **Don’t Let Them Pressure You:** Even if you feel pressured to make a decision, do not let them know. Say firmly, "I'm going to need some time to think about it." Whenever you begin to feel the pressure inside you, take a deep breath, and remember that no one has the right to force you to do something you don't want to do. You have every right to say no, and you need not feel guilty about it. People pleasers often struggle with this step because they have a strong desire to avoid upsetting anyone, even if they know full well that they are being exploited. Yet you have to stand your ground and let the manipulator know once and for all that they can't push you around like your thoughts aren't worth anything.
- **Learn to Say No:** It's not the world's most comfortable feeling to say no, but as guilty as you feel, your happiness and your needs must come first. You owe nothing to the manipulator, and they have no right to expect you to bend to their will (though that is precisely what they intend). When you learn to say no, you don't deliberately annoy others, you love yourself, and you set your limits. Knowing to say no is how you stand up for yourself, knowing that you won't be bullied, and saying no is within your rights if it doesn't fit with your happiness.
- **Point Out the Consequences:** When you see that the manipulator has put you in a situation where you feel verbally and emotionally abused, let them know that you are aware of that by pointing out the possible consequences of what they are trying to do. Putting yourself one step ahead of them by letting them know that you're completely aware of their actions will take them by surprise and signal that you're not

someone to be messed with. You'll force them to re-evaluate their strategies and think twice about trying to take advantage of you in the future.

- **Do Not Expect Anything from Them**: Particularly with regards to getting them to see things from your viewpoint. This won't happen because most manipulators are self-absorbed people, concerned solely with their own desires and interests. They care little about other people's feelings or opinions, and they certainly won't go out of their way to try and see things from your perspective. They lack empathy and can never see past their own interests. If you expect them to change their tune, you're only setting yourself up for disappointment. Never expect them to change their ways, or even attempt to fix them because that's not going to happen. A manipulator will only change their ways when they themselves decide they want to; not because someone else has asked them to.
- **Diffuse and Exit:** When you find yourself in a confrontational situation with a manipulator, there are only two goals to consider. The situation needs to be diffused and then exit. Even if the "exit" means to put an abrupt stop to the conversation or to end a friendship altogether, the longer you keep engaging with the manipulator, the more they may try to rile you up by criticizing you, arguing with you, accusing you of something you've never done just to get a rise out of you, trying to make you lose your patience, and even pressing your buttons until you become overly emotional and likely to do something you might regret.

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CHAPTER 12: HOW TO DEFEND YOURSELF FROM MANIPULATION TECHNIQUES



At this point in your reading, I assume you have a clear understanding of manipulation with regards to what it is, how it happens, and the techniques that are involved. When people realize they have been manipulated, they may feel ashamed, weak, used, or stupid. Generally, being manipulated sucks, especially after realizing that we have been used to help other people further their selfish agendas.

Chronic manipulation can have devastating effects on the victims. The most obvious effect is that the affected person develops a negative image of themselves and the world. This is true, especially for people who have been manipulated and had their bodies or minds abused. Some people stop trusting everyone and everything out of fear of being used again. Nobody wants to have their worldviews negatively affected by intruders.

All the same, there is some good news. The good news is that just like we can put measures in place to prevent us from falling ill, we can also implement some to prevent and discourage manipulation. Manipulation will only affect us if we allow it to, or fail to recognize it before and while it happens. By identifying manipulation before it occurs, we can retain control over our lives. Even if we are already being manipulated by applying these effective anti-manipulation tactics, we can overcome the vice and reclaim our beautiful lives.

We are going to discuss six powerful ways to avoid or reverse manipulation. Some of the ideas might not be desirable or effective in every situation. However, from the six suggestions below, you are sure to settle on a few, which will be your best bets against these malicious mind controllers.

1. **Understand Your Rights**

The main reason that you will feel as if someone is manipulating you is that you will feel as if your rights have been violated. However, you might fail even to realize that someone is manipulating you if you have no idea what fundamental rights you are entitled to. As long as you stick to your lane and do not harm other people or interfere with their lives, you remain on the safe side. Fundamental rights are the acceptable boundaries that define the extent to which one person can affect the life of another. Therefore, one of the most effective ways that can help you to keep manipulators away is to understand where your rights start and end. Below are some of the common fundamental human rights:

k) Everyone has the right to be respected. If someone is disrespecting you, it might be a sign of manipulation.

l) Everyone has the right to determine their own priorities. If you decide to prioritize yourself, nobody should try to interfere with that.

m) Everyone has the right to express their wants, opinions, and feelings. As we have already seen, manipulation happens by taking away free will.

n) Everyone has the right to refuse something without being made to feel guilty. This is very important because if you realize that you do not want something, saying “no” should be respected.

o) Everyone has the right to have opinions that differ from others. Disagreements are normal. Therefore, nobody should mistreat you in any way for holding different opinions.

p) Everyone has the right to create and live their own healthy and happy life. If anything threatens to take this right away, such as a toxic friendship, you have the right to cut it down.

q) Finally, and very importantly to our topic of avoiding manipulation, everyone has the right to protect themselves from being emotionally, physically, or mentally threatened. If you feel this right is being violated, object, and move away.

2. **Maintain Your Distance**

It is easy to detect a manipulator because they tend to show their true colors when faced with different situations or interact with different people. As humans, we are allowed to adapt to situations and people. However, with toxic people, their variations are extreme. A manipulator might be highly polite when with you, but when they meet someone they have less regard for, they can become overly rude or aggressive with them. Similarly, they might seem helpless at one moment but become very controlling the next. This is a sure red flag that the person is unstable and unreliable, and that it will only be a matter of time before they extend the same treatment to you.

The best course of action when you come across such a person is to maintain a healthy distance. A healthy distance means you might not necessarily cut them off completely, but you do not put yourself in situations that might make it easy for them to control you. Avoid engaging with such a person as much as you can. We have seen that chronic manipulators do it as a result of psychological complications, and it might be easier to avoid them than try to change them. However, this is a personal choice.

3. **Understand Them**

It is very important to understand that manipulation can manifest from a psychological problem. If you understand something, then you can determine how to deal with it. For example, we do not scold babies for soiling their clothes or keeping us awake all night because we know it is beyond their control. As they grow up, these habits improve. In the same way, you should look at a manipulator as someone who is experiencing a

problem with themselves. Manipulative people tend to possess low self-esteem, lower willpower, and an irresistible urge for chaos and drama.

Their way of expression is affected such that it does not go well with normal people. One of the reasons they might tend to control others is that they feel inferior and need to hurt others so they can feel better. They do not even realize that their actions affect others because they lack empathy. In short, if we understand that manipulation is a form of mental illness, then we can take any attempts at manipulation lightly. In this way, the manipulator does not gain any power or control over us.

4. **Hide Your Weaknesses**

Manipulation only occurs if we allow it to. One way to enable it to happen is by allowing outsiders to know our weaknesses. A manipulator's agenda is usually to find out the weaknesses of their victims and then use them to evoke feelings of inadequacy, guilt, shame, blame, or weakness. Therefore, always keep your weaknesses hidden unless it is completely necessary to reveal them, or if the person you are opening up to has proven to be genuine and trustworthy. The downside to opening up even to real friends is that you never know when the friendship might end.

To some extent, sharing our weaknesses is not even necessary. Weaknesses are part of being human, and everyone has them. Therefore, if you can keep your shortfalls to yourself and feel satisfied with them, it can be the best defense against manipulation. After all, everyone has their flaws, and they do not go around preaching about them. Once the manipulator has no shortcuts to accessing our most powerful emotions, they cannot succeed in invading our lives. In short, know what to share with others and what to keep to yourself.

5. **Do Not Ask for Permission**

In our upbringing, we are taught to always ask for things to be done for us. As children, we had to ask for food rather than prepare it ourselves. We also needed permission before going out or sleeping over at friends' houses.

Requesting permission was meant to keep us in good standing with everyone, so we could avoid doing what would otherwise offend them. Unfortunately, this training led to conditioning whereby to do something, we need to seek permission or validation even as adults. Manipulators have taken advantage of this kind gesture and turned it into a part of their artillery. They want us to feel tied to imaginary ideals and rules that we must consult with some authority before taking action. Worse still, they install themselves as these authorities, which we must consult.

Honestly, asking for permission, especially to do things in one's personal life, is outdated. It is about time we stopped being concerned with the opinions of others about our life decisions. If we needed others to approve or disapprove of all our decisions, we'd get cast into an abyss of confinement.

For example, parents should not decide who their children should marry. While this was a common practice in the past, things have changed. Arranged marriages risk pitting two people who have no connection together. Such relationships feel like prisons for both partners, and usually, they end in disaster. Therefore, to avoid manipulation of this kind, we should make our decisions without seeking the opinions of others (manipulators).

6. Ignore Manipulators

If you cannot move away from a person that you know is manipulative, apply the shield of ignorance. One of the mistakes that we make when dealing with such people is giving them the attention they so desire. Once they get the attention, they gain the upper hand in initiating the mind poisoning process. If you see or suspect that a manipulative person is making moves on you, just ignore them. For instance, if someone gives you too many compliments yet you are not acquainted with them, resort to ignoring them. You can tell them that the compliments are enough and ignore them henceforth.

One risk of ignoring manipulative people is that it might trigger more aggressiveness in them. They are usually fighting with their inner selves

and will pour out the anger if they feel ignored. This does not mean you should not apply ignorance where necessary. When a normal person feels ignored, they pull back and stop their advances. Therefore, assume that this is the response that they will give. If they resort to aggression, you can take appropriate action, such as reporting them. We will go into this point later.

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CHAPTER 13: HOW TO AVOID BEING MANIPULATED



You do not have to be a victim of manipulation. Here are some tips on how you can avoid being manipulated:

1. **Observe People**

Observe people; watch how they act towards others and in various situations. While it is true that everyone has a slight degree of social differentiation, a manipulator tends to be more habitual. They usually act to the extreme, rude to some and overly polite to others—or fiercely aggressive one moment and helpless the next. When you meet this kind of individual, the best course of action is to stay away from them. Keep your distance unless it is absolutely necessary.

2. **Set Boundaries**

Setting boundaries for yourself is a basic defense against would-be manipulators. Know your basic rights are and use them to set your limits. As we previously discussed, your rights include:

Saying no

Setting your own priorities

Expressing your own opinions, feelings, and desires

Being treated respectfully

Protecting yourself

Having a healthy and happy life

Having a different opinion from others

Getting paid what you are owed

Adhering to these rights will set your boundaries. As long as you are not inflicting harm on others, you have the right to defend and stand up for yourself against anyone.

3. **It Is Not Your Fault**

When you feel your answers do not seem to satisfy the manipulator, never blame yourself. Remember that manipulators exploit your weaknesses and use them against you. There is nothing wrong with you; the manipulator aims to make you feel bad and inadequate to gain control and power over you. If this happens, remember your basic rights and ask yourself:

Is this person treating me with respect?

Are his or her demands reasonable?

Is our relationship one-way or two-way?

Does this relationship make me feel good?

From these questions, you will be able to determine if the problem is you or the other person.

4. Counter Their Demands

Manipulators always demand from their victims, and more often than not, the victims give in to these demands. When their demands become too unreasonable for you, counter them with your own requests to see if they know they are demanding too much. You can throw back some questions to make them aware that their request is putting you at a disadvantage:

Are you telling me or asking me?

What do I get if I say yes?

Does that sound fair to you?

Do you expect me to do that?

When you ask questions like these, the manipulator may become aware of the inequity of their demands and may stop or back down. However, not everyone will do so, such as the narcissist who will ignore your questions and insist on getting their own way. When you meet this kind of person, use the next tip to stop the discussion and retain control.

5. I'll Think About It

These words are probably the most powerful words you can utter to counter an unreasonable demand. Manipulators have a way of putting pressure on you to give an immediate answer. When this happens, buy yourself time and

distance yourself from their influence. Give yourself power by saying “I will think about it.” These words give you the power. You now control the situation; as the manipulator must wait for your answer. This also gives you enough time to weigh up the pros and cons of their demand and consider whether you should negotiate or just say no.

6. **Say No**

Saying no is not as easy as it may sound. For some, saying the dreaded two-letter word is uncomfortable; while others may want to say yes but would like to think about it first, others just want to avoid conflict. Saying no is not a sign of rudeness if you say it articulately and diplomatically. You can say no without being rude or impolite.

> If you are saying no, do not feel guilty. You do not owe the one making the request anything.
>
> They are making the request because they need you and your influence. If you feel that saying yes may violate your boundaries, do not give in. Remember that you have the right to say no without guilt, the right to set your priorities, and the right to live a happy and healthy life.
>
> Protect your most important resource – time. If saying yes will take up time from your other priorities, be honest. You can say, “I would like to help you but, I have a prior commitments.”

Take away the sting of your rejection by referring them to someone else who maybe able to help them.

7. **Set Consequences**

When a manipulator refuses to take no as an answer, set consequences. This would give him pause and could make him change his behavior. For example, “If you continue with this offensive behavior, I will leave (or ask you to leave).”

8. **Stand Up for Your Rights**

In tip number two, you learned about your basic rights and how to use them to set boundaries. However, manipulators can also employ bullying through intimidation and physical harm. What you need to remember is that bullies can only bully those they see as weak. Most bullies are cowards inside, and when they see their victim fighting back, they will normally back down. As long as you are not harming other people, there is nothing wrong with standing up for your rights.

Manipulation only happens if you allow it.

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CHAPTER 14: MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT DARK PSYCHOLOGY



There are a variety of subjects that are appropriate for dinner discussion. Dark psychology is not one of them. The last thing you want to know at Thanksgiving is how Uncle Joe performed on his Machiavellian orientation. Due to the maliciousness around dark psychology, there are generally very few accessible conversations on the subject.

Take the Dark Triad experiment, for example. Are you thinking of taking it? If so, are you willing to disclose your findings to anyone? The odds are that if you responded positively to the first query, you would presumably respond negatively to the second question. Most people want to speak of themselves as decent citizens.

Furthermore, they want other people to think of them as nice individuals. Putting your Dark Triad evaluation on a show for everyone to see might not help this objective. Because of all this hush-hush, there are several assumptions and misconceptions concerning character traits that are critical to dark psychology.

MYTH ONE: Psychopaths and sociopaths are the same things.

TRUTH: Psychopathy and sociopathy are two distinct forms of antisocial personality conditions.

The words “psychopath” and “sociopath” are used synonymously in daily conversation. However, there are notable differences between these two personality disorders. Experts find sociopathy to be a less severe condition than psychopathy. The list below illustrates some of the features that differentiate a psychopath from a sociopath:

Psychopath

a) Lacks moral scruples

b) They are willing to fit in by being attractive and are therefore more difficult to spot.

c) Cold-hearted and highly tactical

Sociopath

d) Has a poor conscience

e) Don't have any intention of fitting in and are therefore easy to identify

f) Will only be concerned about themselves

g) Hot-headed, will jump without checking

MYTH TWO: Psychopaths are raised – it is not something you are born with.

TRUTH: Psychopaths are indeed born that way.

Psychopathy is a very complex personality disorder that more often than not, begins at birth. Psychopaths emerge from the womb already programmed to behave differently from most people. Consequently, they move away from what is considered normal and often find themselves in situations in which any other “average” individual would not typically find themselves. A study has shown that the psychopath's brain functions differently to the brains of individuals who do not have any personality disorders. So, what happens when a psychopath is born?

Depending on the setting in which the psychopath emerges, they will grow into one of the following pathways: If a toddler who exhibits indications of psychopathy grows up in a supportive family, he or she could be expected to become a corporate or political figure with a lot of power. If the infant grows up in a dysfunctional or abusive setting, they are likely to become a

serial killer or murderer. Psychopaths who are molded in an atmosphere that is somewhere between the first two conditions often end up in positions of control in areas such as law enforcement and administration.

MYTH THREE: Sociopaths are born that way.

TRUTH: Sociopaths are primarily the result of their surroundings.

More often than not, sociopaths are the product of the society in which they are raised. It often begins with a biological or hereditary propensity to sociopathy, compounded by the form of care they receive. For example, a boy who grows up in a society where nobody appears to care for him is likely to have the same lack of sympathy for others in later life. When children grow up around parents who possess little sense of morality and have no social code, their morals will be profoundly weakened as a result.

MYTH FOUR: Women cannot be psychopaths.

TRUTH: There are reported cases of female psychopaths.

More often than not, when you hear the word “psychopath,” you immediately assume it is a male character. However, this is not always the case. Many females are recognized as psychopaths who utilize their sexuality and womanhood to exploit others. Female psychopaths also tend to have a large number of intimate partners.

MYTH FIVE: Psychopaths are fascinated with murder.

TRUTH: Psychopaths have a need for exhilaration.

Murder is just one way that psychopaths quench their need for exhilaration. When most people think about psychopaths, they think of the massacres that happen left, right, and, center. Though while a murderer is more likely than not to be a psychopath, some psychopaths are no more likely to commit murder than the majority of the population. Most psychopaths go through their life pursuing thrills but never really cause violent damage to anyone. Yes, they could break a few hearts when they hop from one romantic partner to another and throw a few people under the bus to scale the professional ladder, but that is as far as many of them go. If you search for a psychopath in your life, you are unlikely to find one if you are only searching for brutality and lust for blood.

MYTH SIX: Psychopathy is a mental disorder that can be treated.

TRUTH: Psychopathy is a personality disorder that has no treatment.

If it were a mental disorder, there would be a chance of therapy. Psychopathy, however, is a personality disorder, and this means that no treatment can make psychopaths calm, emotional, and empathetic. Because they don't accept that anything is wrong, they would not even be concerned about taking medication, even if it did exist. In situations where psychopaths have been persuaded to try therapy to fix broken relationships, it is not unusual to find them trying to manipulate the other party into believing that the therapy is effective or has already worked. Note that these people are extremely deceptive and capable of using whatever methods are necessary to overcome challenging circumstances. Owing to their brazen lack of fear and compassion, a psychopath will have no trouble wasting a loved one's time in therapy, if only to make it seem like they are trying.

MYTH SEVEN: You can transform an individual on the Dark Triad by treating them appropriately.

TRUTH: Most of the individuals who rank highly on the Dark Triad evaluation continue their behavior for the remainder of their lives.

Love is a curious phenomenon in that it lets people feel that they are capable of the impossible, even though the truth is revealed before their eyes. Manipulative characters have a way of love-bombing you into assuming they are the perfect match you have been looking for all along. Sadly, this is typically just an effort to draw you into a friendship that is simply smoke and mirrors. When someone has gotten into this kind of partnership, and the true character of the manipulator then surfaces, you will often see a romantic partner hanging around in the belief that things will improve and love will be sufficient to turn things around. Unfortunately, this is rarely the case.

First of all, the fact that psychopathy is mostly inherited indicates that it is impossible to overcome it. At best, psychopaths can only turn their lack of empathy into goals that are not harmful to social structure as a whole. As for Machiavellianism and narcissism, these often derive from profound psychological distress that may take a great deal of strategy to conquer. Most people who lean heavily towards Machiavellianism and narcissism do

so as a defensive mechanism. Every effort to get them out of this state will only appear to them as an assault, leading them to mount their resistance. As such, interference in the form of love can be extremely inefficient. It is also important to remember that love and other shimmering feelings are not necessarily highly rated by a person in the Dark Triad. They may not even recognize love, regardless of how it seems. As such, if you are in a relationship with a partner who has the traits of the Dark Triad, you might want to reconsider whether that is what you desire.

MYTH EIGHT: Individuals who rank high on the Dark Triad are more alluring.

TRUTH: This has been proven to be false.

Why is it that people still tend to be drawn towards the narcissists and psychopaths of this world? Is it because the Dark Triad characters are more appealing than most of us? In an attempt to ascertain if Dark Triad characters are better-looking, academic scholars investigated a variety of individuals with higher Dark Triad ratings. The findings of this research indicated that the main reason these participants looked appealing was that they dressed and portrayed themselves in a way that was well organized. When they were dressed in bland clothing, these individuals didn't seem as appealing as before. As such, it is reasonable to believe that the care and energy that goes into getting dressed and the confidence that comes with it are what renders a narcissist or psychopath more appealing.

MYTH NINE: Psychopaths can improve when they have children.

TRUTH: Psychopaths are unable to be empathic toward or responsible for their offspring.

Psychopaths typically have a very difficult time raising their children. Unlike average parents who are not on the Dark Triad scale, it is challenging for psychopaths to view their children as unique individuals. Rather, they perceive them to be devices or extensions of themselves that are accessible for their use whenever they wish. Psychopaths are more inclined to see their children as achievements that make them feel good, than as young, emotionally fragile beings who are looking for somebody to protect them throughout their early lives. As such, a psychopath will usually force their children to develop skills in something they have no desire to

participate in, even though it may be to the detriment of the children's mental health and development. They could forcefully sign them up for swimming classes, for example, as they feel that their child will become an excellent swimmer and a champion, just to boost their social status in the neighborhood. It is very difficult to convince psychopathic parents to see that they are acting only in their own interests, and they will not comprehend why their children will not do whatever it takes to get to the highest level.

MYTH TEN: You are either on the Dark Triad, or you are not.

TRUTH: The Dark Triad is a scale on which some feature highly while others appear further down.

The characteristics of narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism are rooted in every individual. The only distinction is that in some individuals, these behaviors are amplified to the extent that they become toxic to those around them. Take narcissism, for example. Everyone has their way of thinking about themselves. Perhaps you like to think that you are nice-looking, intelligent, and easy to love. For a narcissist, this self-image is taken out of context to the point that their entire life circles around it.

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CHAPTER 15: COMMON CONS WORLDWIDE AND THE DARK PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND THEM



As we mentioned before, con artists are a great example of dark psychology at work. As such, we thought you might enjoy a chapter detailing several famous cons practiced across the planet. This can keep you out of trouble when you run into these scams yourself, and can also teach you a little of the dark psychology behind the cons. Some of them are only mildly malicious, but others are quite horrible. We hope this will help to explain a little the mindset behind these dark persuaders so that you may be better equipped to avoid them in your future. Before we go into this list, let's discuss a little how con artists use dark persuasion so effectively.

Embarrassment

Con artists know that most folks will NOT report the incident, as they will feel embarrassed at having been manipulated by a scammer. If it happens to you, you should report it, because we can guarantee that you are probably not the only one and it might not stop for a very long time without your help.

Mirroring Your Body Language

Con artists know that if they mirror your body language, you are more likely to like and trust them. Be sure to watch out for this technique to help protect yourself.

Dress for Success

Con artists know that you are more likely to trust someone well-dressed than you are to trust someone who looks like they just came in off the street. They will take advantage of this. Watch out when someone very well-dressed starts treating you like a best friend, especially if they are talking about new business opportunities. If you do decide to do business, there is nothing wrong with insisting on a background check.

Appear Trustworthy

Con artists will buy you drinks and tell you stories that make them seem more down to earth, in an attempt to win your trust. Conning doesn't always occur in the space of an evening, so even if you have known someone for a month or two, you should still be careful where money is concerned. Anyone you barely know that asks, “Do you want to make some the money?” should be viewed with suspicion at the very least.

Get You Talking About Yourself

As dark manipulators, con artists know that people like you more if you get them to talk about themselves. They also know that this gives them information they can use against you to get what they want. Pay attention to their body language and remember the background check advice that we gave you. It gets you information, it's legal, and you can throw it away once you've protected yourself by checking. It's not popular advice, but it is good advice.

Target You When You Are Vulnerable

Dark manipulators know when you are vulnerable and likely to make bad decisions. Con artists are among the best of them. If you've recently lost someone or lost your job, and someone has popped into your life that you seem to be spending a suspicious amount of money around, be careful. This

might be the kind of “friend” that you'll never see again once the money is gone.

Play on Your Greed

The scams that con artists like to employ the most play on your greed. They usually involve buying items or investing in something that is going to have an unrealistic turnaround time and profit. Be especially wary if there is a time limit or it's a “one-time offer.” If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Now that we have mentioned the basic tactics employed, here are some examples of real-life cons to give you a glimpse into this branch of dark manipulation:

1. "**Your Hotel is Full"**

   This may be familiar to some of you with a fondness for travel. If you have never experienced this ruse before, a taxi driver will get you in the car and when they hear the name of the hotel you are going to, they will then advise you that this hotel is full/overbooked that night and offer to take you somewhere nice where you will be able to get a room. Many weary travelers have fallen for this one, providing unscrupulous business for the taxi driver and the hotel which is owned by one of his friends or family members. This can be easily avoided by insisting that the driver take you to your hotel, by calling your hotel, or by leaving the unscrupulous cabby's vehicle immediately to find yourself a more honest driver.

2. **The Petition**

   This one is popular in Paris but occurs in many places around the world. When entering an area of interest to tourists, you'll notice several people going around with

clipboards. They will come up to you and advise that they are rallying for a particular cause and ask you to sign a petition. Once signed, they will then insist that you have to donate and they will get 'offended' if you resist. Many people will pay to avoid a scene or to avoid being viewed as someone who cares for a cause but is not willing to help. Avoid the clipboards altogether, as they are only after your cash.

3. **Renting a Vacation Apartment**

This one is particularly nasty and occurs in many places across the globe. A con artist posing as a tourist will rent a property with stolen cards, only to then begin advertising the property on the Internet so they can collect as many cash deposits as possible before fleeing the scene. By setting the availability date of the property to be at the end of the month and giving out keys to help sell the con, they end up with a lot of money and plenty of time to disappear before the duped people start arriving. If it's too good to be true, it probably is. Keep a paper trail and never pay a cash deposit.

4. **“I'm Making a Video!”**

One story we heard was a con involving a woman who went into a popular expensive clothing store, claiming she was a music producer. She told them that she was making a video and that the store could advertise their items if they were willing to donate clothing for the band members to wear in the videos. As she had had the place scoped out well beforehand, she knew who could and could not make that sort of decision, and was able to procure some very expensive clothing at someone else's expense.

5. **Art Student**

A very popular scam in Europe, tourists will find themselves approached by someone friendly who claims to be an artist working their way through art school. They will be asked to see the art on display, and only find out too late that they have paid 2-4 times the cost of the copy print they have just purchased.

6. **Your Grandson is in Jail (or the Hospital)**

This one is truly horrible. Many con artists, scammers, and other dark manipulators will arm themselves very well to get what they want from you. Information is something they covet. Finding out your name from your mail or bills in the trash, things only get worse from there. For a time, there were reports of dark manipulators contacting elderly targets and telling them that their grandchild was in jail and needed money wired for a bond, or worse, that they were in the hospital far away and needed someone to get money to them. Using the love for a family member is truly vicious, and helps you understand that some of these people will stop at nothing to get what they want.

7. **Versace Manager Needs Gas**

Everyone has had someone come up to them at a gas station and ask for money but one con artist was a bit more prepared. Dressed in expensive clothes and claiming to work for Versace, this individual asked for gasoline, and even showed the targets fabric and clothing samples in the process to make them feel that this was just a person down on their luck. Reportedly, some people made loans to this person for 20, 50, and even 100 euros. Trust, but verify. You can be a Good Samaritan and still be careful.

8. **Dead Husband's Debt**

This is another horrible scam perpetrated largely on the elderly. Con artists will review obituaries to find out the names of the recently deceased so that they may contact the widow or widower. They will then proceed to tell them that their spouse owed a sum of money and attempt to collect on this while the victim is in a vulnerable emotional state. Dark manipulators like to catch us when we are unbalanced and, for many of them, nothing is sacred. If you ever experience someone contacting you like this, be sure to go straight to the police.

9. **Broken Meter**

Another staple when traveling to a new city or a new country, the old 'broken meter' trick has fleeced many a victim. The scenario is simple. Your taxi arrives, you get in, and are advised that the meter is broken as the cabby starts to pull out of the pick-up zone. Once you reach your destination, the price has been doubled or tripled and they will threaten to call the police if you don't pay. Let them. In this information age that we live in, you can easily map a route from the airport on your smartphone and demonstrate the distance.

The difficult part, however, is that this is very popular in many foreign countries where you may not speak the local language. The best you can do is make sure that the meter is running before you leave and, if not, insist on another ride.

10. **Bird Poop Clean-up**

This is a common street scam. Imagine you are walking and someone comes up to you and points out what looks very much like bird poop on your shoulder. This person immediately pulls out a handkerchief and offers to help you out of this embarrassing situation by cleaning off the offensive item. You thank them and leave, only to find that they also cleaned out your wallet and smartphone. If something similar happens to you while on

vacation, don't let anyone clean your clothing, simply thank them and go into the nearest bathroom to do it yourself.

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CHAPTER 16: THE INTERNET AND DARK PSYCHOLOGY



Psychology is a science that encompasses the study of human thoughts, behavior, emotions, and the mind. The beautiful thing is when one gets a deeper understanding of how psychology operates, it can significantly benefit ourselves and our everyday interactions with others. Man is a social being; therefore, it must process social behaviors that psychology seeks to understand, usually explains, and sometimes predicts.

A large part of psychology aims to diagnose and treat mentally derailed individuals who possess a threat to the general public.

Psychology is all around you; your everyday activity, and your interaction with others, that TV commercial you saw recently, the print ads, the website you are most frequently on, and so on.

Interestingly, there is psychology involved in any human problem, no matter the age or gender, and psychologists aim to make life better and improve human behavior. Part of this, as we know, involves looking at ther darker side of human nature.

Dark psychology aims to understand the various thoughts, reasoning, perception, or feelings that often lead to human predatory behavior that leads to the inhumane and brutal victimization of others without any reasonable human comprehension.

Internet trolls can also be an agent of destruction. An Internet troll starts a quarrel and offends people online. According to psychology, such people sometimes have dark personality traits. They live a life based on their sadistic nature, and others must suffer the same fate; they naturally make you feel bad. Most times, there is a psychological disorder triggered by experience or an ongoing occurrence. When you encounter a troll, the best

thing to do is completely ignore them as they feed on your suffering, which gives them great pleasure.

These internet trolls can be called predators. These people are first-class cyberbullies, stalkers, criminals, sexual predators, and the like. They use the power of the Internet to gather useful information about their victims or targets.

A predator can be a group of people or persons that, directly or indirectly, enjoys stalking, exploring, and victimizing unsuspecting individuals by using the power of information communication technology (ICT). They are often consumed with their desire for power, fantasies, or just suffering from loneliness and searching for acceptance. A predator can be any age, gender, or economic status. Once upon a time, all we had to deal with were human predators. But with the rise of the technology age, things are now even more complicated as predators harness ICT's power and use it to their advantage, creating profiles, and becoming almost untraceable.

Dark Traits and Online Activities

The Internet is a world of its own. It is a chain of networks communicating with billions of other systems. You have access to almost anything you can think of. Despite having wonderful advantages, the disadvantages can be life-threatening. One of the common disadvantages is that people who spend a lot of time working in front of a computer often get ill. They get weaker, develop eye issues, back pain, and the like. Some people develop addictions, some fall into depression, and suffer from other serious health issues, while many end up with serious social issues or psychological disorders.

The Internet takes the different behaviors and activities we engage in offline and makes them practical online as well. Imagine someone addicted to sex, games, or shopping. When such a person gets online, it becomes unlimited, which later turns into a habit. If the Internet has such an effect on the average person, imagine what dangers it would pose in the hands of a predator. Narcissists are proud and lack empathy. Machiavellian are manipulative and lack morals, while psychopaths are selfish and remorseless.

Categorically, the dark personality triad is a big influence in the behaviors of predators that troll online. The online behavior of a psychopathy can be remorseless while a Machiavellian manipulates, and a narcissist is preoccupied with getting attention. With all of these traits in mind, one can easily pinpoint an internet troll that possesses a dark personality. Several researchers discovered that dark personality triad behaviors are mostly found on their social media platforms like Facebook. Most trolls have a psychopathic tendency and promotes themselves or their social status using social media platforms.

Since he has pride, the online activity is a display of superiority, though uploading images that exhbits his wealth and success. They can be materialistic and display a sense of superiority; they can be domineering and have a thirst for power and status. Machiavellians, on the other hand, seek to manipulate and deceive unknowing victims to achieve their own goals. The psychopath, in their way, is the most destructive of all the three personalities.

The psychopath has no conscience, is violent, and very aggressive. Hypothetically speaking, psychopathy in the form of trolling is more frequent among popular people on Facebook. On the other hand, a narcissist might not be a troll, but will see themselves as superior to everyone. They look down on people, and they believe that they are special. Psychopathic traits can be sadistic and they may find pleasure in harming others for fun's sake. So, it is acceptable to say that abnormal online behavior is mostly psychopaths.

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CONCLUSION



This book examined dark psychology, and the use of different techniques that can be used to manipulate people. It is becoming more and more prevalent in our society. This book also examined how you can prevent being manipulated, including steps you can take if someone is trying to manipulate you.

A person who is suffering from these dark psychology traits will not hesitate to use trickery, lies, or deceit to achieve their goals. When they are successful and finally get what they want, they will show no remorse for the people they have manipulated. Most of the time these people may even feel justified and believe that what they did was okay.

Those that are manipulated by such a person may not even know what is going on. Instead of seeing the person for who they are, they might mistake the manipulator as someone with good intentions.

Dark psychology has no boundaries. These tactics may be used by a young person to get what they want or they may be employed by someone much older and more experienced in manipulating others.

To give the manipulator the upper hand, it is common for them to disguise their efforts as something else entirely. Rather than admitting that they are using someone else, they may claim to be doing something nice for them. However, this is just a ploy to get what they want.

This form of manipulation cannot be stopped by being aware of it, as the manipulator will find a way to convince their intended victim that it is all in good fun or something else entirely. Laws have been designed to help prevent this form of manipulation, but they do not always work as planned.

What are the signs that you might be the victim of dark psychology? Do you feel that someone is using you? It is important to figure out quickly how someone is using you and to do everything possible to avoid being manipulated. Learning to spot the signs of manipulation is an important part of overcoming this negative form of influence.

One sign that you could be the victim of dark psychology is when you feel like someone may be using your emotions to get what they want. This may come in the form of friendship or even love, but it can be difficult to tell when someone is doing this. Again, just because you are aware of someone using your emotions does not mean that they are doing it on purpose. A manipulator will use any means to get what they want, even if this means using your emotions to do so.

Another sign that you could be the victim of dark psychology is when someone is playing with your mind. There are many ways that someone can play with your mind to get what they want, and this is an effective way to manipulate their victim. You may have heard of the term “mind games” or even “emotional games”, and these are just different names for what dark psychology is all about.

One of the most common ways that someone will play with your mind is through manipulation. They may claim to be doing something nice for you, but this might not be true at all. Instead, they may be using you to get what they want. This could come in the form of attention, or it could come in the form of a free meal or even a gift.

The main thing to watch out for when you are around someone that uses dark psychology is their intentions. If someone is doing nice things for you but this is not because they care about you or want to help, then there is a good chance that they have an ulterior motive.

As you can see, being manipulated with dark psychology is a serious thing. While it may not be possible to avoid everything in life, you do have the ability to try and overcome this negative form of influence. By learning about it and watching for the signs that someone may be using you, you will be able to overcome this problem more easily.

The most common method of using hypnosis and brainwashing has been through cults. While there seems to be no broad consensus on the definition

of a cult, most authors agree that cults are small groups that can be easily controlled and kept separate from outside influences and that their teachings may be in opposition to the views held by the rest of society.

Cults are known to follow certain patterns related to hypnosis and brainwashing. For example, while concentration and meditation are part of the routine of cult leaders, they also commonly use isolation to keep their followers away from the rest of society. Since many cult leaders tend to have a charismatic personality, followers often feel special or privileged just for being accepted by them. This is accomplished through processes that tend to isolate the followers, while at the same time, they are forced to rely on the leaders for scarce resources such as food and clothes. This results in deep psychological dependence on the leaders and leaves them unable to make decisions without their approval and support. In this way, cults can be seen as a transition from segregation or isolation to imprisonment.

Some authors have also described a process of brainwashing as a three-stage cycle: an indoctrination stage, where the followers are educated about the cult; an isolation stage, where followers are exposed to psychological pressure and deprived of their identity; and an indoctrination stage that reinforces the original teachings given in the first part.

The tendency of cults to use brainwashing techniques is evident in the way they are created. In most cases, cults can be attributed to a charismatic individual who has implemented basic techniques of hypnosis or mind control to attract followers. Then, through social interactions and rituals that pressure people into submission, they seem to convert their followers from a normal state into an abnormal state where they are completely dependent on the leader. Whether it is done through hypnosis or mind control, the effect is the same, and there seems to be a strong relationship between mind-altering techniques and cult creation.

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HOW TO
ANALYZE PEOPLE

CHRISTOPHER KINGLER

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INTRODUCTION

Body language encompasses a variety of forms including facial expressions, gestures, eye movement, and posture. It includes voluntary facial expressions and gestures used to control the flow of interpersonal communication; it can also include control of bodily behavior that is not always conscious.

Body language is one of the three cues used in social interaction (besides speech and touch) and involves nonverbal communication between human beings. It can be used to express an emotion or thought, to manipulate others into feeling a certain way or simply to attract attention. Body language can serve functional purposes, such as to attract the attention of another person, to show interest in what another person is saying, etc.

It also serves social purposes, such as indicating a friendly or hostile attitude towards another person, indicating whether a person is comfortable with another, or showing one's attitudes about, or beliefs in something. It can also be used to advertise that one is looking for a sexual partner.

Body language involves the unconscious observation of natural human body movements such as gestures and posture. In this way, body language is a form of interpersonal communication. The term implies the existence of a range of communication which includes those acts that do not require speech. Body language is also sometimes known as kinesics from its early identification in the work of Dr. Meredith Regan in 1955. The field has become popular largely due to the efforts of famous experts such as Paver, Birdwhistell, and Mehrabian.

Body language can be more accurate than tone of voice in conveying a mood or attitude. Body language can be consciously controlled, but may

also be the result of cultural or emotional conditioning. Body language is a form of nonverbal communication.

Body language exploits natural human cues and signals to display attitudes and intentions to others. It consists of facial expressions, hand gestures, posture, and eye movements.

The field of behavioral kinesics emerged in the 1920s as an offshoot of psychoanalysis. A part of psychoanalytic theory, body language was related to the study of mind or mental states. Sometime after World War II, social scientists and psychologists began to criticize the study of psychology, which ignored situational factors and environmental influences. This was the beginning of nonverbal behavior, the study of environmental influences on behavior. The new field proved useful in several ways:

As a result, manuals for law enforcement officers and security personnel emerged whereby they could learn more about preventing criminal activity, including how to identify subtle facial expressions or other body language cues that might help locate weapons or tell if a person was lying.

The American anthropologist Edward T. Hall was among the first scientists to study cross-cultural differences in nonverbal communication. He also developed one of the earliest theories of personal space.

Body language may be able to help people with autism spectrum disorders better express emotions and socialize in ways they can understand more than words alone.

Neurologists believe that humans are hardwired to control their bodies in certain ways. They suggest that this may be due to the existence of mirror neurons, which give people a sense of how others around them might feel during social interactions.

There are two categories of communication:

Verbal cues are communications that include spoken and written language.

Nonverbal communication: Can be observed through direct body contact or the lack thereof. While direct body contact, like holding hands or

hugging, is an obvious example of nonverbal communication, the absence of direct body contact can also serve as a cue. For example:

***Touch*:** is one method that can help let another person know how you feel about him or her. Touching of any kind serves several main purposes:

Touch may also be used as a form of communication to express affection or intimacy (e.g., hugging, hand-holding), or to indicate familiarity or friendship (e.g., a pat on the back). Touch, however, may also be used as a form of power and control (e.g., pushing someone out of the way).

***Pace and proximity*:** This term refers to spatial relationships between people. People use these cues to determine how close they stand, and, consequently, how intimate an interaction is. When individuals are standing close to each other, it usually means they are comfortable talking to each other.

***Proxemics*:** This is the study of human use of space. It describes personal space, social-cultural space, public spaces, intimate spaces, and others. An example of personal space is tending to feel uncomfortable or awkward when a stranger stands too close.

***Gestures*:** Are nonverbal actions that communicate a message to another person without the use of words.

A gesture is understood within the cultural context it occurs in. For example, a thumbs-up gesture in the United States is understood to signal that everything is okay. In Brazil, Mexico, and other countries in South America, the same gesture signals an insult.

Gestures can be broken down into categories

Gestures can be grouped into several categories: greetings, distance-keeping behaviors, stances and poses, gestures of power or control, insults and obscenities, sexual gestures, and body decoration.

Nonverbal cues of discomfort may be communicated by different behaviors like facial expressions or physical actions that reveal emotions like sadness or anger.

While some bodily signals are universal, the context is essential to understanding them. A smile, for example, can mean "hello," or it can mean "I'm happy." It can also be a signal of embarrassment or discomfort. The context and the meaning must be interpreted to understand how that person actually feels.

Head and Facial Movements Are Used in Many Nonverbal Communication Cues

Head movements can indicate agreement or disagreement with what the speaker is saying. They can also be used to express the speaker's attentiveness towards the other person. Head tilts show attentiveness and interest, while a tilt to one side indicates inattentiveness or uncertainty. When nodding, there is usually a slight pause and no movement of the chin or facial muscles. This type of nod is used to indicate understanding, confirmation, or agreement.

Facial Expressions Can Communicate a Wide Range of Emotions

The facial expression may be the first cue a person will give that reveals their inner feelings. Facial expressions can be controlled voluntarily or involuntarily.

Don't Believe Everything You See: The Body Language Charade

If you want to understand what people are really thinking, studying their body language won't always help.

A dissertation by Tim Leighton, PhD candidate at the University of Portsmouth, UK showed that we are better at hiding our real feelings than most people think. In a test with 60 volunteers, only during 37 percent of

the experiment did the participants seem to be really honest. The other 63 percent of the time, they tried to hide their true feelings from researchers.

"This suggests that most of the time we are better at hiding our emotions than we think, and even when we seem to be giving an honest opinion or expressing an emotion, there's a good chance that this is a front," says Leighton. "We simply can't help it—it's a constant source of deception. Humans seem to be hard-wired to hide their true feelings."

But there's no need to despair. Leighton says, “It's more important to be aware of our body language rather than trying to read what people are thinking. Our body rarely lies, but we need to exercise caution when reading people,” he explains. “Anyone who tells you they can read body language with more than 50 percent accuracy is wrong.”

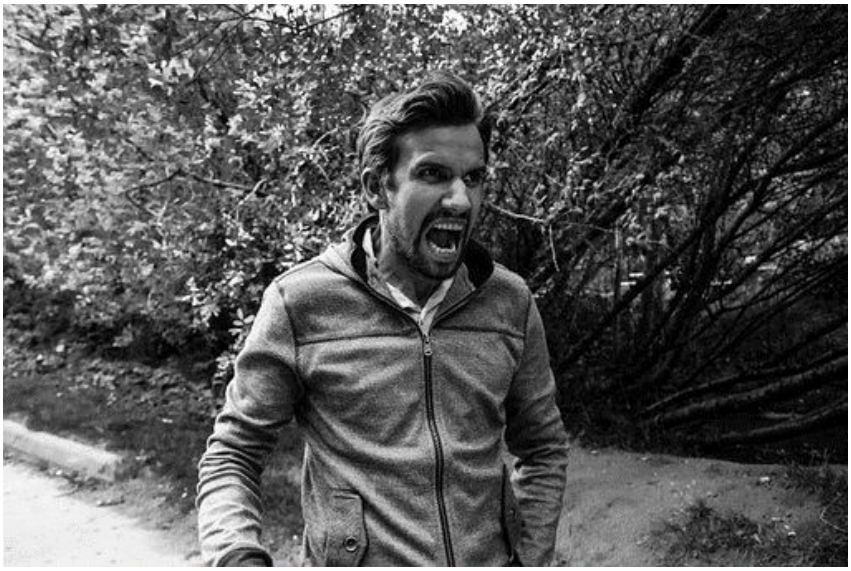
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PART 1

VERBAL AND PARAVERBAL COMMUNICATION

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CHAPTER 1: VOICE



As with any form of body language, the voice should be analyzed against the entire gamut of body language to draw a reasonable conclusion. Individuals that work in customer care or call centers understand the value of voice. It is what the customer meets and on which they form an opinion of the service and the company. Concerning voice, what counts most is what one hears. If you are a fan of music, you probably have had comprehensive exposure to the role of voice in communication.

A high volume communicates nervousness, and one should seek to convey energy and sound persuasive. At one point, you might have felt unease having to shout on the phone due to the mouthpiece or network issues because it makes you sound aggressive, and that is not how you want to be perceived. Listening to an individual that appears to be shouting suggests that the individual is irritated, tired, or unwell. A speaker that sounds like he

or she is shouting comes across as someone that is offended or irked by an issue or the audience.

Then there is the speed of speaking. Speaking fast indicates panic and selfishness. Slowing down the speed of speaking allows the receiver to effectively process what is being spoken. Speaking fast also indicates that one is in a hurry and wants to move on to the next point. If you have ever called a call center and got an agent that spoke faster than usual, then you likely felt the agent was not listening or that they were not valuing your concern, as it should be.

Pitch concerns the lowness or highness of the voice and is highly important in the English language. Through pitch, we express emotions and attitudes by changing intonation. From the pitch of the voice, we can determine if one is feeling stressed. Variation of pitch helps make the conversation sound natural, as emotions are not static. From the analysis of pitch variation, one can determine if one is a native or non-native speaker of a language. A monotone voice is not expressive and not interesting to hear.

Regarding tone, it is critical because it can mislead or enhance the outcome of the conversation. If one has an angry tone, then the receiver will assume that the speaker is upset. A professional and understanding tone is preferred. A critical tone makes the person sound as if he or she is judging the audience. A professional tone makes one appear diplomatic and knowledgeable in what he or she is presenting to the audience. Organizations invest significantly in attaining a professional tone.

Tone also includes the choice of words, however, in this context, we are focusing on nonverbal communication. Perhaps at one point, you tried making a joke, but no one laughed, or you had to offer apologies because the audience processed it differently. Maybe part of this mishap was due to the way you voiced the joke, making it appear like you were shouting, taunting, or expressing disdain. Even the best comedians lose the audience in some instances due to the way they express their jokes.

Having a consistent content tone of voice enables the audience to view you as consistent. Take time to search the late and former United Nations Secretary General Koffi Annan to appreciate the pitch and voice of a speaker. There is a justification for insisting on a pleasing tone during communication. Your tone is likely to be associated with your personality

and profession, and it is the reason organizations invest time and resources in evoking a tone that connects them with their clients.

Exhibiting a unique tone can help charm and convince your customers. It is not just about having a pleasant tone but also about creating an identity. If one exhibits a consistent and particular tone, then the public is likely to form an image of your values and personality, and this can make it easier to connect with customers. For instance, your favorite social media influencer has a particular tone that you associate with the individual.

Particularly outside of face-to-face communication, tone is critical to avoid misconceptions and backlash. As most services are online these days, customers occasionally need assistance with applications and access to online services, and this requires a responsive call center. When customers contact the call center, the only thing they interact with is the tone of the speaker. The tone of the call agent can worsen the emotions of the client or thaw their emotions and make it easier to solve the issue facing the customer.

The role of tone in communication is to make one appear human. People prefer to deal with humans, and tone helps create a relatable personality that the customer can bond with. A rising and falling tone helps make the communication feel natural. Having the same tone will make one sound monotonous as well as appear rehearsed. If you sound monotone, then it suggests that you cannot elicit the emotional aspects of the communication, and this makes you appear less human to the audience. Most likely, your favorite actors effectively use tone to convey different emotions. At the national level, your favorite political figure varies their tone, making their message appear relatable.

Tone also helps establish authority. You probably know someone that sounds commanding and authoritative, courtesy of their tone of voice. The preferred tone is consistent and natural that communicates confidence in what one is speaking about, and this makes the person appear in charge. Try watching National Geographic wildlife documentaries or TED talks, and you will realize that the narrators and speakers have a consistent and varying natural tone to suggest confidence in what they are talking about. Most documentaries provide a learning opportunity for the role of tone in communication.

It is through tone that one sustains the focus of the communication. Tone helps keep the audience positioned in what the speaker intended. Again, using the call center example, most call agents politely try to keep the conversation formal even when the caller tries deviating the communication. The tone of the conversation makes the audience appreciate the formality level of the conversation. During interviews, the formality of the tone helps make the content delivered by the interviewee sound believable.

Lastly, tone helps one develop an identity. As indicated, you regard certain people as commanding, comical, or reserved based on their tone, among other factors. Again, try recalling which celebrity or politician sounds convincing, professional, commanding, or angry. Tone is connected to the way people feel the emotion you are trying to communicate. In some cases, the tone contradicts the intended emotion, thus distorting the message.

Activity

Search YouTube for industrial strikes in the United Kingdom and the United States and listen to the pitch and tone of the leaders. Now search for industrial strikes in any African or Asian countries that speak English and listen to the pitch and tone of the leaders. Then comment on the tone variation or lack of tone variation in the selected leaders of the industrial leaders. Go further and comment on the pitch of the selected leaders of the industrial strikes. Then, listen to any speech by Barack Obama and a speech by Teresa May. Which of the two sounds convincing and natural to listen to?

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PART 2

HOW TO UNDERSTAND BODY: INTERPRET THE MOST COMMON SIGNALS

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CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION?



Nonverbal communication is difficult to define. Ray Birdwhistell claimed, “Studying nonverbal communication is like studying physiology with no heart.” For that reason, it is difficult to propose a single definition of it. Using the general and accepted definition of communication (sender, receiver, and messages) we can accept that any behavior is considered communication.

Characteristics

Nonverbal communication is omnipresent and multifunctional.

It can lead to misunderstandings.

It has phylogenetic and ontogenetic primacy.

It can express what is not said verbally.

It is reliable.

In humans, non-verbal communication is frequently paralinguistic; that is, it accompanies verbal information by shading it, expanding it, or sending contradictory signals.

When we talk (or listen), our focus is on words rather than body language, although our judgment includes both. An audience is simultaneously processing the verbal and nonverbal aspects.

The movements of the body are not generally positive or negative in themselves, rather, the situation and the message will determine its evaluation.

Gestural and Body Language

Body communication, evolutionarily before structured verbal language, is an essential part of the human communication system and that of many primates. In modern humans, nonverbal language makes paralinguistic sense and is important in many human communicative exchanges that adequately complement verbal discourse. It is mentioned that gestures transmit moods and the bio-psychic situation of a person, such as their degree of stress or fatigue.

Some authors point out that success in communication depends on the correct and proper functioning of all components of the communication system. We start from the conviction that being understood by a small or large number of people is an art that can be learned to the extent that several resources are known and implemented by the sender; in this case, the monitor, the transmission of the message, and its correct assimilation by the receivers will be favored.

Look

The look is an important aspect of nonverbal communication since it complements verbal information by corroborating it or clarifying its content. In most conversations between human beings, there is remarkable eye contact. In children, the lack of eye contact is frequently associated with lies, distortions, and other interesting psychological facts. It can also point to autism. In public communication, very persistent eye contact can cause restlessness and nervousness in the person speaking, or the audience.

On the other hand, the look serves to interact and mark the word shifts in a conversation. Before answering a question, it is common to look away. The gaze also serves to establish the duration of the word shift. Many of the gestures and attitudes are derived from an unconscious behavior, although they are acquired in childhood and are not innate. Children gradually learn to distinguish between a mocking look, a look of surprise, and a challenging look, etc. Finally, the time for which the gaze is maintained can also help to know what the interlocutor thinks. Thus, an insecure or nervous person is unable to keep his gaze fixed on his interlocutor for a long period. Also, talking about personal issues decreases (or even causes loss of) eye contact.

The look is a basic technique of nonverbal communication in the field of communication. In this communicative field, we have studied the existence of three levels to which we can direct the gaze according to what we want to convey:

Low or Ground Level

This is when the gaze is directed to an area near the ground or on the ground. This type of look conveys feelings related to the earth in semiotic terms. Self-assimilation is typical of this level, suggesting that the sender is having an internal conversation with himself. Other feelings related to this level are disgust, anger, and sadness.

Medium or Neutral Level

This is a gaze at the level of the emitter's eye or between the ground and sky. The issuer uses this level to give a sense of truthfulness and neutrality

about the information that is he emitting. It is related to the truth, sincerity, or the feeling of trust that the sender intends to generate over the receiver. It is also used to express feelings related to the upper and lower level, reinforced with the veracity of the level. It is not so much an internal conversation of the sender with itself, but rather a direct and voluntary projection of nonverbal information to the recipient.

Upper or Aerial Level

The gaze is directed to an upper point of the middle level, closer to the sky. In semiotic terms, the feelings related to this level are joy and illusion. The gaze directed to heaven has historically been related to the gaze towards a magical world of gods and superstitions. We can also relate the look to the sky as an acceptance of the issuer of a superior figure, trying to convey humility or a request for mercy.

The Analysis of Nonverbal Communication Requires at Least Three Basic Criteria

Every nonverbal behavior is inevitably associated with the whole communication of the person. Even a single gesture is interpreted as a whole, not as something isolated by the members of the interaction.

The interpretation of nonverbal movements should be made in terms of their congruence with verbal communication. Normally the emotional intention is revealed by nonverbal movements, and intuitively we can feel the incongruity between them and what we are told verbally. Nonverbal communication needs to be congruent with verbal communication and vice versa so that total communication is understandable and sincere.

The last criterion of interpretation of the meaning of nonverbal communication is the need to place each nonverbal behavior in its communicational context.

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CHAPTER 3: HOW TO READ FACIAL EXPRESSIONS



Some people have just too much ego to allow their true facial expressions to be shown. When a particular matter has clearly hurt them and that they are undergoing immense pain on the inside, their big egos do not let them reveal such details. These are the kinds of people who suffer in silence, and within a couple of days you may get information that they did something more harmful—suicide for example.

There is also a category of people who hide their facial expressions, not because they want to do so, but because they just do not know how to overcome negative emotions. As negativity builds up from the inside and starts to show in the face, they devise ways to hide any negative expressions to lock you out from analyzing them. They want to look happy when, in reality, they are sad. They want you to see that they are having a good time, but in reality, there is a sickness or issue that has been stressing them for months now. We all know that negative emotions can lead to frowning, which essentially makes a person seem not so approachable or appealing. Thus, in an attempt to retain their attractiveness, they conceal any negative facial expression.

In other cases, people may hide their facial expressions just to please. These are the people who believe in the philosophy that what you do not know cannot hurt you. Their idea is that when they keep information from you, you may still have a happy life. Thus, when they speak to you, they will struggle to build a certain kind of facial expression that conveys the message that all is well while, even though this is far from the truth. Let’s say, for example, one of your best friends gets some bad news from the doctor that they have cancer and that they have only a few years with you. They love you so much and know how devastating such news could be to you. In order to save you all the pain, they may choose to struggle with the

pain on their own, believing that if you do not know about it, you will have a happy life. Whenever they speak with you, they will do their best not to let you into the inside. From their facial expressions, they will be smiling for you, while only they know the agony they are experiencing. You have the responsibility of decoding this so that you get the message they are trying to lock inside.

5 Signs Someone Is Faking Facial Expressions

1. **Taking a Deep Breath**

This is a technique that seems to be universal amongst all people who express untrue facial expressions. You will often see them continuously breathe in and out heavily in the midst of their explanations. This is because they know that for you to believe the facial expression they just wore to impress you, they have to appear calm. That is what the deep breathes are meant to do—take in more oxygen so that they can recollect their composure and be cool. If you do not pick up on the breathing pattern, they may succeed in the deception.

2. **Putting On a Fake Smile**

A smile doesn’t mean someone is happy at all times. Someone who smiles and has a bubbly look on their face can win hearts and affection. As a result, many assume that with just the right smile, they will be able to hide feelings like anger or sadness. But a fake smile will always be fake. It may convince some people at first glance, but a keen individual will soon realize this smile is fake. How well you know the individual could guide you into distinguishing between the smile they just put on and their real happy smile. But even if you do not know them that well, their inability to sustain the smile will eventually prove it fake.

3. **Trying Not to Support the Head**

There is something about ‘cooked’ facial expressions that makes the head heavy. People who understand the technique of hiding facial expressions know this. Thus, they always try to make sure that their head is held up high to better deceive you. When you pick up on this, there will be occasions when they can no longer hold the head up and end up burying the face in their palms for some seconds before realizing that they may show you they are lying. Careful analysis of the struggles not to support the head could reveal to you that they are faking their facial expression.

4. **Struggling to Relax the Face**

A relaxed face can easily build up a deceiving facial expression. When you speak to someone, and at one moment their face is relaxed and the next moment it is not, that is a sign of a problem. This shows that they may have tried to relax it up to a certain point when they could do it no more. There is something here; take a deep look at their face, and you shall see the truth.

5. **Silent Lip Movements**

To become calm, some people speak to themselves. They may say something like, “Calm down, you can do this. Just stay cool.” If you are not careful, they may actually succeed in being calm and creating a falsified facial expression. Through a keen look at the lip movements, you may tell that the person has more things that they are hiding under their facial expressions.

Monitor Body Language

Communication is a combination of tonal variation, body language, and spoken words. Of these three, body language is the most important element that determines how the message is passed across. To get the message, you need to embrace body language from a neutral perspective. Don’t anticipate

anything. In an attempt to analyze someone, you might go overboard and overthink the message.

It is advisable that you relax, observe, and allow your subject to express themselves comfortably and freely. Allow your subject the same freedom of expression that you need to interact with them and understand them well.

There are a few things you need to pay attention to that can help you analyze their actions and body language and decipher the message in their communication better. Here are some of the things you should look at:

Posture

To analyze someone, you must take note of on their posture. There are subtle messages you can identify from someone's posture, like confidence, self-esteem, and ego. These have an effect on the message passed across or the inferences drawn from the message.

Appearance

Appearance matters when communicating with someone. It can influence your perception of the recipient or their message. Many people will assume someone is deeply spiritual if they show up in Buddhist attire, casual if they have a T-shirt and jeans on, and professional if they are in a power suit. By their clothing and appearance, you are already biased about their personality, hence the message you expect from them.

Motion

Physical movements can also influence the way you analyze someone. Some of the things you should focus on are subtle, but they can tell you so much. Someone who feels under pressure can pick their cuticles or bite their lips in a bid to ease the situation or to overcome an awkward moment.

This might not apply all the time, but in most cases, when someone is not forthcoming about something, they tend to put their hands behind their back, on their lap or in their pocket.

Anger, defensiveness, or need for self-preservation is portrayed when someone folds their arms and legs. Look keenly, and you might also notice that people tend to lean toward those they feel more comfortable with or those they like and further away from their foes. It is amazing how such simple reactions can tell you so much about someone even without them uttering a word.

Facial Expressions

While it is easy to hold back from saying something, it is not easy to hide facial expressions. Facial expressions can also tell you a lot about someone's reaction. Someone who is overthinking a situation or worried might have deep frown lines. Contempt and anger are associated with pursed lips. The same can also be expected of a bitter person. In a tense moment, many people will grind their teeth or clench their jaws.

Emotional Attunement

Ever heard someone say you give off positive or negative vibes? This is true. Emotions express your energy about someone or something. When you are around them, you feel either good or bad. Some people drain your energy while others make you feel vibrant. The energy might be invisible, but it has a profound impact on your perception of someone, which also affects the way you analyze them.

To sense someone's energy, notice how you feel when talking to them. Do you feel comfortable in their presence, or do you want to back off? Look at their eyes. You can tell whether someone is angry or content by looking at their eyes when they speak to you.

Another feature you should look at is the tonal variation. From someone's tone, you can tell whether they are annoyed or happy. You can also tell how their mood changes from their tone.

Intuitive Approach

Intuition is about gut feeling. This goes beyond the spoken word and body language. Intuition rises above everything you might have read or heard about someone. It is about what you feel about them the moment you meet them.

During your first meeting with someone, how easy are you around them? Gut feeling is a primal method your body uses to determine whether you can trust someone or not. After your gut feeling, think about whether you got goosebumps. Goosebumps represent striking a chord with someone or a sign that you resonate with someone who inspires you even if you have never met them before.

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CHAPTER 4: THE EYES



The eyes are said to be the windows to our soul and our thoughts. There is so much that you can tell just by looking at a person's eyes and the various movements that they make.

To Be a Stellar Analyzer, Follow the Steps Below

1. **Establish Your Reason for Wanting to Analyze Someone**

Do you want to know whether they are lying to you or are you trying to validate their authenticity? It doesn't matter if you are dealing with a stranger or not. The rules are the same.

2. **Baseline the Eyes**

The baseline process involves establishing how a person's eyes behave in a normal and non-threatening situation. Do this by asking about casual and neutral topics such as what they think about the weather, what they would like to drink, as well as movie and hobby preferences. The baselining questions should be no-brainers and something that nobody would really lie about. Take note of how the eyes behave as you are having this talk, and you have your baseline.

3. **Look for Any Signs of Eye Deviation from the Baseline**

For instance, if you are on a first date, keep tabs on the conversations and topics that make the other party's eyes deviate from the baseline. These are potential red-flags, and you may want to dig a little deeper. Psychologists and the FBI use this tactic all the time, and they are able to establish which questions they need to dig deeper on.

Baseline deviations can take the form of:

Eye blocking. Eye blocking often happens when a person feels threatened, or when they are repulsed by something they see or hear. This is an indication of a very uncomfortable situation, mostly due to disbelief or innate disagreement. Some people display eye blocking by rapid blinking while others take to rubbing the eyes. Learning to read eye blocking can help you realize when you have repulsed people, enabling you to make it up or change the topic immediately.

Many years ago, I was out on a date with a person that I really liked and felt an instant chemistry with. As we got to know each other, I said something demeaning about people who opted for a divorce rather than staying and fighting for their marriage. I was trying to come off as a keeper, and I missed his sudden change of demeanor, which involved a lot of eye rubbing. Turns out he had married young and had already been divorced once. Needless to say, we never went out for a second date. If I had known what I know now, I could have potentially saved the situation.

Squinting. People will often squint if they do not like you or something that you are saying. This behavior is similar to eye-blocking, and you should address it quickly or clarify whatever it is that you have said before it gets worse.

Eye positions. Understanding eye positions is immensely important in the analysis process, and it will tell you a lot with minimum effort.

You can analyze these eye movements when doing cross-examinations, interviews, or generally when a person is talking to you. From this analysis, you can tell whether a person is lying to you or not.

Right eye movements are associated with truth, while left eye movements are associated with lies/making things up. You must realize that human beings will always have a strong desire to be liked and accepted, and sometimes creating a façade of who they want to be seems like the best

option. Regardless of the content through which you are analyzing a person, knowing this technique will help you know who you are really dealing with.

When a person is talking about a past event, they often rely on stored memories that they can vividly remember and describe. The memories are said to be on the left side of the brain, and that is why eye movements are to their upper left (your right if you are directly facing them). However, if a person is just being deceptive and has to come up with a fake story, the eyes will shift to your left. The same applies when they are talking about remembered sounds such as conversations they claim to have had in the past.

When a person is having an internal dialogue/debate, they will most likely glance toward the lower left. However, remembering a feeling will have them glancing toward the lower right

Movement of the eyes is considered to be one of the most accurate methods of analyzing a person/situation, although it is not fool proof. You have to pay very close attention to the movements and put them in the context of the discussion to avoid making wrong judgments. In most cases, you have to associate the movement with the exact word or sentence that a person is saying. Consider the following scenario:

A person may be telling the truth about an incident and add bits of lies in between. For example, a statement like “I graduated in business and commerce from Harvard University” may have two parts. It may be true that indeed the person graduated in business and commerce, with the only exception being that they did not attend Harvard. If you are keen enough, you may notice the sudden shift in eye movements which will be red flags. If you are not sure about what you have observed, it is prudent to ask to follow-up questions. For example, you can ask the person to tell you all about Harvard and what their experience was in the institution. Such a question requires a lengthy answer, and you will be able to observe eye movements much more accurately at this point.

Sideway Glances. When a person is giving sideways glances, it is often an indication that they are uncertain, and often an indication of nervousness. You may want to ask to follow-up questions since this may be a sign of deception. Again, it really depends on the context of the conversation since

most people are prone to making sideways glances when they are withholding certain information. Maybe they just don’t trust you.

In most cases, you will only make credible inferences when you understand what all the eye movements mean and connect them to the context of the conversation. Remember, if you are not sure, the best thing to do is to ask more follow-up questions and analyze more signs.

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CHAPTER 5: THE MOUTH



Nonverbal Behavior of the Lips

Lip Compression

Have you ever watched the recordings of someone testifying before a judge or Congress? You will likely notice an eerie similarity in the way the person's lips seem to disappear during those moments. When we are faced with stress, we often make our lips disappear unconsciously as a way of shutting ourselves off from the world. Lip compression is a vivid sign that the person is troubled or something has gone wrong.

Mind you, this behavior doesn't necessarily show deception. Sometimes, when the person is in a high level of discomfort, the corners of the lips might turn downward. You should also know that it is hard, perhaps impossible, to fake this gesture.

The Lip Purse

When people disagree with what you are saying, they are likely to purse their lips. It could also mean that they are either considering what is being said or searching for an alternative to your offer. Knowing this gesture will help you to modify and present your case.

To know if the lip-purse gesture stems from disagreement or the person searching for an alternative option, you need to consider the ongoing conversation to pick additional cues. The lip purse is rarely faked, and you should give it special attention when you notice it in those you are interacting with.

Tongue Display

There are numerous tongue signals that can give you an insight into what people are feeling. For instance, people's lips become dry when they are stressed, and they tend to moisten their lips by licking them. Also, people tend to run their tongue across their lips as a way to calm themselves during discomfort. It is also common to see people stick out their tongues at someone they feel like antagonizing. It is usually a sign of insecurity when people lick their lips while pondering their options.

Let's examine the tongue-jutting behavior that occurs in various contexts. This is a universal gesture that you will observe anywhere in the world.

I'm sure you are trying to conjure up a mental image of this gesture. Don't worry if you can't since you will get a clear picture as we proceed. The tongue-jutting gesture is seen in interviews, restaurants, meetings, and even in gambling rooms. It is often done at the conclusion of a deal or when you think you have the upper hand in a transaction. The gesture has several meanings. For instance, it translates to "I got caught again," gleeful excitement, "I did something foolish," or "I'm naughty."

In business discussions, you often see the tongue-jutting behavior when one person feels he has gotten away with something. So, if you see this expression, ask yourself what could have triggered it. Perhaps you have been cheated or fooled.

Smiles and Laughter: The World's Most Irresistible Gestures

Children are often told by their parents to put a big smile on their face when their cousins come over for Christmas. We also learn the art of faking laughter to cover up embarrassing moments. We have integrated so many gestures into our daily routine that help us navigate different situations.

Smiles have the ability to evoke positive emotions at an intuitive level. It's a common tool used to disarm people.

When we probe deeper into the significance of such smiles, we often find a whole different type of meaning. You need to know that the zygomaticus

muscle, which is responsible for the smile gesture, can be consciously controlled. Smiles can be faked!

How to Differentiate Between Real and Fake Smiles

To an person inexperienced in reading body language, it's difficult to differentiate between a real and fake smile. One of the major reasons for this is that when a person smiles, our defense usually comes down, and this makes us powerless in telling the difference between a real and fake smile. So how can we tell the difference in order not to fall prey to those who would manipulate us through the smile?

There is another muscle referred to as the orbicularis oculi, which controls the corners of the eye. It acts independently and reveals the sincerity of a real smile. So, the first place to check a real smile is to look at the wrinkles in the corner of the eye. A sincere smile creates wrinkle lines at the corner of the eye, while a fake smile involves just the widening of the lips.

The Smile Leniency Concept

The smile leniency concept is a tool used by people, especially transgressors, to disarm dangerous situations. According to Dale Carnegie, the author of *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, people believe that smiling can not only help you win friends but also influence people.

For example, applicants smile more in a job interview to boost their chances of getting the job. People smile more when they are trying to get others' approval.

The smile-leniency effect, when applied by transgressors in a court of law, can result in a less severe sentence since the transgressor is more likely to come across as likable and nonthreatening. So why does this effect have such an impact on others?

This concept is a sign of deference, apology, and submissiveness, all rolled into a charming smile. People who don't want to seem weak or submissive often move around without a smile in a bid to look grumpy and aggressive.

Five Common Types of Smiles

While it's easy to detect a fake smile, we often have difficulty deciphering the types of smiles that we come across every day. Let's take a look at the five basic types of smiles:

Tight-Lipped Smile

This is the type of smile you put on when you have something to hide. In this gesture, the lips are stretched tight against the face without showing the teeth. This gesture is a favorite of women, and it shows they have a contrary opinion that they'd rather not say.

Interestingly, other women are quick to detect these signals, while men often remain oblivious to them. For instance, a woman might say another woman is capable and strong while maintaining a tight-lipped smile. She secretly harbors thoughts that the other woman is bitchy and controlling.

You will also observe this gesture in successful businessmen who look as if they hold the key to success but aren't willing to divulge it. Conversely, some successful businessmen like Richard Branson walk around with a wide toothy grin and are glad to explain the secret of their successes because they know most people won't attempt it.

Twisted Smile

This gesture reveals only one thing—sarcasm. This is a smile used to show contrasting emotions on the face. For instance, the left cheek, left zygomaticus muscles, and the left side of the eyebrows might be pulled up by the right side of the brain to form a smile while the muscles of the right side of the face are pulled downward by the left side of the brain.

What we have here is a contrasting emotion on each side of the face—i.e., one side of the brain features a cheesy grin while the other part forms a smile. This gesture is usually accurate, and it's a good indication that the other person is using sarcasm against you.

The Drop-Jaw Smile

The drop-jaw smile is a feigned gesture meant to boost happy reactions in people. You often see this gesture on Bill Clinton and the Joker in *Batman*. It is a practiced gesture that involves dropping the lower jaw to give an impression of laughter or playfulness.

Sideways-Looking-Up Smile

This coy smile gesture has been known to generate widespread empathy for women, especially from men, since it evokes their parental nature to protect and care for females.

This involves slightly turning the head downwards and away while looking up with a tight-lipped smile. This gesture creates a smile effect that looks secretive, coy, and juvenile.

People like the late Princess Diana were able to use this gesture effectively to captivate the hearts of those around her. It's an important courtship gesture used by women to attract men. It is analyzed as a seductive and "come on" gesture. Interestingly, this same smile is used by Princess Diana's son, Prince William, which not only reminds people of Diana but also melts their hearts.

What to Do When There Are Mixed Signals

Sometimes we don't say what we are thinking, but the face betrays our innermost thoughts. For instance, someone who's consistently looking at the nearest exit while walking with you is giving you clues that he would rather be somewhere else. I call these 'intention cues.'

Other times, we say something and believe otherwise. This brings us to a general rule about observing and analyzing words and emotions by looking at the facial expressions. Whenever you are confronted with mixed signals from the face (such as anxiety signals along with happiness clues, displeasure displays alongside pleasure behavior) or if the nonverbal facial behavior is not in coherence with the verbal statement, always pick the negative emotion as the more honest and accurate of the two.

In this case, the negative sentiment is the more genuine and accurate of the person's emotions and feelings. You might wonder, "Why side with the negative emotions?" The answer lies in the fact that our immediate reaction to an objectionable situation is always accurate, and we quickly attempt to mask it with some socially acceptable behavior. So, when confronted with mixed signals, rely more on the negative emotion, especially if it's the first.

Here's a tip before we move on—it is possible for you to be confused about the significance of a person's facial expression. When you find yourself in this situation, try to copy the facial expression and see how it makes you feel.

And don't bank all your judgments on the facial expression alone since it can mislead. Rather, look for clusters of the body language and assess it in the context of the person's circumstance and environment.

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CHAPTER 6: INTERPRETING BODY GESTURES



There are actually two ways to deliver a message when you are engaged in a conversation. Of course, the usual way is simply by talking; however, there is another way that is also as effective but is often overlooked, and that is through the use of gestures. Gestures as small acts that you do while you talk. By learning how to read gestures, it is even possible to say whether the person you are talking to is lying or not. Gestures may also reveal the current mental and emotional state of a person. As they say, “actions speak louder than words.” Indeed, if you want to master the art of manipulation, then learning how to use, as well as read, gestures are very important.

Take note that a gesture is not limited to the movements of the hand or crossing of the arms. It can also involve such small and often neglected movements with the eyes. If you want to stress something strongly, it is suggested that you say it while looking directly into a person’s eyes. Also, leaning slightly forward while placing your hand on your chin and nodding your head shows that you are eagerly listening to the other person as he talks. Snapping your fingers is also often used to show that you have just realized something. As you can see, there are so many gestures that you can do. Gestures add more energy and give more expression, which makes the conversation more interesting.

Learning how to interpret gestures is also important. Again, the key to manipulating a subject is having a good understanding of your subject. The crossing of the arms and/or legs usually shows a defensive posture. It may show that the other person is not being open and relaxed. Covering one’s mouth, as well as touching the ear, may mean the person is lying. If you want to know what a certain gesture means, a good piece of advice is to do the gesture yourself and be open to how it makes you feel.

Of course, there is always the possibility for gestures to be interpreted in a different way. For example, just because a person rubs his nose as he tells you something does not always mean that he is lying to you. However, although gestures may be hard to decode at times, they will allow you to have a better insight and understanding of a person.

What if the person you are talking to does not use gestures? Indeed, you cannot compel someone to express themselves with gestures as they talk. Also, to be real and authentic, gestures must come naturally. Most of the time, when a person remains calm and still, it is a sign that you need to do more to penetrate his defenses. Once you are able to get into his mind, he will be more open, and will naturally use gestures as he talks to you. To do this, simply make him more relaxed and encourage openness.

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CHAPTER 7: POSTURE



The same way you train a dog to listen to your body language and cues, you can train a human being to follow you without question. The first step to control those around you lies in analyzing them, however, which is why this will discuss how to analyze people based on their body language.

Positive Body Language

There is a chance that you or someone you are observing is feeling insecure and trying to mask it. However, if you are not dealing with a melancholic personality, you might be dealing with a choleric personality. Everyone has heard the phrase “fake it until you make it.” This is the dogma of the choleric personality type. Whether they were cut out for something or not, they will not give up easily.

If you are confronting this type of personality, the mere act of uncrossing your arms or legs should give you a little confidence. Add to that a genuine smile for the next person that you encounter and watch as they lighten up a bit in response. It might take a little practice, but this type of body language gives you control of the situation.

Understanding Eye Contact: This one can be tricky as it is easy to misinterpret, but long eye contact is almost always meaningful in some way, shape, or form. If a person can look at you without looking away for more than a few seconds, then usually they are confident around you and are likely to be genuine. This is likely to be your phlegmatic personality type; one who is displaying a little bit of awkward shyness. They will notice you scanning the room, but do not count on them calling you out on this.

Typically, eye contact can make you look interested and says a lot about the person you are dealing with. If you find yourself being stared at by a

person, you are likely dealing with a sanguine personality. This personality type is an observer and tends to be the sincerest of the four. Looking people in the eye is their way of proving those qualities.

Depending on the situation, you might look down and away out of shyness. When people are shy, they are deemed innocent. Phlegmatic personalities are really good at this as well. You want to seem innocent, no matter what your intentions are, and the best choice for drawing other people in is to keep them interested. Since you want people to trust you, you have to get close enough to analyze what type of personality you are dealing with.

If the other party looks away and down, and then back up at you, take advantage of this opportunity to consider them more closely. This is a sign of vulnerability which means they trust you, so you are free to do with that trust what you may. This is often a good time to ask them about themselves or offer something personal to break the ice. Compliments are always a good choice as it is hard to dislike someone who has recently paid you a compliment.

Smile: The most important asset anyone has is their smile. If you are walking down the street and someone gives you a genuine smile, it can change your day. That is the power you want to carry around with you. This is the gift of most sanguine personality types. They are cheerful on the outside and can easily make people laugh. Faking a smile is hard. The truth of any smile lies in the eyes. Pay careful attention to the lines that form when the cheeks rise as the evidence of a genuine smile.

If you ask someone to do something and they decline, smile anyway; they will feel bad for saying no. Depending on their reaction, you could say it again in a different way and in a cartoonish voice (humor), and follow up with a serious voice. Ask for the favor again by adding another smile. This is best used in social situations and is to be avoided at work, unless you are super cool with your co-workers or if you are sure you are dealing with a sanguine personality.

If your co-worker or boss displays a dislike for emotions or seems impatient, you could be dealing with a choleric personality. You will need to make it seem like they are the leader. You’re pushing boundaries, but you don’t want anyone to recognize this game. No matter how it ends, do not give too much of a reaction. If you are too happy, it could kill the vibe. The

same is true if you are too upset; just smile. You will not be able to change your own personality type as the theory is that you were born that way. However, by knowing more about yourself, you can control the display or even master your weaknesses to have influence or get close enough to other people that you may sincerely analyze them.

Negative Personality Cues

Now that you have a basic understanding of positive body language, let us take the opportunity to dig into the negative cues often given by different personality types. Sometimes even the most trustworthy and genuine people can give off signals of distress through body cues, so it is important to take them with a grain of salt to avoid being misled.

If you find someone who is trying to discourage you, or they are judging you, it is likely that their personality is phlegmatic. If the negativity you are picking up on is coming from someone who is demanding attention or seems phony, you are amidst a sanguine personality type. You want to recognize the difference and how to respond to either situation to achieve a goal, whether that is to cheer someone up so you can enjoy their company, or perhaps get away from someone who seeks to destroy your aura. Either way, practice makes perfect, and observing takes a lot of it.

Personal space: If someone moves away from you, this is often a sign that they believe you either did something wrong or you represent something negative to them.

This mentality applies to all four personality types. It hurts to feel rejected. Instead of feeling sorry for yourself, move back into their realm if you want to change the vibe.

Body Language and Posture

Posture and general movement can also express a great deal of information. Our knowledge of body language has developed considerably since prehistoric days, however, well-known media have concentrated on the over-interpretation of protective postures, arm, and leg crossing. While

these nonverbal acts can show thoughts and attitudes, studies indicate that body language is far more restrained and less perfect than previously believed.

Personal Space

Individuals often refer to the need for personal space, which is a vital element of nonverbal communication. The level of space people need and the level of space people tend to perceive as belonging to them are swayed by several factors comprising social models, intellectual potential, situational aspects, personality distinctiveness, and level of knowledge. For instance, the amount of individual space required when having an informal talk with another person frequently varies from one to four feet. On the contrary, the individual distance required when talking to a group of people is approximately eight to twelve feet.

Eye Gaze

The human eyes play an important role in nonverbal communication, and such aspects as staring, looking, and blinking are considered significant nonverbal acts.

When people meet someone or something that they adore, the pace of blinking goes up and pupils enlarge. On the other hand, staring at another individual may show a variety of emotions including hostility, concern, and desirability.

People use eye gaze as a way to conclude if someone is being sincere. Fixed eye contact is frequently taken as an indication that someone is telling the truth and is dependable. Deceitful eyes and failure to maintain eye contact is often a pointer that somebody is being dishonest or misleading.

Haptics

Communicating via touch is another essential element of nonverbal conduct. There have been considerable amounts of study on the significance

of touch in childhood and infancy. For instance, a baby raised by a negligent mother experiences a lasting deficit in conduct and social relations. Touch is used to communicate love, awareness, compassion, and other related emotions.

Touch is also used to communicate both position and authority. Researchers have established that high-status persons tend to attack other people's individual space with superior rate and strength than lower-status persons. Gender differences also play a part in how individuals use touch to bring out the intended meaning.

Appearance

People’s preference of color, outfits, hairstyles, and other aspects affecting appearance are also regarded as a method of nonverbal communication. Research has confirmed that diverse colors might suggest different personal moods. In addition, appearance might also change physiological responses, judgments, and understanding. Think about all the judgments people rapidly make about somebody based on their look. These initial impressions are vital, that is why specialists propose that work seekers dress properly for interviews with prospective employers.

Researchers have also established that appearance plays a part in how individuals are viewed and even how much money they make. For example, a study established that attorneys who were perceived as more attractive than their workmates earned more than those viewed as less good-looking. Culture also has a significant sway on how appearances are viewed. While slenderness tends to be respected in Western cultures, a number of African cultures associate full-figured people with superior health, prosperity, and social class.

Objects

Items and images are also as tools that can be deployed to communicate nonverbally. On an online discussion, for instance, people might pick an avatar to symbolize their distinctiveness and to share information concerning who they are and the things they adore. People frequently spend

a huge amount of time creating a particular picture and surrounding themselves with items intended to transmit information regarding the things that are important to them. Uniforms, for instance, may be applied to convey a marvelous amount of information regarding an individual. A warrior puts on fatigues, a police officer dresses in uniform, and a physician wears in a white lab coat. A simple glance at this attire tells everybody what an individual does as an occupation.

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CHAPTER 8: BREATHING



There are different ways you can read someone's body language. It can be read by their leg and arm movements, facial expressions, eye contact, or smiles. But do you realize that how a person breathes has meaning too?

Emotions and how you breathe are connected. If a person's emotions change, the way they breathe might be affected. See if you can notice breathing patterns in your family, friends, coworkers, or significant other.

Deep Breathing Might Indicate Excitement, Attraction, Anger, Fear, or Love. Deep breathing is the easiest pattern to notice. If somebody suddenly starts to hold their breath, they might be feeling a little scared. If someone takes a deep breath and then shouts, they could be angry. People who are experiencing shock might suck in a deep breath. They might also take in a deep breath and hold it for a few seconds. If their eyes start to glow, this might indicate that they are surprised or excited. A person might start to breathe deeply if they feel an attraction toward another person. You may notice someone take a deep breath in, suck in their stomach, and push their chest out to try and impress somebody they are attracted to.

Sighing Might Signal Hopelessness, Sadness, or Relief. When you sigh, you are letting out a deep, long breath that you can hear. Somebody might sigh if they are feeling relieved after a struggle has passed. They are thankful that their struggle is over. A sign might show sadness or hopelessness, like somebody who is waiting for a date to show up. It could also show tiredness and disappointment.

Rapid, Heavy Breathing Might Show Fear and Tiredness. You may have just seen a person rob a place, and the police are chasing them. You notice they are breathing rapidly. This is because their lungs need more oxygen since they are exerting so much energy. After all, they are running. Their bodies feel tired, and their lungs are trying their best to keep up. We feel the same effects when we feel scared. This happens when we experience fear; our lungs need more oxygen, so we begin to breathe faster. You can easily see when somebody has been scared or running by noticing the way they are breathing.

Another interesting fact about breath is that smells can influence breathing. Any odors that are tied to emotions can change a person's respiration rate. Several studies have shown that the body will respond to bad and good smells by breathing differently. If you were to smell something rotten, you would end up breathing in a shallow and rapid manner. But, if, instead, you smelled baking bread and roses, your breath would be slow and long. The really interesting part of this is that the breathing rate will change before the brain has ever been able to consciously register if the smell is good or bad.

According to *Scientific American*, smells are extremely associative. We started learning about these different smells in the womb, and then during our lives, our brains learn to refine our views of emotional rewards, pleasures, and threats that are contained within a certain odor. If a person breathes deeply, they feel that something is safe, creating a pleasurable emotional state. If you notice a person's breathing rate suddenly changes, let your sense of smell catch up first. It could be that they have gotten a whiff of something they either like or dislike.

The interesting thing is that while we can learn how people feel based on how they are breathing, the way a person breathes can also affect their emotions. In a 2006 study published in *Behavior Response & Therapy*, they discovered that undergraduates who practiced slow breathing exercises for 15 minutes had a more positive and balanced emotional response afterward than the group faced with 15 minutes of unfocused worrying and attention.

And it doesn't even have to do with just being calm. French scientist Pierre Phillipot asked some study participants to identify the pattern of breath that they connected with certain emotions such as sadness and joy. He then

asked a separate group of people to breathe in a certain manner, and probed their emotions. The results were amazing. If the subjects were told to breathe in a particular manner, even if they were unaware of it, they felt the associated emotion, apparently out of nowhere.

I want to share one more way you can use a person's breath to tell how they feel. This is something that you can't readily do, but it is still interesting.

A new idea that is being studied is that what you exhale also plays a role in emotional response. Chemically analyzed exhalations can be used to determine how a person felt. An article from *Science News* claims the air's chemical makeup within a soccer stadium varies when people begin cheering, and the same is true in movie theaters. They studied 9500 people as they watched 16 different films that ranged from rom-coms to horrors, and then studied the air composition of the room to see if it changed during certain scenes that were rather emotional in one way or the other.

The crazy thing is that it did. In suspenseful moments, there were more CO2 and isoprenes in the air, which are chemicals associated with muscles tensing. Every type of emotion came with its distinct chemical makeup.

Facial Microexpressions

Learning to decode facial expressions is similar to having superpowers. The face, with all its subtle expressions, which are called microexpressions, could be a window into a person's soul. Knowing how to read them can help you to understand a lot about how someone is feeling.

Methods of Nonverbal Analysis

To perform any nonverbal behavior analysis, you have to use techniques that can help you describe the behavior in a way it can be trusted. Scientific analysis helps you:

> To identify a person's weaknesses and strengths during normal relations.

To expose lies by using a combination of facial and verbal expressions.

To anticipate a person’s behavior.

To identify another person’s state of mind and emotions.

It doesn’t take long to learn these techniques with an interactive and focused program based on specific exercises.

Scientific Based

The first text about emotional expressions was written by French neurologist, Guillaume Benjamin Amand Duchenne de Boulogne. This text was written in 1862 and demonstrated the method of using electrodes on the facial muscles to establish their relationship between the facial muscles' movements and the subsequent emotional expression. To honor him, a true, authentic smile can sometimes be called the Duchenne smile.

Charles Darwin wrote the *Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals* in 1872. In this, he says that emotions are just another evolutionary product and are inherited. Body and facial expressions go hand in hand with emotions and look to be the same in people who live in different parts of the world, and in other animals and primates. Darwin’s studies didn’t continue after he died because of the scientific community's hostility toward his theories. He was criticized for saying animals have emotions. According to his critics, only humans can feel things. His methods were based on observations rather than science.

This concept of emotional expressions being universal was furthered in the late 1950s. Researchers like Birdwhistell, Izard, Ekman, Ellsworth, and Friesen tried to validate Darwin’s theory. They worked together to develop a set of theories, tests, and methods that created the “Facial Expression Program.” They believed emotional expressions and emotional experiences come from a specific number of inherited neurological programs. We know now that there are specific paths for every emotion that causes a facial expression associated with that particular emotion. According to the Theory

of Evolution, emotions have adaptive functions that let a human react through immediate responses to various stimuli for survival.

There Are Two Groups of Nonverbal Techniques

Decoding technique: This interprets and will give meaning to movements.

Coding technique: This describes the body and facial movements.

Facial Expression Techniques

ISFE or Interpretative System of Facial Expressions

Jasna Legisa developed this in the NeuroComScience laboratory in 2013. It is a table of what facial movements mean. It comprises a set of descriptions and tables that order and integrate facial expressions according to the emotions they are related to. This information was taken from existing literature and previous systems about this subject.

Other than secondary and primary emotional expressions, other facial signs get described as regulators, illustrators, and manipulators. According to Ekman, Izard, and Hjorstjo, emotional expressions get grouped into “big families.” These “families” include many facial expressions that, even though they mean slightly different things, get united because they receive the same emotional range. Within the “surprise” family, you will have an annoying surprise, fake surprise, real surprise, awe, and many more.

Primary emotional movements get put into three categories:

The first category includes muscular movements that belong to specific emotions.

The second category includes movements that might belong to primary emotions.

The third category includes minor variations to emotions that could be part of many emotional families.

These categorizations make the interpretation and accuracy of the whole analysis.

Mimicking Language and Man's Face or the Hjorstjo Method

In 1969, an anatomy professor at Lund University located in Sweden, Hjorstjo, tried to systematically categorize certain facial movements with their meanings into eight emotional families. His handbook reports the decoding and coding of facial expressions, so it is possible to determine the facial muscle contractions either in combination or by themselves.

MAX or Maximally Discriminative Coding System

This system gives meaning to the facial movements instead of just describing them. Izard developed MAX in 1979. In 1983, he worked with Hembree and Dougherty to create an advanced version of MAX that was named AFFEX. The created facial configurations based on regular expressions of emotions like shame, disgust, pain, surprise, happiness, interest, fear, sadness, and anger. Basically, every emotion and expression gets classified.

EMACS or Emotional Facial Action Coding System

Friesen and Ekman worked to describe the expressions of six emotional families: fear, surprise, anger, disgust, sadness, and happiness. Hager has been working at Ekman's laboratory since 1994, studying facial expressions by using a computer to identify their techniques. This database created the FACSAID or FACS Affect Interpretation Dictionary system.

Hanes

During the same year that the first version of FACS was published, the *Hanest Manual* was also published. The *Hanest Manual* was created by Gergerian and Emiane, who are two French scientists. It has the same goal as FACS – to describe facial movements.

FACS or Facial Action Coding System

In 1978, Vincent W. Friesen and Paul Ekman introduced FACS, or the Facial Action Coding System. In 2002, while working with Hager, they release another version.

BabyFACS or Baby Facial Action Coding System

The same structure that is used for adults can be used for small children and babies. In 1993, Oster looked at babies' facial expressions and changed up the descriptions as needed. These are only descriptive and don't give any meaning to the emotions.

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CHAPTER 9: THE HANDS



We all talk with our hands often. For some people, the gesturing matches their message well. Some people do not deploy hand gestures, while others overuse hand gestures. Most hand gestures are universal. A person that does not use hand gestures may be seen as indifferent. For this reason, the audience may feel that one does not care about what the speaker is talking about. If your hands are hidden, then the audience will find it difficult to trust you. If one's hands are open and the palms wide enough, then the individual is communicating that he or she is being honest and open.

Randomly throwing hands in the air while talking may suggest that one is anxious or panicking. Extreme anger will also make one throw their hands up in an uncoordinated manner. For further understanding, take time and watch movie characters quarreling, and you will note that most people being accused of something will throw their hands in the air randomly. It is something that they have little control over because most body language happens at the subconscious level of the mind. Randomly throwing hands in the air indicates that one is overwhelmed with emotions or has given up defending their position in the argument and left the argument to the individual that started it.

Additionally, one may point at an object or a person. Pointing as a gesture helps the focus of the speaker and the audience. During your school days, you probably saw your teacher point in a particular direction without speaking until the students that were talking had to stop. As such, pointing at particular students drew the attention of the entire class to their direction, making them become the center of attention, and they had to do a quick self-evaluation and stop talking.

Furthermore, pointing while waving the index finger indicates a warning. When one points the index finger at someone and waves it up and down, then you are denoting a stern warning and judgment to the individual. It is

the equivalent of saying, "this is the last warning." Your parent or teacher may have had a point and wave gesture to signal a warning that what you are doing was wrong and that you should stop. The finger signal singles out the individual and reduces the focus to just that one aspect of behavior that the speaker wants the target person to understand.

Relatedly, if one spreads all the fingers and holds them together against those of the opposite hand, it indicates strong personal reflection such as when praying or remembering a departed soul. The same gesture can be used when one is focusing the mind during meditation or yoga. The holding of each of your fingers against their peers of the other hand may also indicate feeling humble and thankful for everything. For instance, followers of the Catholic faith frequently use this gesture when praying. The gesture shows humility and thankfulness.

Sometimes one may tap on the head once or continuously. This indicates the individual is thinking hard or trying hard to recall something. Children often tap their heads once or continuously using one finger or the entire palm to signal attempts to recall something. The gesture is the equivalent of saying, "Come on, what was it?" or "Come on, what was the name again?"

Similarly, a fully raised palm with fingers spread may indicate that one should stop. When stopping a vehicle on the roadside, one raises one of their palms high. The same is true in the sporting environment where raising one palm commonly communicates that play should stop.

If one claps the palms together, it may indicate applauding the message or the speaker. When the speaker is done speaking, the audience may clap to mark appreciation of the message or of both the message and the speaker. However, when the hands are spontaneously and violently clapped, it is a message that the audience should stop because what they are doing is unethical or irritating. At home, one of your parents probably clapped their hands suddenly and violently to make you stop as well as draw attention to their presence, especially when you were playing loudly around the house.

Relatedly, if one interlocks the hands, this gesture indicates that one is attentive but uneasy. During an interview, meeting, or a class session, the audience is likely to interlock their fingers and fold them. In a way, the interlocking of the fingers is supposed to offer some form of assurance to the affected person that he or she is safe. One is likely to also use this

gesture when he or she is mentioned negatively. Think of how you reacted when you were mentioned among noisemakers or workers having challenges following the rules of the company. Most probably, you interlocked your fingers.

Additionally, if one is feeling shy or uncertain, they are also likely to interlock their fingers and raise them when speaking. The gesture in this context appears as a sort of prop for the affected individual, enabling them to navigate the anxiety. The gesture in this context is not just about communicating the physiological status of the affected person but as a coping mechanism.

If one raises both hands behind the head and interlocks the fingers, then it is to act as a cushion for the head. The gesture is used to indicate that one is feeling casual, tired, or simply not tasked by the current conversation. The gesture may also indicate that the individual is feeling tired by the conversation or the activity. Think of how you react when feeling exhausted when talking to a friend or after watching a movie. You probably raised both of your hands behind the head and interlocked the fingers to act as a headrest. In most cases, when one invokes this gesture, the individual is likely to let the mind wander to escape the current conversation.

Correspondingly, there is the gesture where one lets one of their palms to brush down their face. The gesture is used to signal deeper thinking, processing new contradictory information, or accepting humiliation in front of the audience. The gesture suggests surrender. It indicates yielding to inner thoughts or views from the audience that one may have initially opposed.

To indicate rejection or strong disagreement, both hands with palms wide are waved in an alternating manner to create the letter X. In class, you probably drew the letter X using both hands to indicate that you disagreed with or rejected what was being proposed. As a kid, you probably drew letter X to signal that you would not follow instructions. The sign also indicates retreat to your inner world to avoid listening to or watching the speaker.

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CHAPTER 10: THE CHEST AND SHOULDERS



While many people focus on facial expressions when making a judgment, the shoulders also play a certain role when it comes to body language.

Hunched Shoulders

When a person has hunched shoulders, usually with the arms crossed or tight and holding the body, it can mean they are feeling cold. It might also mean that the person is aloof.

Shoulders Curved Forward

When a person has curved their shoulders forward, you need to read something along the lines of them being defensive.

This usually happens when a person feels threatened.

Shoulders Pushed Back

Pushing the shoulders backward forces the chest to come out, which then exposes the torso.

This can be used to taunt you, showing power.

Shrug

The classic shrug usually means negation, and might be accompanied by other body movements, especially facial expressions.

The movement of the shoulder might not be much; it might be just a slight raising of the arms that you barely notice.

Shrugging usually indicates a sense of uncertainty or lack of understanding. Shrugging might show lying when it is more prolonged. You need to understand the context in which the shrug is being used to make a decision on whether it is positive or negative.

Clothes and Jewelry

Discussions around body language are often biased toward features like genuine smiles, pupil dilation, and crossed arms and legs. Most people ignore the importance of appearance and clothing. How you dress tells someone a lot about you and your perspective of them. If you are attending an event, your attire tells your audience what you think of the event or how seriously you take it.

On its own, appearance might not mean much to an audience. However, it sets the tone for everything else you might say. If your appearance contrasts the message that they expect from you, working your way up might be a tall order. If your appearance aligns with the message or theme that the audience expects, your work is relatively easier.

Clothing can project a low authority, high authority, or neutral image of yourself. When dressing, remember you are not doing it for yourself but for your audience. Consider the demographics and cultural expectations because it affects your message.

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CHAPTER 11: THE VITAL OR PROXEMIC SPACE



Now, imagine that you are standing in front of someone. You can see that they are crossing their arms with hands hidden behind them, their eyes shifting nervously from you to veer off to the left now and then. They shift their weight from foot to foot and struggle to maintain eye contact. Something about the body language of this person makes you uneasy, but you cannot place it. They keep their distance from you, and every time you get closer, you notice that they move away.

Body language is good at making us feel on edge, offended, or relaxed, but if you do not know what you are reading, you will struggle to understand why you feel that way.

Proxemics refers to the distance between yourself and someone else—it is the usage of space between yourself and the world around you. Naturally, people put varying degrees of space between themselves and others. When you are looking to understand proxemics, the best way to do so is to consider it a judgment of the relationship between yourself and those around you. You can also judge others' relationships based on the distance they put between each other, both vertically and horizontally.

The Use of Vertical Space

Vertical space is the space relative to your position height-wise. When someone utilizes vertical space, they attempt to make themselves taller or shorter, depending on the context. Those who want to make themselves taller may want to be an authority or someone deserving of respect and compliance. They may even use this space when they are trying to look at

others who are taller than them—they simply tilt their heads back to look down their nose at the taller person to create the same impact.

When you make yourself smaller, you typically want to be seen as less dominant for some reason. You may be attempting to shrink down to speak to a child to be understood truly, for example, or you may be lowering yourself to make yourself seem more submissive. People will pull their chins inward when they want to be smaller because they will then be required to look up through their eyelashes at the other person, even if the other person is taller.

The default, eye level, is deemed to be the most respectful—it marks you and the other person as equals deserving of the same respect and consideration.

The Use of Horizontal Space

In horizontal space, you are looking at how near or far people are to each other. You will use this when you are picking apart the relationships of others. There are four distances used between each other, ranging from intimate distances to public distance.

- **Intimate Distance**

This refers to being as close as possible to the other person. When you are in this position, you are usually touching without trying or are close enough to do so. It is typically only young children and parents, or lovers that are comfortable being this close to each other. Generally speaking, this zone is only about 18 inches away from you.

- **Personal Distance**

Slightly further away than the intimate distance, personal distance covers about 18 inches away up to about 5 feet around you. It is what people are talking about when they say that you are invading their personal bubbles.

This zone is usually reserved for those you like or feel comfortable with, such as friends and family members, or children who are too old to be within the intimate zone. The closer you can get to the center, the closer your relationship with that other person.

- **Social Distance**

This is a bit further out. It is the distance you naturally try to maintain with strangers around you or when interacting with someone else you do not know. Typically, this is between about 5 and 10 feet. You will use this when you are out and about unless you have no choice. When you are forced to encroach on this distance, you will most often make it a point to ignore the other person in an attempt to ignore the fact that they are violating those personal boundaries, such as when sitting on the bus.

- **Public Distance**

This refers to anything beyond 12 feet and is reserved for instances in which you speak out toward a crowd. You want to be loud enough that everyone in the crowd can hear you, so you want to ensure that people are a bit further away from you. It is reserved for lectures in classrooms, for example, or performances.

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CHAPTER 12: HOW TO UNDERSTAND BODY LANGUAGE: INTERPRET THE MOST HIDDEN SIGNALS (ADVANCED TECHNIQUES)



Making a deep, lasting, meaningful connection with others is something we all yearn for. We're social creatures by nature, and we don't do well in isolation. Loneliness is something we try to actively avoid, and therefore, there exists a necessity to form strong bonds with the people you surround yourself with. Everyone wants to feel that sense of belonging, but to achieve that, we need to be able to trust the people we're with.

Your ability to effectively analyze someone has a big effect on how you deal with them. But you cannot achieve this without at least some understanding of your own behavior. As much as you learn to analyze others, you need to learn to analyze yourself too, looking at the way you interact and the body language signals you're sending out to the rest of the

world. What do those signals say about you? Are they the right signals that you want to send? There's a lot to think about in behavioral analysis, both for yourself and others too.

NLP Techniques and Tools to Help You Analyze Your Behavior

Neuro-Linguistic Programming, or NLP for short, was created in the 1970s by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in California. NLP has three components. The neuro component focuses on neurology, linguistic refers to language, and programming is about using neural language functions. NLP, in other words, means learning the language of your mind. Isn't that interesting? NLP is now introduced in seminars and by companies looking to train their managers to enhance their skills in communication and better governance. But how does that help you understand your behavior? Let's find out.

Imagine you're in a foreign country on a holiday. You're trying to communicate with a local who doesn't speak your language. Try as you might, they can't understand you, and likewise, you can't understand them. If you're sitting at a restaurant trying to order a meal, what you think you ordered and what comes to your table could be two very different things. The missing communication link and inability to understand each other causes immense confusion and sometimes frustration on both ends. That, however, is the kind of partnership most of us have with our subconscious mind. The same part of the mind responsible for body language.

NLP is meant to bridge the gap between your conscious and subconscious mind. It is about understanding what your brain is trying to tell you. Without this understanding, it would be challenging to connect to your thoughts, which makes it more difficult to regulate your behavior and body language. What you think and feel, and what you want to say, will be two different things. Like the restaurant scenario. You need NLP to help you connect with your mind and understand your thoughts in a way you never have before.

To regulate your behavior and body language, you must be able to identify your current limitations and break through them. NLP's focus is about

learning how to tap into the subconscious mind and become more adept at managing your emotions. It helps you learn how to manage the situation according to the circumstances you're in, which will help you empathize on a deeper level and maybe see things from a whole new perspective.

NLP's Tools for Behavioral Analysis

NLP practice and techniques enable you to connect with yourself and your relationships in a more enriching way. You will be open to more learning possibilities, easily adapt to the changes happening in your life, and will learn as life moves on. Your ability to immediately identify and push through your limitations will increase. Along the way, you will become more adept at steering your emotions so they do not get the better of you. You will learn to handle your emotions based on the situation you are in, and become a more effective and powerful communicator both verbally and nonverbally.

There are several helpful tools within the NLP framework which can be used to help you better understand your behavior:

- **Tool 1: Submodalities**

NLP believes that the brain codes emotional significance differently in different people. This means everyone's brain is going to code differently based on their own mental "image" or representation. Submodalities in NLP are classified as visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and olfactory/gustatory, each of which represents the way we encode and attach meaning to our experiences. Submodalities can help you minimize your stress, either indirectly or directly. Using submodalities will help you learn to disassociate yourself from stress so it doesn't reflect in your behavior. Learning to listen to the way that you feel is your first step towards altering your submodalities. When you're feeling a particularly strong or tense emotion, do something else that takes your mind away from focusing on the negative.

- **Tool 2: Content Reframing**

Reframing involves taking a negative situation and empowering yourself by changing the meaning that you associate the experience with, subsequently turning it into a positive experience. This technique is extremely useful whenever we feel helpless or when negative thoughts and emotions weigh us down. Take a negative scenario and reframe it to give yourself an entirely different experience.

- **Tool 3: Perceptual Positions**

This technique teaches you to put yourself in another person's shoes. In other words, see things from their perspective by developing your empathy and social skills. Better empathic abilities help you understand others in a way you can relate to, and your body language will start to mirror theirs, making you more relatable.

- **Tool 4: Anchoring**

Anchoring is best described as a neurological association between a sound, scenario, or situation and the behavior we have when we come face to face with that situation. It is a very significant and commonly used NLP tool, you need to anchor yourself to the situations you face. Anchoring helps us to associate a desired positive emotional response when we face a certain sensation. When we choose a positive emotion or thought and connect it deliberately to a simple gesture, we also trigger the anchor whenever we feel negative emotions.

NLP Tools to Analyze Your Behavior

This technique is meant to change our emotions immediately, and with it, our behavior and body language.

Human behavior is learned, and it is a product of several influencing factors, including our environment, social circle, ecology, and lifestyle. It is learned, but it also has a structure to it, which means it can be changed and adjusted with the right framework and tools. NLP techniques are one such approach to working with, understanding, and altering human behavior.

Speed Reading People and the Art of Listening

Everyone is different. Each person comes with their unique behavior patterns, quirks, and tendencies. No two people are ever going to be the same, not even twins. Add this to the fact that not all body language gestures are definitive, and speed reading people becomes even more challenging.

People display different body language cues for a reason, and while we may not be able to read minds, we can certainly read bodily signals, and that can be used to our advantage, particularly when combined with another overlooked, but just as a vital skill – the art of listening.

As with nonverbal communication, this form of communication is not without its challenges.

Misunderstandings can happen for several reasons, including a poor choice of words. Arguments may take place when two people have a difference of opinion. When poor communication techniques are used, messages conveyed are misconstrued, causing a breakdown in communication, and if you happen to misread the nonverbal cues too? That's a recipe for communication disasters.

This is why speed reading people must be combined with the art of listening, instead of just relying on an analysis of body language alone.

Defining Communication and Its Purpose

You would think that communication is an easy, straightforward process, especially since we're engaged in it every day. But nothing could be further from the truth. That's because communication is more than just trying to understand and interpret what you're being told. There's a lot of other dynamics that come into play, which makes it hard to take their verbal communication at face value.

There's no way of knowing whether you're being told the truth unless you can learn how to analyze the hidden nonverbal signals. That's the whole reason why you learn to analyze others in the first place.

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PART 3

TECHNIQUES TO IDENTIFY IF A PERSON IS LYING

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CHAPTER 13: BEWARE OF BLUFFING



Imagine a world where people say the first thing that comes to mind, a world where you tell the truth to everyone you talk with.

For example, let’s say you take one look at your boss early in the morning and tell him he looks like a weakling.

What do you think would be the result? Peace or chaos? Here’s another scenario most people are quite familiar with: your spouse turns around and asks, “Does this dress make me look fat?” Even if the dress does make her look fat, I know most men will say something along this line, “No, it doesn’t; it’s probably the mirror playing tricks on you.”

So why do we opt to lie or gloss over important facts? Well, it is to avoid chaos. As we grow older, we learn the art of deceit to grease our interactions with others and help us maintain healthy social interactions. We know how much the cold, hard truth hurts sometimes, and it’s no wonder research supports the fact that social liars are more popular than those who repeatedly tell the truth.

This type of lie is referred to as a white lie since the other person is trying not to hurt our feelings.

So, what about the malicious lies people tell in order to deliberately deceive others for their personal gain? This is what we are going to focus our attention on. We will take a look at the common clues malicious liars give when they lie or withhold the truth. Before we explore these common deception cues, I want you to understand why it’s so important to study deception signals.

You and I deserve the truth. Society functions on the ability to trust people’s words, the knowledge that people will choose to abide by their words. If it

didn’t, society would descend into chaos, relationships would have a very short life, there would be no commerce, and parents and children would not trust each other.

In as much as we will sometimes use the white lie to avoid chaos, society also depends on honesty because we would all suffer in the absence of the truth.

Millions of people paid with their lives when Adolf Hitler lied to Neville Chamberlain. When Bill Clinton lied, it destroyed the reputation he had built over the years. When Richard Nixon lied, it nearly broke the steadfast loyalty and confidence of the American citizens in their country. Truth is, undoubtedly, essential in all relations, be it professional or personal.

We are lucky that people speak the truth most of the time, and most of the lies we come across are usually social or white lies. When it comes to crucial matters, it is essential for us to assess the truth of what we are told.

It is not always easy to find the truth. For millennia, people had to rely on the use of torture devices to get the truth from those suspected of deception. Today, people have learned how to analyze handwriting and voice and use the polygraph test to uncover the truth.

Still, even with our advanced techniques, there are a lot of concerns about the accuracy of these methods. You may think you have little chance at succeeding when these modern deception analysis techniques can still fail. Don’t be discouraged. With practice, you will become better at reading these deceptions cues.

After all, it is impossible to totally conceal deception.

Why Lying Is Difficult

Practice makes perfect, and most people have spent a good amount of time practicing and honing their lying skills. We have learned how to lie from an early age, and we’ve done it so often that we have become good at it.

Despite our perceived skills of deception, we still give off nonverbal cues that betray our innermost emotions to the astute observer.

For instance, people tend to smile less when they lie. This is contrary to the popular misconception that we smile more when we lie.

The difficulty in deception is that the subconscious mind gives contrary signals to our verbal statements. That is why it is so easy to catch someone who's not experienced in deception. On the other hand, actors, politicians, and public figures have learned how to refine their body gestures to the level where it's difficult to catch them in a lie. They tend to restrict their gestures in order not to reveal negative or positive gestures when they lie.

Researchers have discovered that it is easier to lie over the phone or in an email. It is also easy to lie when part of your body is obscured by the interviewer or interrogator. It is no surprise that law enforcement agencies place their suspect on a chair in the open in a bid to have an unrestricted view of their body language.

How to Detect Deception

People give off different types of signals that reveal deception. Some of these signals are so subtle that even veteran body language readers might miss them if they don't know where to look. Some signals are insignificant, unless you study them in clusters.

In some cases, you will be looking for signals of omission—looking for the hidden piece of information. Other times, you will be searching for verbal statements or actions that are inconsistent with the rest of the message.

Sometimes you won't have access to these deception clues since you might be communicating via an email or phone.

Variables such as ethnicity, gender, and cultural background can also influence how you detect nonverbal deception cues. Let's examine the major signs of deception in people:

Study the Body Language

Every part of the human body betrays our true feelings. By studying the arms, legs, eyes, nose, and torso, you can effectively deduce if someone is lying.

Liars Will Try to Avoid Eye Contact

When lying, people often avert their eyes in order not to betray their true emotions. They often do everything in their power to avoid looking at you since they think their lies will be uncovered through their eyes.

Conversely, people often give you their full attention and concentration when they tell the truth.

Restricted Body Movement

The arms and feet are great indicators of negative emotions, like deceit. It is easy to detect the gestures created by these body parts.

When someone is lying, they tend to be less expressive with their arms or hands. This means they are conscious about exposing themselves.

Have you ever noticed your arm movements when you are passionate about something? Your arms will wave all around as you try to emphasize your point.

When you notice a person sitting with his legs and arms close to his body, it’s a sign that he’s keeping something in. Watch out for unnatural hand and arm gestures. People who lie often try to overcome their restricted body gestures by using their gestures to convince us of the honesty of their verbal statements.

Involuntary Cover-Up

When the person’s hand goes straight to the face when making a statement or responding to a question, it is a clear sign of deceit. Liars often cover their mouths while speaking as if they don’t believe what they are saying.

Watch Out for Contradictions and Consistencies

We will take an in-depth look at the correlations between verbal statements and the accompanying body language.

From obvious contradictions, such as shaking your head from side to side while saying yes, to a more subtle form of contradiction, such as pursed lips, you will learn how to accurately interpret these signals.

These signs occur both on the conscious and subconscious levels. You will notice when people make a conscious effort to embellish their points through their forced gestures and off-timing.

You will also learn how to read people's initial reaction. This is the initial expression you notice on people's faces before they mask it with other body language. Even if you can't read the fleeting initial expression, it is usually an indication that someone has something to hide.

Observe the Timing

Timing is everything when detecting deception. For example, if a person's head begins to shake in an affirmative direction before the words come out, then there's a high chance he's telling the truth. But if the person's head shakes after the point is made, it is a sign that the person is trying to demonstrate conviction.

Watch out for the arm and hand movements that demonstrate a point after it's been made. This gesture is an afterthought, and it's the work of a shoddy liar. These arm and hand movements won't only start late but will also seem mechanical and at war with the "verbal" statement. Someone who is truly convinced about his statement will nod or shake their head in tune with every point he makes.

Be aware that a mechanical nodding when there's no point to emphasize is a sign of deception.

Sniff Out the Contradictions

Timing is crucial, but we need to pay more attention to contradictions between verbal and nonverbal cues. The woman who smiles while saying, "I hate you" is sending a contradictory signal. There's an obvious disharmony between her facial expression and verbal statement. Another example is a man telling his girlfriend or spouse he loves her while

clenching his fists. Similarly, the gesture and the verbal statement are not in harmony.

Study the Timing of the Emotion

It is also difficult to fake the timing of emotions. For you to detect deception, carefully observe the timing of the emotions, and you will never be fooled. A fake emotion is not spontaneous; there's usually a delay in the onset of the emotion. The fake emotion lasts longer than normal and ends abruptly.

Let's take the emotion of surprise. The surprise emotion is always fleeting, and it is a fake response if it lasts too long. So, when people feign surprise, they usually keep the surprised face longer than usual.

The Unhappy Smile

Here's another contradiction you need to watch out for. I briefly touched on this aspect when I explained the concept of smiles. I elaborated on the difference between fake and real smiles and how the former is limited to only the mouth area. When you pay close attention, you will notice that most deception signals are restricted to the mouth region.

Interpersonal Interactions

You need to consider a lot of factors when searching for signs of deception in people. Take a look at their posture in relation to the environment. Observe their stance to see if it's defensive or offensive. Research shows that guilty people are likely to go on the defensive since they feel they are boxed in.

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CHAPTER 14: HOW TO SEDUCE AND ATTRACT SOMEONE



As social creatures, we have a long history of utilizing sure non-verbal signs to show interest in others or check whether others are keen on us.

Today, this has become more refined, however antiquated signs are still there and can be utilized with excellent outcomes. Temptation is a game played at all levels, not just in your romantic life. A man might need to entice a lady to take her to bed. A lady might wish to attract a rich man so she can have a peaceful monetary life. A vocalist might need to allure the majority with her appeal so she can sell her music. A legislator might need to entice the electors to have success.

Enticement can be both negative and positive. It may be tied in with beguiling somebody, causing somebody to have a positive outlook on themselves, or decreasing their feelings of trepidation. It may be about utilizing impulse to mislead individuals and getting them to accomplish something that they wouldn't ordinarily do.

In this chapter, you will discover a series of non-verbal communication techniques that help you utilize the craft of temptation in order to get what you need.

Get Yourself Noticed

Non-verbal Sign

- Drop something deliberately, and twist down to get it. Ideas include a glove, a book, a watch, or a napkin.

Mirror your Partner

Non-verbal Sign

- Mirror each move the individual you are attempting to tempt makes. At the point when he folds his legs, copy it. When he lifts his hands behind his head, repeat it. If he touches his face, do likewise.

How Does It Work?

When you and the individual you are communicating with move in synchronization and match each other's non-verbal communication, you suggest that you think the same way. The other individual will get this non-verbal sign unwittingly. As a rule, we find individuals who resemble us more appealing.

Seem Vulnerable

Non-verbal Sign

Female

- Show the rear of your wrist.
- Tilt your neck and uncover it.

Male and Female

- Wear a shirt with an open neckline and touch your neck or collarbone.

How Does It Work?

The neck and the rear of the wrist are weak parts of the body. By leaving these parts undefended, you suggest that you believe the person you are speaking with, and are not apprehensive. It also infers you may be happy to go above and beyond with other parts of the body.

Be More Visible than Others

Non-verbal Sign

- Walk near the individual that you need to tempt.
- Aim to be inside their field of view more regularly than others.
- Bump into them a few times with the goal of becoming a recognizable face.
- Have a casual discussion to break the ice, so you don't feel like strangers.

How Does It Work?

If others see you frequently, they are bound to get inspired by you. Commonality prompts interest. Plan to be around your target individual more regularly than others. In time, they will undoubtedly give more consideration to you than others.

For instance, trying to say hey to an individual you don't know will make you a familiar face. It will be much simpler to interact with them, become more amicable, and take it to the next level.

You can't be enchanting if the other person is not aware of who you are.

Seem Approachable

Non-verbal Sign

- For ladies. Tilt your head down and turn your eyes upward. A side tilt now and again enhances this.

How Does It Work?

This signal emulates how a kid admires a parent. Because of the stature contrast, a youngster will consistently gaze upward with wide eyes. It is a motion that proposes blamelessness and is generally utilized by young ladies.

As a grown-up, you can utilize a comparative signal to show accommodation to an expected accomplice and demonstrate that you can be drawn nearer.

Physical Contact

Non-verbal Sign

- Touch an individual's shoulder.
- Touch an individual's hand.
- Hold an individual's hand.

How Does It Work?

Begin with an incidental touch. This can be a light touch on the hand while trading something or sitting together. It will serve to break the ice with regards to contact. Specifically, this can be your beginning stage while alluring a lady. This non-verbal communication strategy is especially appropriate to those from nations that are socially more hesitant to contact.

When all is said in done, contact can be very ground-breaking. Examination shows that servers who make a light touch while conveying a bill for their clients are bound to get a bigger tip. Curiously, the client is usually unaware of the communication and just "feels" like tipping more when the opportunity arrives.

In another example, if a clerk in a retail shop gently touches a client's hand when the client is paying for a product, the client will probably rate the exchange and the experience more positively than if the client was not contacted. Once more, this occurs on a subconscious level.

Appear Exotic

Non-verbal Sign

- Surprise individuals by how you look.
- Appear offbeat and intriguing.

- Look not quite the same as the common person.
- Offer a vital service.

How Does It Work?

This procedure is maybe best depicted by the activities of the expert of temptation. It was the year 48 B.C. Julius Caesar was in an Egyptian castle having a gathering with his military commanders. A gatekeeper announced that a Greek vendor needed to meet the Roman general to give a significant blessing. Caesar permitted the trader to approach. The trader came in carrying an enormous floor covering. Once before Caesar, the shipper fixed the rope tied around the rug and spread it out with a fast snap of his wrist. A youthful, wonderful half-bare woman, the young Cleopatra, the sovereign of Egypt, was covered up inside the carpet!

It caught everybody off guard, as it was evident how much trouble Cleopatra had gone to in designing this move. The move was so enchanting that Caesar was snared.

Like Cleopatra, plan your passage, what you look like, and your general non-verbal communication.

Be Symmetrical

Non-verbal Sign

- Use cosmetics to show up as balanced as could reasonably be expected. This is especially pertinent to ladies.
- Wear evenly lovely material.

How Does It Work?

Analysts have discovered a connection between evenness and sexual choice. We will, in general, be pulled towards individuals who have even faces and bodies. Individuals who are ill-suited or unfortunate often have topsy-turvy bodies. Any deviation from evenness suggests that a specific individual has not developed appropriately or is unsuitable for procreation. An even individual is generally viewed as being more appealing. If your

utilization of cosmetics or fabric makes you look balanced, you are bound to seem alluring.

A good first impression can make the resulting experience much more straightforward. Furthermore, when individuals know nothing about you, they will be anxious to discover more.

A good first impression comprises non-verbal signs, alongside the underlying short welcome and conceivable casual discussion. Fortunately, you are your promoter. You can prepare for the experience. You can determine precisely how you appear. With such a significant amount of rivalry in publicizing and catching individuals' consideration, getting the initial introductions right is critical.

Be Prepared for First Impressions

When you are going to meet somebody, regardless of whether it is for business or pleasure, ensure that you show up at your best. You do not want to be rushed, fail to remember something, or look ill-equipped. If you seem ill-equipped, the other individual's impression of you will be that you are someone who doesn't value that experience or them. Strive to show the other individual that you care about them and their needs.

We should repeat over that once more. The initial introduction isn't about you. It is about the impression other individuals have about you. Henceforth, it is eventually about them; it is tied in with causing them to feel that you will help their lives.

Focusing on this fundamental objective, you can use the following non-verbal communication rules:

- Dress appropriately, and in a way that makes the other individual agreeable when you are near.
- Be on time.
- Appear sure and ingenious, so the other individual understands you are worth his time.
- Be open with the goal so the other person will feel relaxed.

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CHAPTER 15: WHAT REALLY MOTIVATE US?



Now, we're going to talk about the motivations of people. This is the principal thing that keeps them going, and if you want to be able to read a person's body language correctly, you need to understand the motivations that drive them. Think of this like driving on a highway. Everyone is driving towards a destination, which is their main motivation. If you're driving right alongside them, you might not be 100% sure of where they're going. However, if you take a good look at the car's movements, the blinkers, their position in the lane, and so on, you should be able to make a close-to-accurate prediction and therefore adjust your own driving accordingly. Even if a person lies to you, knowing what motivates them or what their "end game" is can help you to figure out what the lie is all about.

One more note, motives are defined as the conscious or unconscious factors for people's behaviors. Motives are the reasons we do what we do. Behaviors are the acts themselves; the actions that are reflective of a person's motivation.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

This is possibly one of the oldest rationales for understanding human motivation. It's not perfect, but what is? Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a lot like the Nutrition Pyramid. It explains that motives have a bottom-up approach. The bottom needs are the most basic and prevalent which must be met first before the other's needs are addressed. There are five levels to basic human need, starting from the bottom, and these are: Physiological, Safety, Love/Belonging, Esteem, and Self-Actualization.

Here is a brief look at how this works:

Physiological Needs

These are the components that are aimed towards survival. According to Maslow's theory, humans are compelled to fulfill these needs first before they can ascend to higher levels. So, what exactly are these physiological needs? These are:

Homeostasis, or basically the balance of the body in order to preserve its living condition.

Health.

Food.

Water.

Sleep.

Clothing.

Shelter.

Social Belonging

Once you have the most basic needs and security, the next step is to seek out social belonging. We are social animals after all, and the need to be accepted by our peers is one of the most common driving forces for people. The need for social belonging is typically met by the following:

Friendships.

Intimacy.

Family.

The need to be accepted in social groups exists regardless of the size of the group itself. Small social connections include family, friends, and colleagues. You will notice that most people will go to extra lengths in order to have this sense of acceptance and belonging in their chosen social circle. Failure to meet these needs leads to problems like social anxiety, clinical depression, and loneliness.

Self-Esteem

Next is self-esteem which is connected to the second level. People often use the second level to jump to the third. Acceptance in their social circle tends to boost a person's self-esteem as they find themselves worthy because others find them worthy. What does this level cover? There are actually two versions of this: the lower and the higher version. The lower version speaks of self-esteem derived from others. There's a need for status, fame, prestige, recognition, and attention from others.

The higher version speaks of self-esteem derived from your own competency. This speaks of self-confidence, knowing that you're capable of independence. This means being able to take care of yourself, know your needs, and have the ability to meet those needs. This gives an individual a sense of value and prevents them having an inferiority complex.

Self-Actualization

This is the toughest level of the motivation pyramid, and is all about managing to reach a person's full potential. Maslow describes it as the ability of an individual to accomplish everything they can possibly achieve in life. It is a lifetime goal and for many people, it can be difficult to actually pinpoint that lifetime goal. Others, however, know what this goal is, but have a hard time reaching it.

Self-actualization Can Include

Parenting.

Partner acquisition.

Utilizing and developing abilities.

Utilizing and developing talents.

Pursuing other goals.

These self-actualization motives are described by Maslow as the intrinsic drive that pushes people forward into completion. People who have a clear grasp of this goal need to understand how their four needs in the pyramid interact with each other to help them achieve the ultimate goal.

The Fifth Level—Transcendence

Oddly enough, the developer of this hierarchy also talked about a sixth level. He called it transcendence and according to him, it is a level of achievement where a person surrenders himself to something or someone more powerful than himself. You are probably thinking about religion, but that's not all there is to it. Transcendence is also pursued through meditative exercises. According to him, transcendence refers to the highest and most holistic level of human consciousness.

So How Does This Help with Reading People?

If we rely completely on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, you'll note that most people's actions are geared towards reaching any of these five needs. It can be a tad difficult, but what you want to do is try to figure which of these five needs a person wants to achieve through a particular behavior. Do they want social acceptance? Do they want to achieve the basic needs of maintaining life? Or do they want a sense of security? If you can figure out exactly what ultimate need one wants to fulfill, you can at least fill in the gaps and make a reading on what their body is saying.

Experience Matters When It Comes to Motives

Obviously, there is a lot more to motivation than just figuring out which of the five needs a person wants to meet. Experience is a big predictor when it comes to figuring out motivations. Plus, it's on a case-by-case basis, with YOU as a big factor in the equation. Simply put—what does this person want from me? What need is this person trying to fulfill through me? What need can I fill for this person?

Guidelines for Understanding People

Let's say you're ready to figure out people's motivations and understand them to forge better connections. The question now is this: how do you start? The way you start varies from person to person, but there are certain "general rules" that can help you move forward with connections.

Here are some of the typical guidelines to make things easier for you:

Most Social Behaviors Are Hidden

We've been talking about the different actions of people and what they mean, but it's also important to look at the opposite end of the scale. You should keep in mind that more often than not, people draw inwards instead of pushing out. Many actions or reactions are done in order to suppress rather than express. For example, people close their arms, suck in their lips, or look away from people. It's a pull motion rather than a push. How does this apply when you're trying to connect with people?

Well, you have to pay extra attention. There's this precious moment between a push and a pull when a person starts to react to something and then quickly holds that back in because they realize that they're showing emotions they don't want people to see. That's the moment you have to catch.

Now, you might not always catch this deliberate inaction, but knowing that it's there is half the battle. A lot of things are beneath the surface. This is why you need to focus on empathy, instead of just interpreting what people

say. Put yourself in the person's shoes, and you should be able to at least have an idea of what they're trying to do or what they're trying to achieve.

Conceit Trumps Malice

Another thing to keep in mind is that people aren't naturally evil. If you're going to guess a person's motivation, malice should NOT be your first choice. In law, accused people are often considered "innocent until proven guilty" because the default setting is that a person is "good" unless there's enough evidence to show that they've been bad. This is also important if you want to understand people better.

In any situation where people are doing something that is harmful to others, first assume that they're doing it because they're unaware or ignorant or believe that their way is more important. By having this mindset, you are more likely to react in a kind manner. Chances are you'd react by explaining to them exactly why their choice of action is not the best one. In contrast, walking into a situation believing a person is simply "evil" makes you react badly, perhaps even rudely or violently.

Selfishness and Altruism Often Dictate Behavior

Selfishness is often viewed as a desire to please only yourself while altruism is its exact opposite. Altruistic people are said to be selfless and want only the best for others. Oddly enough, people can be driven by these two factors at the same time. Perhaps the simplest way to explain this is: people are giving, but they are giving in a way that also helps themselves. For example, people have no problem lending money to a friend, knowing that this particular friend can help them fix their computer or fix their car without charge. You trade in a car from a dealer and the two of you benefit. In some cases, helping someone is a sign that you have more power than that person, therefore helping you establish a feeling of dominance over another person.

Memory Is Fickle

Another thing that might help you in understanding people for the better is that they don’t have excellent memories. Memory is incredibly fickle and people are likely to forget certain things, ideas, or concepts. Hence, if you’re expecting someone to call or someone promised to do something for you, and it did not eventuate, you can always assume it’s because they simply forgot instead of it being deliberate malice. Do not assume that people are naturally evil as this will leave you feeling bitter and closed to the possibility of connecting to and understanding others.

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CHAPTER 16: PERSONALITY TYPES



Researchers examined data that was collected from over 1.5 million people and it was found that there is a minimum of four distinct personality groups: reserved, regular, exemplary, and egocentric. The findings go against the existing paradigms that are present in psychology.

The study used questionnaires in which volunteers responded in exchange for more information about their own personality.

People have tried to categorize personality types since ancient times, but scientific literature has long rejected the idea.

Personality types were only found in self-help literature and not in scientific journals. From the answers to the questionnaires, specialists pointed out the five basic traits of personality: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to new experiences, sympathy, and conscientiousness. Once the new algorithms were developed, there were four types of personalities that emerged.

Regular

Regular people are rich in neuroticism and extraversion and have low levels of openness to new experiences. Women are usually more prone to falling into this category.

Reserved

The reserved individual is emotionally stable but has no openness or neuroticism. He is not extroverted, but he is pleasant and aware.

Exemplary

Exemplary people score low on neuroticism and high on all other characteristics. There are more women in this category. The likelihood of someone being exemplary increases with age. They are the kind of people that you can trust, and they are open to new ideas. These are the kind of people that will take care of things.

Egocentric

This group scores very high on extroversion and below the required score in openness, sympathy, and awareness. There is a substantial decrease in self-centered numbers as people age, both with women and men.

Researchers also developed a new method, reducing the possibility of aggregation of the algorithms. This procedure revealed the four groups.

To make sure the categories were accurate, they used a group of egocentrics – adolescent boys – to validate the information. We know that adolescents behave in an egocentric way.

According to experts, this research can help health care professionals evaluate people with extreme personalities. In addition, you can use this information to help select candidates for job vacancies or even to find a loving partner.

The analysis also points out that as people mature, their personality types change. For example, older people are usually a lot more conscientious and sympathetic than people under the age of 20 years. When we look at people in large groups, it becomes very clear that trends exist. Some people can change their characteristics over time.

Classification of Personality Types

The classification of your personality type comes from the combination of 4 criteria.

These criteria are the opposite and exclusive. For example, if you are extroverted, you cannot be introverted. In order for a personality to be formed, it is necessary to choose an answer from each criterion. The combination of the four chosen criteria gives the personality type, for example, ENTP or INFJ.

Check out the acronyms and the four classification criteria below:

Introverts or Extroverts

The first classification of personality types is related to the way we interact with the world. With respect to this question, we can be: Extroverts (E) or Introverts (I):

Extroverts (E): Someone with this type of personality is extremely sociable and likes to talk and interact with other people. He is not afraid to state his opinions and is very communicative. They focus their energy on the real world.

Introverts (I): These are usually people who feel better alone, are less sociable, and interact with fewer people. In general, they do not open up easily. They concentrate their energy on the world of thoughts.

Sensory or Intuitive

The second classification of personality types is related to how we observe and absorb information from the world. With respect to this criterion, we can be: Sensory (S) or Intuitive (N):

Sensory (S): Corresponds to the most materialistic personality type, obtains information through the observation of facts and concrete details. They are realistic and practical people.

Intuitive (N): These are people who have a more imaginative profile. Instead of obtaining information through concrete facts, they prefer to observe and draw the final conclusions from their own thoughts and beliefs. They are the most creative and complex people.

Thinkers or Sentimental

The third classification of personality types concerns how we judge other people's actions and also how we make decisions. With regard to this criterion, we can be: Thinkers (T) or Sentimental (F):

Thinkers (T): They make decisions and always judge people based on logic, generally weighing up the pros and cons of the situation. They are objective and fair; they rarely let feelings influence their decisions. They value logic, justice, and equality.

Sentimental (F): People with this type of personality judge people and make their decisions guided by their instincts and also by feelings (i.e. decide based on what they are feeling at the moment). They value harmony; empathy does not follow strict rules; they accept exceptions well.

Judges or Perceptive

The fourth classification of personality types is related to whether we prefer to act spontaneously or whether we prefer to think well before acting. With respect to this criterion, we can be: Judges (J) or Perceptive (P):

Judges (J): Whoever has a judging personality is satisfied after decisions have been made; they are distressed by letting problems accumulate. In general, they do not think much before acting, they prefer to regret later.

Perceptive (P): They make well-thought-out and more accurate decisions; they take time to act. They become distressed if they need to make a decision quickly. They usually think hard before they act because they are afraid to repent.

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CHAPTER 17: PRACTICAL APPLICATION



Exercises and Practice for Masterful Analysis of Others and Broadcasting of Yourself

You'll find several basic exercises to practice to enhance your analysis of others and influence social interaction. Select one or two you're comfortable with and start there. When you've become comfortable with those, select one or two more, and even add other practices you've found elsewhere and learned by observing others. Learning from others you admire and then mirroring that behavior is an effective process of adapting more influential behavior. The key is to practice them regularly and record your results.

Regulate Your Breath

This is a common breathing technique used in meditation and in the practice of mindfulness. Like most breathing exercises, this is designed to guide the individual into a slower frame of mind that most often includes a slowing and calming of the body. The individual is encouraged to listen to, and focus on, his or her own breath. When the mind wanders, gently guide it back to the breathing exercise.

This exercise can be practiced almost anywhere, but it does require the individual to block out the rest of the world for a solid 5-10 minutes for maximum benefit. There is no preparation necessary, and while it's nice to practice this exercise in a comfortable and relaxing space, it's possible to implement this in a space that isn't perfect. Doing so will strengthen your ability to block out distractions and concentrate deliberately for 5-10 minutes.

The primary function of this exercise is to regulate a slow, and steady breathing pattern of 3-count inhales, and 5-count exhales. It's also suggested that when breathing in, you breathe deeply through your nose, and when exhaling, you do so through the mouth as if you're blowing air out from your lips.

By adding this breathing exercise to your repertoire, you'll improve focus and memory and decrease stress chemicals in the body. This exercise also decreases your overall sense of anxiety, lowers heart rate and blood pressure, relieves muscle tension, and improves eyesight.

To practice this exercise:

Get as comfortable and quiet as possible in a place you can sit undisturbed for 5-10 minutes.

Sit comfortably and close your eyes.

Breathe in deeply and exhale.

Hold your breathing for a moment on the exhale.

Inhale again, but this time, breathe in slowly and steadily for a count of 3.

Hold your breath for a count of 3.

Exhale, but this time, exhale slowly and steadily for a count of 5.

Inhale again, slowly and steadily for 3 counts.

Exhale again, slowly and steadily for 5 counts.

Continue this pattern of slow and steady inhales and exhales at a 3-count, and 5-count, respectively.

You may opt to continue to hold your breath in between inhaling and exhaling as part of your pattern, but it's not mandatory. Do what is most comfortable. If the mind begins to wander, gently bring it back to the observation of the breathing process. Your analytical mind should be

listening closely to your breathing for any sign of faster or unsteady flow. The analytical mind can also remain focused on the evenness of your counts, trying to maintain the slow and steady flow. After a 5 or 10-minute period, you can slowly open your eyes and readjust to your immediate surroundings. With regular practice of this breathing exercise, you will teach your mind and body that you have the power to bring yourself to this peaceful moment whenever you want. This is a personal micro-vacation you can use any time in your day; it feels good.

Try Reframing

In reframing, you're encouraged to take a situation you feel negatively about and put it in a new light; paint a different picture of it. This can be done anywhere, at any time, and takes only seconds or minutes. It can be done silently in your own mind or out loud. Reframing out loud has the added benefit of strengthening the story, and the accompanying emotions.

This exercise works well for people who regularly overthink, and form exaggerated and dramatic stories based on one small piece of evidence, often taken out of context. Examples of situations that reframing can work well on might be someone standing you up for a date, someone taking the seat you saved, someone cutting you off in the grocery aisle, a stranger giving you a nasty look, and so on. These situations often put us on the defensive quickly, as we feel we're wrongly judged or mistreated. It's easy to imagine a personal injustice or that the situation was done against you, personally.

This exercise forces the individual to look at the situation objectively, as if no personal emotion was involved. Through this lens, the individual can often slow the pattern of negative thought and put the situation into a more realistic perspective.

There are no step-by-step instructions for this practice. When you notice a situation you feel personally offended by, stop. Take a moment to analyze what's really going on from an objective point of view. Ask yourself if you could be seeing some of these details wrong and if something else, which is not a personal attack on you, could actually be going on. Imagine a scenario where the same situation plays out, but it has nothing to do with you. For example, the person who stood you up could have had an emergency. The

person who took your seat probably didn't realize they did it. The person who cuts you off in the grocery aisle could have been in an important rush to get somewhere. The stranger with the nasty look could have made that face because of a thought of their own, and they just happened to be facing your direction.

Read Others in Public

The next time you're in any line, take your time reading and observing the body language of others around you, both customers and clerks. Note the correlations you observe, and even make notes on your phone about this while you're in line. Once a month or once a quarter, look back over that which you've recorded to analyze your progress and the spots you still may need more work on.

Exercise Written Influence

In-person interactions are a prime way to maximize influence, but this isn't always possible. Many times, we interact with others on the phone, in chat, or on social media. If email and text is the way you communicate for most of the day, try writing a persuasive email at least once per day. Plan what outcome you want to see, and then try to implement one or two of these tactics to see if you can get the email recipient to do what you want or agree with you.

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CHAPTER 18: HOW TO FAKE YOUR BODY LANGUAGE

Now, we will go through some easy and simple ways to fake your body language in order to convey different emotions or expressions to those around you. These methods can be beneficial in everyday life as well as in the workplace. They can also serve you well when starting out relationships. These methods also do a good job of helping you feel how you are trying to feel. Have you ever heard the cliché, “Fake it till you make it?” Well, in some ways, this is true. By pretending to feel a lot of the emotions, you may be able to convince yourself that you actually feel that way.



Taking a Deep Breath

Amplifying the supply of oxygen within our lungs gives us more power and more ability to fake our emotions through body language. This will also give us a moment to collect our composure and pretend to be calm and collected. In addition, deep breathing tends to stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system, which can trigger a relaxation response. This is very helpful, especially when trying to trick those around you into believing that you are calm and controlled in a situation. Deep breathing is a very good trick for mindful living, as it gives you more control over your body and your reactions to stimuli.

Controlling the Movement of Our Eyebrows

Our eyebrows can convey a lot about our inner feelings. A lot of movement from our eyebrows can convey feelings that you do not want to express. You need to be aware of the movement of your eyebrows when you are trying to fake certain emotions through your body language.

Trying Not to Use a Fake Smile

While it is good to smile even if you don’t feel like it, that is not always beneficial when faking your emotions through body language. While looking happy and bubbly may make others like you, it is not the best look to have constantly. Fake smiles are far too easy to see through, and humans are naturally inclined to try and search for any inconsistencies within somebody’s smile. A better way to hide your emotions is to keep your mouth straight and not smiling or sad.

Relaxing Your Face

By keeping your facial muscles relaxed, you can more easily control the movements of your face. Stay away from movements such as teeth

grinding, frowning, or displaying any other type of emotional expression. Having a calmer look on your face makes it easier to control the emotions you are putting out through your body language.

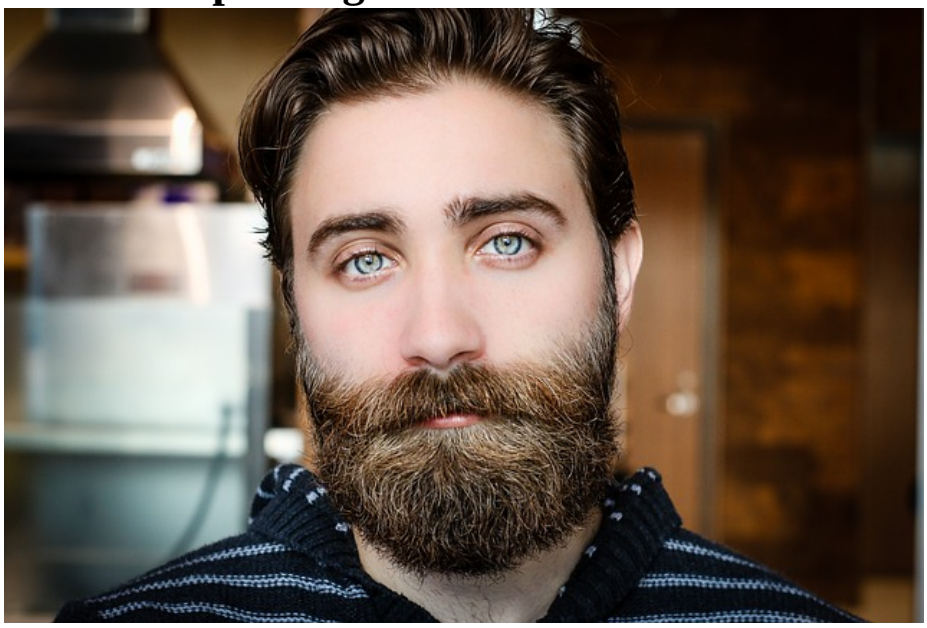
Supporting Your Head

A person’s head that is being held up or a face buried into one’s palm is a very obvious and clear giveaway of a bad mood or sadness. Keep your head held up high and your neck and back straight in a situation where you feel sad, but you do not want those around you to know that you feel sad. Another important thing to remember is to try and stop yourself from touching your face when you're feeling sad, as it is a strong sign of anxiety and stress.

Avoiding Fidgeting

Moving suddenly or very quickly are obvious signs of discomfort and anxiety. If you try to relax your body and try to look as though you are comfortable where you are, it can be easier to control your emotions and feelings. It also becomes harder for those around you to decipher what you feel because you simply look calm and relaxed.

Speaking in a Balanced Tone



This one is very important. If you want to come across as anything other than how you are currently feeling, take a moment to think about what you're going to say. Speak in a balanced and even tone to those around you. The tone of your voice can give away your thoughts faster than you can think. Speaking too fast or changing your tone very quickly and frequently is an obvious sign that you aren't quite sure what you are trying to emote or what you are feeling. Try to slow down before you answer any questions. In addition to this, try to speak with your mind in a logical setting. Focus exclusively on facts and remove any emotion from the situation. Through focusing on facts, you can stop your body from exclusively feeling the said emotions and focus on the task at hand.

Trying to Disassociate

If you can manage to detach yourself from a situation you are in, it will become much easier to control your body language and the emotions that you are seeking to hide. An easy way to do this is to think of good memories. Doing this will help take your mind off of whatever is happening

around you, and it will make it more challenging for others to read your thoughts. By detaching yourself from the situation around you, you will more easily be able to see the logical side of what is happening, and be able to accurately portray the particular body language and emotions that you want to exude.

Speaking to Yourself

Tell your mind to think the way it should. This will make it easier to control your body language and your emotions, as you are in the process of controlling your own mind.

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CONCLUSION



How to Analyze People with Your Own Powers of Observation

#1. Body Language

The body is the most important part of any person’s communication. Hands, feet, arms, and legs are all used in different ways which reflect a person's moods, likes, and dislikes. If you see someone thumping their feet on the floor and crossing their arms over their chest, this means they are feeling stressed or annoyed. If someone is standing very still and staring at the floor, they are feeling embarrassed or shy.

#2. Voice

What someone says and how they say it can reveal a lot about their personality. A loud or quiet voice, too high or too low pitch, deep or high-pitched laughter can all give clues to a person's character. Just the way they pronounce certain words, or their grammar can reveal a lot about their education and social status. For example, if someone is constantly laughing nervously it may indicate that they are feeling nervous and defensive.

If a person tries to control the way they speak, for example, if they try to sound smarter than they are, then this will also reveal something about them. For example, if someone speaks in a slow and quiet voice it is a sign that they want people to like them and feel comfortable with them. If someone speaks too loudly in an aggressive way, then this may mean that they are being defensive and trying to be intimidating.

#3. What They Say

It is the conversation that reveals the most about a person. People who talk a lot are more extroverted and probably have lower self-esteem. They enjoy attention and want to be popular. People who speak quietly are often very happy with themselves, or may be shy. It is difficult to know why they act in this way, but either way, it shows something about their personality and character.

#4. Appearances

The way people dress can tell you a lot about their personality. People who wear expensive, designer clothes tend to be more confident and successful than others. People who wear their clothes in an untidy way are probably more relaxed and laid back, as they don't care what they look like. People who dress very smartly have high standards and want to look good. This is usually a sign of a good self-esteem. If someone dresses very badly, or in clothes that are too young for them, it could mean that they are trying to hide their real personality.

#5. The Way They Look At You

The way a person looks at you when you speak to them can reveal something about their feelings towards you. If someone is looking away from you or at the floor it could mean that they are not listening to you. If they are listening but looking at something else, like their mobile phone, it could mean that they are not interested in what you have to say. If their eyes are focused on you and they are following what you are saying it means that they are listening and taking in what you're saying.

#6. Your Own Reactions

The best way to observe people is to notice your own reactions. If you get along with someone it means that you feel comfortable around them. If you are not comfortable around a person then this probably means that you don't

like them or that they are intimidating. If you are interested in a person or think that they are interested then it means that you like them and feel attracted to them. If you are jealous of someone then it shows that you respect them and think they are better than you, or maybe that you feel threatened by them.

#7. Looks

If someone is giving you a dirty look, this most probably means they don't like you. If someone looks you straight in the eye when you speak to them then it means that they are interested and open to what you have to say. If they are staring at you in a very intense way it may mean that they like you. If they look away when you speak to them it could mean that they are not interested in what you have to say.

#8. Confidence Level

People who are confident and relaxed will act differently to those who are nervous and uptight. If someone is confident and relaxed, they will stand tall, speak in a clear voice and look you straight in the eye. If they are nervous and uptight, they may fidget, speak quietly, and look away when listening to you. Nervous people are usually more defensive because they don't feel good about themselves.

#9. Facial Expressions

If someone is smiling, then they are probably happy. If they are smiling when talking to you then it means that they are interested and like you. However, a tight-lipped smile can mean that the person doesn't like you, or maybe that they are trying to hide their feelings.

#10. Age and Gender

The way a man acts is generally very different to the way a woman acts. Men tend to be more confident and extroverted, whereas women are more

sensitive and caring. If you are talking to a boy or girl then it is important to notice the difference in their body language, facial expressions, and tones of voice. You will be able to tell whether they like you by their actions and reactions towards you.

#11. Where They Are Looking

Where a person looks can also reveal a lot about their personality. People who are observing their surroundings may be more confident than those who are not. Those who are not looking at what is around them usually have low self-esteem and do not feel comfortable in their environment.

#12. Their Interests

If someone is interested in something, they will speak about it a lot, and watch a lot of films/TV about the subject. A person who doesn't care about anything will not pay attention to anything and won't watch any films or programs on TV. Also, if someone is interested in fashion, they will do a lot of research on the internet about different styles.

#13. Intelligence Level

People who can't speak very well are often very defensive about their intelligence and have low self-esteem. If someone speaks in a confident way, then it shows that they are intelligent and have high self-esteem. People who try to speak in a smarter way than they are used to are probably trying to impress someone.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

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INTRODUCTION



Psychological warfare is the use of propaganda and psychological manipulation to influence a target audience toward the accomplishment of a political, economic, or military goal.

I am severely saddened and a little bit disturbed that the United States of America, with all of its might, has used psychological warfare against its own people. This psychological warfare has been going on for so long that "We the People" have forgotten all about it and allowed it to continue. If a country was being used as a guinea pig in a psychological warfare experiment, and the results were not favorable, the experiment would be discontinued.

The question is this, are we the guinea pigs? I don't know! But upon researching the concept of psychological warfare, I have concluded, "well, we sure might be."

From the birth of the United States of America, right up to the present day, we the people have been subjected to an ongoing psychological warfare program, and the war will never end. The war will never end because we are unaware of the full extent of the loss of freedom that has occurred and is still occurring.

From my own investigations into the topic, I do not believe the psychological warfare program is only taking place in the United States, but also in other nations in the world. Secret documents have been leaked to an international news agency revealing that countries like Russia were also singled out for their participation in a psychological warfare program. I'm not making this up, I have read a ton of these leaked documents that a national news agency obtained from one of the countries being subjected to psychological warfare.

Psychological warfare also happens in our ordinary lives. Those who practice psychology know it is possible to conduct surveillance on a person based on subtle clues provided by that person. A common example would be when someone is looking around at the paintings at a museum and then later that person gets hit by a spell that was cast against that person just because they looked at a bunch of paintings.

As I said before, psychological warfare is nothing new, it was being practiced long before I was born, and I didn't grow up with the computer. But the computer sure made it a hundred times easier to practice psychological warfare, and made it harder to detect as well. We need to be aware that we have been heavily programmed by the government and television while we were in the womb – yes, while we were in the womb.

A major reason why it had to be done while we were in the womb is that we are all born with a superpower called intuition. The government and television program people in that area of the brain the least because that is where people are stronger than them. The rest of the brain has been hard at work since before we were born.

This psychological warfare program is used in all of society's sectors. An example would be in the media. Investigative journalism has been around a long time, but recently a lot of investigative journalists have been silenced because of the psychological warfare program. The reason behind the attack on the media is that the psychological warfare program is nothing more than an attempt to sustain the illusion of a strong, powerful, invincible USA.

I have also researched the Pentagon and have read about a few situations where they have acted out psychological warfare programs by using the services of individuals who have been trained in the art of covert warfare.

I will not go into the process of the psychological warfare program in any great detail, as I am a writer, not a trained psychologist. However, this book will cover the various branches of psychological warfare. This is so you will be aware of the truth and be able to avoid psychological warfare programs, thus reducing any damage that they may cause you. It is up to you to decide what to do with this information; whether you will simply ignore it, or whether you will react to it positively and vigorously.

The psychological warfare program, though it is a covert program, is not a secret to journalists. While people like ourselves may feel naïve about some of the things we have heard and read regarding psychological warfare, spies think about us, “Hey, we all know about you.”

I've met with many reporters who have covered the psychological warfare program, and none of them are aware of any of this information. You would be surprised by the number of people who are aware of this information, and they only talk to other individuals who are already aware of it – they don't talk about it to the public.

Be aware that the psychological warfare program is always just around the corner – nothing can be taken for granted.

I am of the opinion that the psychological warfare program is being carried out by people in our own government. These people are professionals in covert warfare, and they are professionals in psychological warfare as well.

It is up to you to decide what you will do about the psychological warfare program. React positively or react negatively. How you choose to react will have an effect on your life and the fate of your loved ones, so to speak. The psychological warfare program is so subtle that it is virtually impossible to avoid. Even the most experienced and dedicated truth-seekers may still be subjected to the psychological warfare program.

There is one thing I do know. Our only hope is that we can change the way we react to things for the better.

It is our duty to make positive changes in our lives; create change.

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CHAPTER 1: WHY YOU SHOULD KNOW THE ART OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE?



All people have a dark side. Some people just suppress that side and don't explore all the power it has to offer. You, on the other hand, have decided to explore and even enrich your dark side. Many benefits await you. Human beings are naturally ruthless and competitive creatures. The only ones who succeed are people who are willing to violate morals and ethics to get to the top. Now that you have decided to do this, you will get to the top too. You will only fall behind and lose in life if you don't become cutthroat and shameless about going after what you want.

But in our society, we have to at least pretend to follow the current social code of morals and ethics. Otherwise, people will judge us harshly and avoid us. They won't be as willing to like you and to help you out. Your psychological warfare training will not work if people start to dislike you and avoid you. Therefore, you must create a façade that totally obscures your dark side. You must hide behind an elaborate and beautiful façade that fools people into liking and trusting you. It is the only way to get away with psychological warfare.

Create a Foolproof Façade

So how do you create this lovely, warming façade that fools the world? How should you look to others? How do you hide what you are really up to? How do you make people believe that you mean only the best and that you are not ruthless and self-serving?

Well, deception is part of it. But so is denial. And so is confidence. You can create a very convincing façade if you blend these three elements into your outward projection of yourself. You will create a façade is so convincing that you will have everyone fooled.

Deception

It's OK to lie about yourself and present yourself deceptively if it builds your image. You can use deception to make yourself look good to others. Just make sure that your lies are not blatant. You want to mislead people by making yourself look good, but you don't want to lie and look pathetic should you get found out. Always tell at least most of the truth when you talk about yourself.

Let's say you are on a date. You want to make the best impression but you don't have a great job. You don't want to lie outright about your job as you might get caught. Instead, talk up your job and use words that exaggerate the importance of your position.

Focus on your strengths when you speak about yourself, too. Try to show off your strengths. Don't show off your weaknesses. Downplay your weaknesses to make yourself look better. The better your outward image is and the more positive of a character you appear to have, the more people will like you. Then you will have better luck with people.

Denial

Denial can help you appear innocent. There are many aspects to denial. You should combine deception and denial in order to fool people into thinking that you are incapable of wrongdoing.

The victim card is a good one to play. Deny that you have ever done wrong and pretend to be an innocent victim to justify your actions.

You can also pretend that you didn't know what you did was wrong. You made an honest mistake. Now, you're repenting and consumed with guilt. Deny that you are immoral and pretend to be the grieving sinner. People

will feel that you have a good heart, even if you have messed up in the past. They will forgive you and admire you for your bravery.

You can also just flatly deny that you have done what others say about you. Act shocked when you hear stories about yourself. Then tell people some stories of your own to discredit those who talk badly about you. Deny that you had any involvement in any wrongdoing in the past.

Confidence

Confidence is the key to creating an innocent and believable façade. In fact, confidence is the key to getting others to like you. People are attracted to those who possess healthy confidence and ego. If you project confidence, you will draw people to you. And then your façade will definitely work.

Have you noticed that vain, narcissistic people are usually the most popular and well-liked? This is because they are totally confident and don't let others ruffle their feathers. Basically, they have such thick skins that nothing can stir up their insecurities. They are bold and passionate about who they are and what they want. You need to become this way.

Confidence is not just something that you must possess. You can fake it. Faking it will actually make you confident over time. And you can convince others that you possess lots of confidence, even if you really don't. Start acting confident today. It all lies in body language and speech. If you walk with a straight spine, look people in the eyes, and speak first, you will appear far more confident. You should also speak very directly and avoid stuttering or being inarticulate. Doing this will make you appear as if you have nothing to hide and nothing to be ashamed of, which will inspire trust and admiration in others. This is partly why confidence is so attractive. You may also establish dominance over others by being confident, which gives you that authoritative edge that is so beneficial in persuasion.

You can also take being confident a bit further. Being cocky may go against your nature and your sense of modesty, but it's really the best way to charm people. Yes, people claim that they are put off by cocky people, yet look who gets the most women or men. Being cocky is not the same as being confident. But it can work for you. Putting on a charmingly cocky façade is

a great way to make people feel attracted to you. They won’t know why, but they will feel inexplicably drawn to your suave and vain nature. Be sure to brag about yourself, while also complimenting others. Shamelessly talk to people, forcing your nature on them and never taking no for an answer. Don’t ever speak doubtfully or belittle yourself.

Confidence also helps you justify what you do to yourself. If you believe that you are a great person who deserves the best and that there is nothing wrong with what you are doing to others, then you won’t give away your secret dark side out of guilt, doubt, or hesitation. You will simply act on your desires boldly and shamelessly.

Shockingly, people will believe you more often than not if you act like you are in the right.

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CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE THEORY?

The term “mental fighting” or “psychological warfare” is utilized to mean any activity which is rehearsed with the intention of inspiring an arranged mental response in other people.

It is utilized to initiate admissions or strengthen dispositions and practices ideal to the perpetrator’s goals, and often includes dark activities or bogus strategies. It is additionally used to pulverize the confidence of foes.

There is proof of mental fighting throughout recorded history. On many occasions, mental fighting endeavors have been utilized widely. Today, the web causes numerous battles of disinformation and falsehood, perpetrated by operators in any place on the planet.

Tactics of Psychological Warfare

Perpetrators of psychological warfare are advised to choose not just ONE of the techniques available, but SEVERAL at the same time, organizing them into a campaign that will mutually reinforce one other.

This is a key point, and you would do well to note it, because, in order to accomplish true psychological warfare, it requires more than one person’s involvement. It then becomes one of the classic meanings of the word “conspiracy.”

Conspiracy—An agreement to perform together an illegal, wrongful, or subversive act.

Subversive, in the context of this document, means:

A destructive, aggressive activity aimed to destroy your will to resist being forced into conforming with an enemy's view of who they want you to be, how they want you to act, what views they want you to have, and what decisions they want you to make.

It is a military term in its basic origin and is considered a war tactics.

Since psychological warfare requires a campaign in order to have any chance of working, you can see that this would usually involve more than one person trying to subvert you into giving up your will to fight. And at that point?

You have a conspiracy.

This is why one of the first things trotted out by psychological warfare supporters when they or someone they work for comes under fire publicly for illegal, immoral, and undeserved acts are to call them a "conspiracy theorist."

See the thing is, in most cases, the people that trot out the Conspiracy Theorist term know for a fact you are telling the truth. Or at least that you are too close to the truth. Their first priority in a well-publicized situation is to try and prevent others from realizing that it's true. The goal is both to discredit you by any means possible, and to distract from the hard, cold, truth. Their second priority is to try and wear you down so you'll stop. It's always a two-pronged approach that, as you can see, lines up perfectly with their own guidelines for psychological warfare.

There exists in every person, a completely accurate perception of what IS, at any given point in time. And things can change very fast—but so do you.

You don't live in a void. Other people are always doing this, that, and the other thing. It's just the way it is. Take a "feeling of having done something wrong." You will usually have both the feeling that you have done something wrong, and the feeling that THAT idea is wrong. They can both be TRUE in that they both exist, but they cannot both be true as to accuracy.

As long as both are present and part of NOW, you see what is, so you will see/perceive BOTH because they exist.

Food for thought.

And remember, it is exactly that kind of effect on a target's mind that is sought by psychological warfare tacticians.

You have a problem.

You can't decide.

You can't tell what is true.

Or how about this one…

Question everything.

Think that is a "good policy" to have?

No, actually it's not—not as a policy, that's for sure. It's actually quite subversive because it pre-supposes that you are an idiot who can't tell the truth about something, or that you are an idiot who just accepts whatever passing data crosses your path instantly as truth. Either or both must be taken as a given to even pre-suppose a NEEDING to "question everything."

Well, here's what my answer might be, to the person that invented that particular subversive policy:

OK. Why should someone "question everything" when they don't have a question in the FIRST PLACE?

Sometimes there are things to question, but that's not the same as actually being uncertain and needing to question in order to find the truth. It's more of a rhetorical question.

I'll give you a question that isn't a question, because neither you nor I have a question about what I'm going to ask. Some like to call this particular rhetorical question "the real question."

Question: Why are you trying to sell to the rest of us that we are inherently blind, wrong, and ignorant and needing "fixing"?

Everyone's words don't need to be questioned as to their truthfulness, but YOURS most certainly do.

Other Tactics of Psychological Warfare

Basically, all tactics of psychological warfare include using mind games on enemies. These are some modern tactics that are extremely dangerous and destructive, however they can be used in any situation:

(1) Heart reaping: This is a tactic where the enemy is successfully distracted from his mission by hearing a suggestive conversation that is directly related to the topic of the mission. His body and mind are disturbed because the nerve synapses will light up and the brain will focus on this feeling.

(2) Long-Distance Suggestion: The act of using expectations to build faith that the mission is possible and that time is on their side. They will exhibit a feeling of unwavering courage.

(3) Human Trafficking: To get the enemy from his position into ambush tactics, illegally recruiting and changing the mind of the enemy.

(4) A Vigilant Disciple: A technique that makes the enemy despair and abandon his mission.

(5) Psychological Intelligence: This is a technique that uses the enemy's mind against him. It, like other psychological warfare techniques, uses surprises to distract the enemy and cause him to abandon the plan, but this also can actually defeat the enemy. This furthers the psychological warfare tactics to keep the enemy's mind positioned in any unexpected situations, or just to mess with their mind and make them doubt themselves in their mission.

(6) Mind Reading: Another tactic is called mind reading where the enemy is told to think of one thing and the person doing the reading will be able to see what the enemy is thinking by indirect reasoning. This technique could possibly work on the mind of an enemy that has advanced technology. This could come from a futuristic alien or any kind of scientific advancement. This is most effective when the enemy's mind is open to the mind-reading. It will also work best on enemies who are naive.

(7) Monitoring Profile: This is a process where profiles of the enemies are monitored in every way possible until it is possible to predict their movements. This is done using a camera or any other type of viewing device.

(8) Social Engineering: The idea here is to manipulate information and excite the enemy and distract him from the goal of the mission by using a series of propaganda and ideological beliefs.

Psychological warfare tactics will most likely evolve just as humans are constantly evolving. Technology and science will probably come out with a versions of this stuff. The idea is to keep disrupting your enemy's mind and stop the mission from happening until the enemy is gone.

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CHAPTER 3: THE GREATEST EXPONENTS OF THE ART OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE



Learn to Analyze Friends, Coworkers, Lovers

Learning to apply psychology to friends, coworkers, and lovers is primarily a matter of boundaries. Each person might have different interests in their possible angle of manipulation. Each of us plays a number of different roles throughout our lives. In one role, we are called to be a family member. This might refer to your given or born family, or it might refer to your chosen family. “Chosen family” refers to the people who you include in your life to the closest degree. This might include friends or other people to which you have chosen to be closest.

Coworkers include people we are often required to be around. Some lucky people get to choose who they work with, but most of us are required to work with people at random. Friends are a category of people who we choose to spend our time with, mostly doing enjoyable activities. Lastly, lovers include those with whom we choose to be romantic.

When dealing with friends, we must establish the types of boundaries we want to have. Friendships should bolster your health and overall well-being.

Coworkers are a little trickier because these are not people we necessarily choose to be around. Having a good relationship with coworkers means that you are able to be pleasant and nice and effective in the workplace, while not asking too much about the intimate details of their lives.

Family is yet another category of people with whom we must figure out our relationships. In some cases, a relationship with family members is not

possible or necessary. For people who grew up with abusive parents, it can be healthy to cut out traditional family members and grow a new chosen family. However, for many people, family connections are deep and important.

Once you have firmly established the different roles for the people in your life, you can start analyzing whether or not the relationships are equitable. You might find that someone has set up the relationship to be more beneficial for them than for you. You might find that you are manipulating someone else!

Confidence and Charisma

Confidence and charisma are ways to both employ dark psychological tactics on others as well as protect yourself from being manipulated. What do you think of when you think about confidence?

Rather than focusing on the modern conception of positive psychology's confidence, let's roll back the tape of history a little bit and consider Machiavelli's style of confidence. Machiavellianism is defined as a cold and calculating ability to work for and towards your own goals, for yourself. It does not emphasize morality or empathy, and it is an essentially cynical mindset.

Nice guys finish last. That's the mindset of Machiavellianism. It is all about strength. Cynicism helps to frame the world in a realistic way. People are out to get you and they want to stop you from accomplishing your goals. Think about it. There are not many people who are actually just in the world. Justice is a concept that is very fluid, and it is rarely placed on the right people. The world is filled with predators, people who want to take advantage of other people. The world is filled with con artists, scams, mind control, brainwashing, and darkness.

Looking Inward

One thing that many people have to do to reach this state of confidence is address their unfinished business. This is not business in the conventional meaning of the word. This is business in any form, whether it comes from past relationships, things that happened, things that you have been putting off for a while, or many other things. There can be many sources of unfinished business that have to be addressed.

Non-verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication is a huge part of your life, whether you realize it or not. Each time that you talk to a person, there are tons of messages that are being conveyed through the slightest body movements. When you are talking to someone, and you are listening to what they are saying, you are using your mind to connect with them. However, your sight, smell, hearing, and other senses also perceive tons of information that is processed automatically.

Self-Realization

Self-realization is a term that comes from the humanistic school of psychology. It references the idea that each person has an authentic self somewhere that can be reached through the process of understanding the self and doing work to achieve a more authentic and real you.

Communication

Communication is a huge part of being an effective leader, and it is very important if you want to have charisma and confidence. We use words to describe things, people, feelings, attitudes, theories, philosophies, and so on. We can choose many different words to describe the same thing—and this is where the trouble often starts.

You Are What You Think

Ever heard the expression, “you are what you eat”? There is a variation on that phrase that I enjoy, it goes: “You are what you think.” When you think negative thoughts about yourself, you are participating in a sort of self-loathing, self-fulfilling prophecy. If you are always telling yourself that you are lazy and worthless, you encourage yourself to do types of behaviors that you consider worthless or lazy. You start to think about yourself as the worst version of yourself. This is something that needs to be battled against. Positive thinking is much better for your overall health. It will improve your mood and attention span and even your physical health.

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CHAPTER 4: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM SUN TZU AND MACHIAVELLI?



Ultimately, Sun Tzu and Machiavelli both discuss power. They do this in different ways and have different areas of emphasis, but the bottom line is that both sets of ideas are based on gaining, maintaining, and exercising power. As a leader, power can seem like an abstract concept that is difficult to grasp and put into actionable ideas. Two very actionable concepts appear as key themes in both *The Art of War* and *The Prince*—deception, and perception. This chapter explores how being able to strategically deploy deception in a range of situations can lead to a significant advantage for leaders. It also shows how being able to control, influence, and even manipulate perception is a vital part of powerful leadership.

Sun Tzu's Deception—Updated and Applied

Let's take a look at some of the ways that Sun Tzu spoke of deception in *The Art of War* and how these can be interpreted and understood in the modern era.

"When able to attack, seem unable" is one of the most famous sections of *The Art of War*.

Essentially, we can apply the idea of "attack" in the sense of "an aggressive or outgoing course of action." Think of the term "plan of attack"—it does not literally have to be violent. With this new, non-literal definition of attack in mind, what are some of the ways we can apply Sun Tzu's famous maxim?

Personal Attacks

One of the key applications of seeming unable to attack is within the personal sphere of career and business. Many corporate environments feature a range of highly coveted promotions that are known about and sought after by many. This is where the concept of “office politics” comes from. Even the most mundane office environment is likely to have a range of rivalries and dramas. Almost anyone who has ever worked in the modern era will be aware of the focus of these dynamics—rivals trying to push each other out, pull off feats of one-upmanship, and look better than their foes.

Guess what? The most effective way to attack is to do so when no one sees it coming. If you are going for a promotion, keep it as secret as possible. If you are not perceived as a threat, as a challenger, you will be off the radar in terms of competition. If you are targeting someone’s job, keep it secret. They will never know your attack is coming and will be unable to defend themselves against your intentions in time.

Large Scale Attacks

The idea of hiding your intention to attack so your targets are unprepared does not just apply on a small scale, personal level. It also works on a larger scale, such as the actions and strategic plans of an entire organization. This concept is easy to illustrate with an example—Apple product launches.

Think about the drama and excitement that comes with the launch of a new Apple product. People speculate like crazy about what the new unveiling will bring. Apple is as secretive as possible ahead of time. Then, on the day of the launch, the product is revealed and usually announced to be on sale within a very short period of time. As a result of this, competitors are on the back foot. They never know exactly what is coming and what they should do as a result. The launch of the original iPhone was a game-changer—Apple did not necessarily seem set to attack the portion of the tech market that they chose. As a result of this, competing firms had no real time to prepare. Look at the fates of Blackberry and Motorola if you doubt this concept.

Stealth

Another famous quote on deception from *The Art of War* states “when using forces, seem inactive.” This is truer than ever these days. We live in an era where people are encouraged to broadcast their every thought, plan, and intention through social media. Countless cases of people being caught out in terms of identity fraud, affairs, or going against workplace rules have come to light because of people not being cautious enough. If you work quietly and behind the scenes, you have a significant advantage over those who do not.

One of the key areas in which working behind the scenes can work is politics—both in the electoral sense and in general. Often, politicians focus heavily on preparing their views, appearance, and perception in a way that makes them seem favorable in comparison to a known rival, then out of nowhere, a little-known challenger will make a massive push and catch the favorites off guard. It’s not as if the newcomer started overnight—they likely began to work diligently and quietly a long time before. They just had the good sense to not make a big deal of what they were doing, which would give their rivals a chance to prepare and take countermeasures.

It is not enough to just act quietly—it is sometimes vital to seem specifically inactive. This can be done through sleight of hand. Let’s say, for example, a skill is valued in a workplace. A number of people are working hard to acquire this skill in the hope of advancing up the career ladder. Someone else is also acquiring this skill—but in secret. They not only do this secretly but make a point of seeming uninterested or uninvolved whenever the topic of the new skill arises. This is an example of proactively hiding one’s efforts in order to gain a strategic advantage.

The Illusion of Distance

“When near, make the enemy believe you are far away” states *The Art of War*. This is a powerful concept that can be applied in a number of fields.

Human beings have evolved to be conscious of the immediate and obvious threats to their safety and prosperity. If something is obviously dangerous and nearby, our guard goes up and our defenses heighten. If something

seems like a distant prospect, however, we are less worried by it at the time. Let's look at modern warfare to see how this works.

Take two modern situations—the conflict in Korea between the North and South, and the ongoing threat of terrorism. In Korea, the threat is obvious and near. Troops are massed on either side of the border and there is a constant awareness of the potential for conflict. Both sides are prepared and ready, and therefore are in something of a stalemate. Terrorism, on the other hand, remains under the radar. There is no formal membership structure. People assume they are safe and then, suddenly, a bomb goes off. The proximity of the threat is unknown at any given time and therefore cannot be adequately expected.

So, what are some of the non-violent uses of strategic deception relating to proximity?

Market entry is one area of business where seeming to be distant can provide an advantage. If you wish to enter a new market, such as a region, then it may be useful to prepare to do so quietly and discretely. If your competitors don't know you are close to entering a market, their attention is not drawn to it. They are unlikely to assume the market is worthy of consideration as a result of your interest in it.

The Power of Machiavellian Perception

One of the key recurring themes in *The Prince* is that a leader can get away with almost anything if he appears a certain way in the eyes of the masses. Therefore, almost any true nature can be covered up by careful management of perception. Numerous examples show this is as true in the modern day as it was in the time of Machiavelli.

Countless corporations are adept at using marketing to seem as if they are ethical or praiseworthy while secretly pursuing entirely different motives. Politicians are another prime example of this idea. How many candidates running for office, or even prominent politicians, have claimed to be wholesome and family-friendly and then have been exposed to be engaged in infidelity or some other vice?

Interestingly, even when someone or something's true nature is exposed, many people will often still rush to defend it. Why? The person or entity in question was so skilled at using perception to appear a certain way while being another, that the false perception is deeply embedded in people's minds. People hate feeling like they have been duped, so will do almost anything to cling to the false image they held. Think of the countless celebrities who have been caught doing disgraceful acts but still command legions of fans who claim the individuals in question were simply "misunderstood." Perception is powerful—use it to your advantage.

Keeping a true behavior or nature hidden is harder in the modern era than it ever has been. Think of the countless examples of old photographs or emails giving the game away. Even old data can be hacked and released into the public to devastating effect. It is therefore absolutely vital that anything you wish to remain hidden is kept in the utmost secrecy. Stay away from email, text messages, social media—anything that could come back to haunt you. Conduct your true plans in secrecy and away from any chance of ever being exposed.

While doing one thing in secret, it's important to leave a trail of doing something different and acceptable in the eyes of the public. Let's say, for example, as a manager you need to get rid of one of your workers. You know you must plot their downfall in secret. It's not enough to plot and scheme behind closed doors—you must appear to be very fair, even on the doomed worker's side, in public. If done skillfully enough, they will eventually feel almost bad for you when you fire them, as you will seem like a true friend who had their back. Really, their demise was inevitable the entire time.

Deception and Perception—Sun Tzu and Machiavelli Combined

Like many powerful concepts, deception and perception are more potent together than apart. If you take away one core idea from this chapter, it should be that it is not enough to actively do one thing in secret—you need

to put out false information and seem to be doing something very different in the eyes of the masses.

To really apply the ideas in this chapter, always keep two ideas in mind:

1. Which parts of my current course of action should I do in secret?

2. How can I appear to be doing something different to others?

It’s also important to always remain aware of the variables in any given situation. A form of deception that worked once might not work again.

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CHAPTER 5: DANGEROUS DARK PERSONALITIES

The Dark Triad



The “dark triad” is a collection of character traits that are present in every person. However, these traits are more prevalent in some than in others. When they are predominant in an individual’s personality, they can lead to inappropriate behavior, and in some cases, to criminal activity. These traits are the hallmark of manipulators. While it is not entirely known how they form, we do have a good understanding of how they can be fostered.

When one of these traits is predominant in a person, you will find that they are generally disruptive in many ways, but highly creative and energetic in others. Moreover, people who exhibit dark triad traits in high order are generally more skilled and intelligent individuals who have a keen sense of

the world around them. This is why they are able to make the most of their desires and push their agenda along.

In some cases, you'll see them as people who will stop at nothing to get what they want. Other times, you will see them as people who don't care much about the feelings of others, especially if that gets in the way of their achieving something.

So, if you are dealing with someone who exhibits any of these traits, or heaven forbid, all three, then you really need to watch where you're stepping. Often, the best course of action is to get away from them. If you try to do battle with people exhibiting dark triad characteristics, you need to be several steps ahead of them. But, be warned that winning a war with these folks may turn out to be winning a war of attrition more than one based on skills and tactics.

Manipulators are all around us. There is no question about that. Some are very easy to spot, while others may go unnoticed. Some manipulators act out of impulse, while others are perfectly aware of what they are doing. In such cases, manipulators may not spare any expense to get what they want. Others may have a little more moral grounding, thereby enabling them to set certain boundaries as to what they will and will not do.

Narcissism

Narcissism is broadly defined as love for oneself. This name comes from the legend of Narcissus, who was in love with himself. From this legend, narcissism is used to define a person who is extremely selfish. While it is true that we are all selfish to a certain extent, the average narcissist is so enamored with themselves that they will hatch whatever schemes they can come up with to place themselves in the spotlight.

Narcissism is typically associated with feelings of entitlement and conceit. These are individuals who seek to be the center of attention at all times while trying to get others to do their bidding. The most rudimentary of

narcissists don’t really care how they get others to go along with them. All they care about is that others do what they want. End of story.

More skilled narcissists are able to use many tactics at their disposal to get others to go along. Often, these types of narcissists seem charming and very pleasant.

Yet, it’s all a ploy. Their main objective is to get others to trust them and admire them. As long as they are admired and shown constant displays of affection, they are good with people. The problem occurs when they are not given the feedback they seek. Often, it is a question of having their ego stroked.

For example, a narcissist will become livid if they get no recognition for the work they do. This is compounded if they feel that they have put their best foot forward. The lack of recognition will drive them up the wall. On the contrary, if they are showered with praise and accolades, then all is good. They bask in the glory and seek to move on to the next display of affection and appreciation.

The biggest issue with narcissists is that they are control freaks. Since they feel that everyone must do their bidding, they need to control everything and everyone around them. Consequently, if a narcissist feels that they have lost control of their environment, they are liable to go to all means necessary to ensure they regain full control. If this means destroying people along the way, they may not stop to ponder the effects of their actions on others.

A typical narcissist is formed in childhood, usually as the result of neglect and oftentimes abuse. Generally speaking, kids who go through abandonment and neglect in childhood tend to develop issues with control and lack of affection. If untreated, these conditions can develop into a full-blown narcissistic personality. In adulthood, a typical narcissist may have serious trouble being part of social groups, leading them to isolation. While extroverted narcissists may have a lot of friends early on, they may end up becoming isolated as they struggle to form genuine relationships.

If you suspect that you are in the presence of a narcissist, be prepared for someone who demands a great deal of attention and affection. In addition,

they will try to control every aspect of your life. In the end, you will have to either move away or play their game as best you can.

Machiavellianism

Machiavellianism refers to the teachings of Machiavelli, a renaissance political thinker and strategist. His most famous work, *The Prince*, is a classic for all students of political science. In this book, he outlines what a prince, or any leader for that matter, must do in order to achieve power and control. Many famous phrases are quoted from this book such as “divide and conquer” and “it is better to be feared than to be loved.”

From this, psychologists have coined Machiavellianism when referring to a character trait in which an individual is cunning and calculating. Highly intelligent individuals can be Machiavellian in the way they act. They can be very methodical in their approach. In the worst of cases, they can be ruthless and will stop at nothing until they get what they want.

This includes using people for their own purposes. Many times, Machiavellians see people as “a means to an end.” As such, they want to use people, and when they no longer serve a purpose to them, they will discard them without any regard for their feelings. Highly skilled manipulators may exhibit a considerable predominance of Machiavellianism in their personality set. If you suspect that you are dealing with such a person, then you are in for a war of attrition as they will not back down easily.

The limits to how far Machiavellianism can go essentially depend on the intelligence or support network of the person. There are cases, such as those of master criminals, who may be unable to figure out schemes for themselves but will employ those who can. This is a good example of how scruples and morals may be quite loose on some folks.

If you are dealing with a Machiavellian person, you may have to choose if you want to be in such a situation or move away from it. Generally speaking, beating a Machiavellian involves total defeat, that is, destroying them completely. For instance, if you’re dealing with someone who is defrauding others, this may involve bringing them to justice. Even then, you

might be involved in a complex legal battle that you may not have the will to see through.

Psychopathy

The third element of the dark triad is psychopathy. In general terms, psychopathy is an absence of emotion. In particular, psychopaths are unable to feel empathy. They are unable to gauge how others feel. This is why they are incapable of understanding that their actions hurt others. When you look at serial killers and other types of criminals, they genuinely believe they have done nothing wrong as they are unable to comprehend the pain and anguish they have put others through. Think about white-collar criminals who embezzle pensioners out of their savings. They have no remorse over their actions as they couldn't really care less about those affected.

In some instances, psychopathy is associated with physiological issues in the brain. When this occurs, neurochemical reactions may not take place. As a result, these individuals may be unable to process their emotions leading to flat reactions to emotion.

In other cases, it may be a purely psychological issue as psychopaths tend to have a dissociative personality. Dissociative personality is usually the result of prolonged exposure to abuse and trauma in childhood. Regardless of the type of trauma, a child may develop a dissociation between their feelings and the situations around them. This leads them to cut out their feelings from the mental processes that they carry out. Consequently, a perfectly normal person can develop into a psychopath purely through an abusive and neglectful environment.

If you are in consort with a psychopath, you had better get a good idea of what they are capable of. These individuals may be capable of just about anything. They may not necessarily have any sinister motives, but whatever they do is purely for their own pleasure and nothing else… even if it means inflicting grievous harm on others.

The Dark Triad in Action

Having just one of the dark triad traits fully developed is enough to foster an evil individual. When all three come into consort, even to a lesser degree, the individual may have no morals, scruples, or ethics. While they may not actually become serial killers, they may engage in activities that harm people in the pursuit of their personal aims and pleasures. This may lead to unspeakable acts of horror, crafty business schemes, or a relentless pursuit of power in which people fall by the wayside.

There is no real way to deal with such individuals. It takes a lot of courage and energy to stand up to them. That is why the most common course of action is to get away from them. For example, people who grow up with narcissistic parents often leave home at a young age as they are unable to put up with the behavior of their parents.

In other cases, children of Machiavellian parents tend to have their parents concoct clever ways to run their life well into adulthood. And if someone happens to grow up with a psychopathic parent, they may be in for a childhood filled with abuse.

At the end of the day, the dark triad is present in all of us. We all have some type of manifestation of these traits, though most of us will never exhibit them to a degree that is harmful to others. If you happen to recognize the predominance of these traits in your own life, it is worth doing some introspection so that you can determine if you need to get a better handle on your feelings and thoughts. After all, letting any of these traits run wild may end up consuming you to the point of emotional and psychological exhaustion.

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CHAPTER 6: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DECEPTION, INFLUENCE AND DOMINATION



Understanding Deception

Deception is any word or action that is capable of making someone believe something that is not true. Fraudulently providing evidence for something that is false, implying falsehood, omitting the truth, and lying are all examples of deception.

Not all types of deception count as dark psychology. At some point in their lives, everyone is going to deceive others to some extent or another. They may do so because they feel inadequate, because they feel embarrassed, or even as a kindness. For example, some studies have shown that many men lie about their height. This doesn't mean they practice dark psychology. In addition, it is common for people to deceive themselves about a range of issues such as their happiness, their ambition, and their health.

Deception becomes dark when it is carried out with an indifferent or negative intention towards the victim. Dark deception is an understanding that the truth is not going to serve the deceptive aims of the deceiver. The deceiver is going to take the truth and either ignore, hide, or change it in favor of a version of events that suits their purpose a little bit better. Those who employ dark deception do it as a way to harm, rather than to help. They want to foster their own interests, and they don't care who gets hurt in the process.

Deceptive Tactics

There are many different deceptive tactics that the manipulator is able to use. Remember that this deception is the process of hiding information from the victim in order to reach their overall goals. There are four categories of tactics that fall under the umbrella of deception, and any given deception is likely to involve a blend of each of them, which can make it even harder for the victim to figure out what is going on.

The first deceptive tactic is lying. This is the first technique that the manipulator is going to choose as soon as they know that the victim is susceptible to lies and has trouble figuring out the truth. This is often because the victim is someone who trusts others. Or the manipulator may have worked on this victim for some time so that they lower their guard. The manipulator is able to find ways to hide the lies and then explain the discrepancies if the victim starts to notice.

Implication is another form of deception. Implication is when the manipulator suggests something false is true, rather than outwardly stating it. If the manipulator wants to deceive a victim about how much money they have, then they could either lie or imply about it. A lie would be something like, “Oh I’m a successful guy. I’ve made a lot of money,” even though the manipulator knows this information is not true. But when they imply they are rich, they may say something like, “It’s so stressful trying to handle things with my accountant. Trying to get my tax bill down takes a lot of my time.” The manipulator has acted and spoken in a way that makes the other person think they are wealthy, but they never overtly state it.

Omission is another option for the deceiver. This is a failure to mention something – usually a fact that is pretty important – that is true. Omission doesn’t use falsehood in order to cover the truth like the other two options. Instead, it ignores the truth or just leaves it out. Often this piece of information is important for the victim to know about in order to make an informed decision. The manipulator leaves this out to protect themselves and ensure that the victim doesn’t have all the information.

The final form of deception is the most elaborate, and often criminal, form. This is known as fraud. Instead of the deceiver simply lying about something from the past, this kind of deceit involves false stories, documents, and other “evidence” in order to back up their lie. The deceiver

will use these things in a subtle way. They would never say something like, “I’m a doctor; take a look at my certificate!”

Instead, they will use some subtle displays to show off to the victim. They will avoid being too pushy with their fraudulent claims because they know that doing this will make the victim feel that something is wrong with the situation.

Fraud is becoming more common than ever because of the Internet. Deceivers often work with professional software in order to make fraudulent documents that look realistic. This can make it really hard to tell whether you are working with someone who is telling you the truth or if they are deceiving you.

When this dark deception starts to enter the realm of fraudulence, it can be a bad sign. It shows that the deceiver is dangerous and they are committed to sticking with dark psychology. They are risking serious criminal charges to do this kind of manipulation, and they are confident that they will be able to do this without anyone really noticing it at all.

The Art of Subtle Influence and Domination

Did you know that you do not have to be overly dominant to succeed? If you can subtly influence someone to do what you want, then you are still dominant because you are getting this person to do something they otherwise would not do. You are still exerting control. But the subject does not realize this, and thus will not be as resistant.

Sometimes, a more discreet and subtle form of dominance is in order. You may not want to flex your biceps and be the one in charge. You just want to get your way with a person who intimidates you. Therefore, you can use subtle influence and persuasion to your advantage. You can be dominant without letting the other person know. This influence can work great with people who are in charge of you, such as bossy family members, elders, and superiors at work. It can help you get what you want without a big power struggle and stressful resistance.

You are about to learn about all three of these methods of influence. So be prepared to gain lots of power. The world is in your hands, even if you are not the dominant alpha that this book is teaching you to be. No one will know what you are doing and you can have dominance without even trying.

Rewards

Most people operate on a reward principle. You can use this to your advantage by making someone feel that there is a reward in store for them for doing what you want.

Benefits

Always point out the benefits to someone. Show him what he will gain by doing something. The more appealing you make something seem, the more likely he will take advantage of it

Reciprocity

Do someone a huge favor and then call on him or her later to return the favor.

Liking

People will do things for those they like. So, gaining the favor and pleasure of someone who is dominant over you can ensure that you get lots of brownie points.

Make Someone Feel Good

There are a number of ways to make someone feel good. When you do so, you essentially make sure that this person wants to serve you to gain more

pleasure.

Touch creates a dopamine rush in someone's mind and creates a strong bond between two people.

Eye contact can also accomplish this. Warm eye contact, rather than staring someone down, and pretending to be submissive by smiling and looking away can make your dominant counterpart feel really good.

The power of words cannot be underestimated. A simple compliment or thank you can go a long way. People love feeling good about themselves, so make sure they feel good because of what you say. Find out a person's insecurities and play on that by reassuring him that his insecurities are not true. Flatter him by telling him what a great person he is and how great a leader he is.

Also, giving someone a warm cup of coffee or some other hot beverage can really make a difference in how they feel about you. It can subtly influence them to change their thinking about you and to view you as a warm person.

Threats

Threatening someone's needs or sense of safety by pointing out what he stands to lose is an excellent motivator for most people. However, you do not want to overtly threaten someone in order to avoid a power struggle. Instead, you want to act as an advisor serving his best interests. Point out ways that he may lose out if he does not take a certain action. Tell him that you care about him and would hate to see him miss a great opportunity.

Scarcity

You can use this principle of influence to your advantage by making someone feel that he must do something because the opportunity is passing by quickly. Speak to your subject with a degree of urgency and point out that the opportunity is only here for a short time.

Extreme Loss

Learn what your subject cares about. That way, you know what he has to lose. Then find ways to work that into your persuasion. Most people care about their loved ones, their jobs, and their social status, so you can safely employ those as threats. Tell your subject how he stands to lose something he loves if he does not act in a certain way.

Leading Questions

A leading question plants an idea in someone's mind, getting him to say something or make a conclusion on his own. Leading questions are powerful ways to get your own way.

Yes Framing

In yes framing, you get your superior to grant you permission by framing his mind to say yes. You start by asking a series of questions that make him think "Yes." Once he has said yes, a few times, ask for your favor and notice how he says yes!

Idea Planting

The minute you bring up an idea or topic, you automatically put it in someone's brain. Continually mentioning it, especially in casual conversation, can plant the idea in someone's brain enough to make him think about it a lot. Then, when he is forced to decide, the idea that he has been mulling over all day will be on the forefront of his brain and he will propose it as if it were his own idea. He will be open to your idea because he thinks it is his own.

Leading (Literally)

Sometimes, physically leading a person in a certain direction exerts a strong influence over him.

Hiding What You Want

Let’s say you work with a stubborn person who seems to have it in for you. To get your way, you want to make it seem like you don’t want something when you really do. Therefore, you get this person to think that you don’t want something and that he or she should choose it.

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CHAPTER 7: THE ART OF BLACKMAIL, MANIPULATION, AND BRAINWASHING



Blackmail

The next form of mental manipulation is the classic blackmail strategy. Here a manipulator uses an object or piece of information to control the subject. Control mechanisms for blackmail generally stem from the fear of exposure to topics that would cause either social embarrassment, actual loss, harm inflicted on the subject, or their loved ones, or an induced state of helplessness.

While the subject being blackmailed may want to disclose the wrongdoing, they most often won't because the consequences of telling outweigh the benefits. Experienced blackmailers know to work on a subject's most sensitive areas.

A classic blackmail line is this:

"If you tell anyone, I'll tell them it was yours!"

In-Depth Techniques of Manipulation

Projection

Projection is easy to pinpoint because it often consists a manipulator being unwilling or unable to see their own shortcomings and avoiding being held responsible for anything they have done wrong in the past. In other words, a

person using projection will “project” their negative behavior or actions onto another person by finding a very extended and unreasonable connection between an action of the other person and the action of the manipulator. This form of manipulation is also often used as a defense mechanism and tends to be instinctual for most people.

Denial

Denial is a very versatile form of manipulation. There are many different ways that a manipulator can deny their actions or deny the actions of another subtly. They can do this using a method known as diversion. Using diversion, a manipulator will refuse to give a straightforward answer to questions and instead will move the conversation onto a different topic time and time again to avoid the said question. This is a way of denying the answer by not even giving it. A very similar tactic to this is known as evasion; these two tactics are often confused. The difference between diversion and evasion is that while diversion intentionally steers the conversation onto a different but interesting topic, evasion is more an act of giving vague and confusing responses that seem to have no meaning or are irrelevant in the current situation.

Intimidation

There are many different forms of intimidation that can be used by a manipulator to control their victim. The first one we will discuss is known as covert intimidation. This is the subtle, indirect, or implied threats of a manipulator that puts their victim into a defensive mindset. These threats are often not threatening in a physical manner but rather in a business, social, or economic sphere. These threats are very subtle, and may not be picked up up on by the people around the victim.

Conditioning

Conditioning someone is a process of learning that happens through the use of rewards and punishments in response to or desired or not desired

behavior. This can also be called operant conditioning. In this particular form of conditioning, an association is made between a behavior and a consequence of that behavior. This is not to be confused with classical conditioning which is similar but not exactly the same. All of the steps leading up to the end result of both forms of conditioning are the same; the difference lies in the very last step. Operant conditioning is based on voluntary behavior by the individual being trained, whereas classical conditioning is based on the involuntary behavior of the person being trained.

Now we can begin to see the connection between these two types of conditioning with manipulation. If a manipulator knows even the basis of these two types of conditioning it becomes very easy for them to subconsciously train their victim to bend to their every whim.

Stalking and Gossip

Stalking and gossip are very interesting and very dangerous forms of manipulation. When a manipulator stalks their victim, their intentions are very different from normal manipulative intentions. This form of manipulation is more a method of researching the victim. This is beneficial to the manipulator because it allows them to know the victim's vulnerabilities and insecurities. This form of manipulation is very different from obvious stalking. There is of course a type of stalking in which the stalker wants their victims to know that they are being stalked. This is more a method to elicit fear into the victim.

While gossip is normally fairly insignificant and not the subject of psychological studies, it can also be used as a form of manipulation. False gossip more specifically is used as a form of manipulation.

Seduction

Seduction is a form of manipulation that is very well known throughout history. It is often connected to attractive women seducing sexually

frustrated men, but this form of manipulation can go both ways. It can include the use of conversation as well as sexual scripts. They may also use certain methods of nonverbal communication.

Brainwashing

Brainwashing is, without a doubt, the biggest and most complex mental manipulation tactic in a psychopath's repertoire. If every other technique was bad, this is *Game of Thrones* Red Wedding half-your-favorite-characters-just-died kind of bad. The kind of bad you have a hard time even imagining.

How Does It Work?

Well, simplistically speaking, brainwashing deals with the use of ideologies or cults to slowly but steadily replace the beliefs that the victim holds on particular topics, with the newfound beliefs that the manipulator wants them to have. Those new beliefs are more in line with the manipulator's plan. Brainwashing is convincing a subject about a particular issue so deeply that the subject no longer questions it, the same way in which we would view a universal truth such as the sun rises in the east.

There are multiple ways in which brainwashing is carried out; however, some of the most common and most effective techniques are listed below:

Isolation

Since it is much easier to control people individually than it is to control them when they are in groups, a common tactic to start the whole process of brainwashing is to isolate the subject. The subject is initially put in a situation where they are distanced from their friends, family, and loved ones. This not only makes it easier to control how they think and act, but also creates a form of forced dependency, so the person who is being

worked on feels like the only person they can depend on or rely on is the manipulator.

By positioning themselves as their only source of information as well as their only source of support, the manipulator has created an artificial ecosystem that the subject thinks they need to survive. This feeling makes the subject not only see the manipulator as a hero, but also makes them less likely to allow third-party influencers to influence or question what they know to be right or true. Isolation is critical to the initial stages of brainwashing as it makes the subject more malleable and also ensures that they don't rebel or act out against the restrictions or the new reality that the manipulator is slowly enforcing on them. Worst of all, if you are dealing with a skilled manipulator, the subject won't even know they are being isolated and will blame their friends or surroundings for the things that are happening.

Mental Abuse

Another common ruse is the emotional battering technique. Here the manipulator uses common forms of mental abuse such as bullying, public shaming, humiliation, embarrassment, insulting, and badgering to weaken or mentally destabilize the subject. Once the victim feels like they have no choice but to give in, the manipulator starts to teach the victim how they need to act or think to escape this hellish environment they have been put into.

Physical Abuse

Mental abuse, however, is also often substituted with physical abuse. A lot of these techniques are commonly used in wartime scenarios or even by police to get the subject to act in the manner desired. Common physical abuse tactics include light therapy, waterboarding, sleep deprivation, and starvation. Subjects are also put in cold, completely silent, or extremely loud situations where the sound balance damages them mentally. These constant physical tribulations have a way of overwhelming the subject and

making them more susceptible to the manipulator and the suggestions, making it a critical brainwashing tool, particularly for militaries.

Repetitive Music

Another fan favorite when it comes to brainwashing is the use of repetitive music. Scientific studies have shown that when a person is in an environment where they not only are listening to a specific repetitive beat but a beat that is in rhythm with the beating of one's heart (generally at about 45 to about 72 beats per minute), the subject enters a state of consciousness referred to as the Alpha state. (The normal state you are in is the Beta state.) The Alpha state, however, makes you 25 times more susceptible to suggestions and as such is used as a common brainwashing tactic.

Selective Contact

Selective contact deals with the social control aspect of cult-like brainwashing techniques. Here, instead of isolating the individual, the manipulator only allows the subject to have access to similarly minded individuals. This creates a sense of false enforcement. The person being brainwashed is surrounded by people who are preaching or stating the same things the manipulator is saying, and this starts to give weight to the manipulator's words. They must be right because they are all saying the same thing. It's a lot like social proof or mob mentality. The idea is that if so many people are saying it, it must be right.

Us Versus Them Mentality

The "us versus them" mindset is a common form of brainwashing seen mostly in teenagers, particularly in high school or in specific wings of colleges such as frat houses. Here the subject seems to be given a choice: Do you want to be with us or do you want to be with them? The choice is meant to create a sense of loyalty or obedience. Now the manipulator can

ask the subject for just about anything, and because the subject thinks they need to do it to stay in the group, they are much more likely to comply.

Incessant Push and Pull

Another familiar tactic is the push and pull scenario. Here, the manipulator plays good cop, bad cop on a routine basis to upset the subject's sense of normalcy. On one hand, they are being loved and adored, while on the other hand, they are being abused or demeaned. The manipulator uses positive reinforcement when the subject is doing what they want them to do, and then when the subject steps out of line, the manipulator comes down on them with negative reactions to get the subject to associate those actions with negative consequences..

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CHAPTER 8: MANIPULATIVE POLITICAL PROPAGANDA AND MEDIA TACTICS

History has given us some amazing examples of propaganda, and two of the most striking forms originate from the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. The two nations used effective methods of propaganda to influence their citizens into believing that they had the correct side of the story. They bombarded the population with varying forms of propaganda designed to persuade them to toe the party line.

Here Are Some of the Ways the Soviet Union Disseminated Propaganda

1) Schools and youth organizations: They formed a program named the Young Pioneers for children aged between ten and fifteen years old, which taught their members to oppose the enemies of socialism.

2) Media: Poor people in Russia had no way of accessing any form of entertainment, so the Russian propaganda machine used this fact to “educate” them and keep them informed.

3) Propaganda trains: They authorized the use of propaganda trains filled with printing presses, projection equipment, radios, and public speakers to preach to the masses.

4) Posters: They regularly depicted the “new man,” who believed that hard work and severe discipline were the best methods to overcome the more basic instincts of mankind.

5) The printed word: Russian people were only allowed to read newspapers that were favorable to the Communist cause.

These methods were designed to encourage Russian people to band together and oppose any form of rebellion. People listened and watched the propaganda together and formed like-minded groups. Punishments for non-conformists were swift and harsh. It was impossible to tune out the noise of propaganda, as it was literally everywhere.

Propaganda in Nazi Germany

The emergence of Nazi Germany took political propaganda to a new level. Hitler was a master of propaganda, and he appointed Joseph Goebbels as the head of his campaign to ensure the Nazi Party was seen in a positive light. He was also tasked with ensuring the German people had no access to harmful information regarding the Nazi movement.

The production of powerful propaganda films furthered this display. The films were made to highlight several issues and bring them to the nation's attention:

The greatness of Hitler and his vision for the future

The Jewish people: The Nazis used beautiful and artistic posters to promote the hatred and fear of Jewish people and other non-conformist groups. They used beauty and art to mask the ugliness and hatred of their message.

The way forward for the future: They promoted the idea of a “master race” that began with “perfect children.” Any imperfection was an insult to the Nazi vision of perfection.

> The mistreatment of Germans in Europe: As WWII became imminent, the Nazis recognized the need to demonize the rest of Europe. They did this by highlighting how badly migrant Germans were being treated in Eastern Europe.

While films like *Triumph of the Will* (1935) addressed serious subjects, Goebbels recognized the power of entertainment propaganda.

He also recognized the power of saturation.

They used symbolism to its full extent. The use of the swastika, the salute, and uniforms made sure that people in the street recognized the power the Nazis held. While Hitler understood the importance of grandiose titles for his henchmen, he was astute about his own title. He refused to be called President, as he claimed the title was too “august” for him. This appealed to the common person, and Hitler garnered popular approval with this move.

Nazi Germany was a prime example of mass brainwashing. The Nazis used a barrage of information, images, and events to create an environment of hatred and reverence.

Political Propaganda in the US

As one election passes, the preparations for the next one begins. We are constantly being told to give our vote to one candidate or the other for different reasons. While this is a fact that nobody can escape, are we hardwired to believe the propaganda, or are we capable of making an informed vote?

Recognizing the techniques used is the first step to becoming a savvier voter. Let's examine some of the more popular ways that politicians have used propaganda while angling for our vote:

Presidential Ads

We need to travel back to 1952 to witness one of the earliest ad campaigns for a presidential candidate. “Ike for President” was a catch song used to

promote Dwight Eisenhower. In 1960 JFK also used a catchy song to head his campaign.

The Bandwagon Technique

This is a technique that appeals to the masses and makes people feel part of a movement. This type of ad plays on the insecurities of the masses and the desire to belong.

The Testimonial Technique

Also referred to as the “endorsement” technique. These can include endorsements from political hard hitters, media outlets, sportsmen and women, and celebrities.

Symbolism Technique

When a candidate is trying to appeal to a base feeling of patriotism, they will use all-American symbols to stir the emotions.

Glittering Generalities

These are statements that use vague words and phrases to influence the public. They have no real meaning; they are mostly emotionally appealing and are designed to have a positive effect on the general population.

The Plain Folk Technique

This is when politicians try to appeal to the man on the street. They may have had Ivy League educations and never known what it is like to “miss out,” but politicians know how to appeal to the common person.

Stacking the Cards

This type of propaganda may sound harmless, but it can be devastating. The perpetrator will highlight their personal accomplishments and triumphs without addressing any of their failures. They will then proceed to trash their opponent and drag their name through the mud.

Media Manipulation and Subliminal Influencing

Media is all about influence. Everything you see in the media is designed to influence you. However, have you ever wondered if the media is also manipulating you? Some believe that the media is more a tool of manipulation than influence. What if these people are “onto something,” as they say on social media? According to Wikipedia, media manipulation is “all about techniques in which partisans create an image or argument that favors their particular interests.” Basically, the media can create a certain perception of an issue, a person, a group, or anything to the public. The public believe it because the media is supposed to be the ultimate source of factual information. The media does this through the use of subliminal messages.

Anybody that consumes media content is susceptible to media manipulation and subliminal influencing. For years, subliminal messages have been regarded as one of the dark arts used in persuasion and manipulation. Advertisers, marketers, politicians, and the media are believed to use subliminal messages to manipulate and modify people’s behavior. But how effective are media manipulation and subliminal influencing? Do subliminal messages actually work?

It is believed that the media subliminally influences consumers’ perceptions by deliberately using communication techniques that are engineered to generate specific responses. The aim is to get people to do things that they ordinarily would not do. In short, both the perception and response to subliminal influencing happen in the subconscious mind.

Visual subliminal messages in the media are either sub-visual or embedded. Sub-visual cues are flashed very quickly in media content, so quickly that

you cannot perceive them. Embedded messages are static visuals in plain sight, with an unchanging environment. They are often used in advertisements. An example is the dollar bill in some KFC burger ads. Auditory subliminal messages are either sub-audible or backmasking. Sub-audible messages have low-volume sound inserted into high-volume audios, such that you cannot hear them. Backmasking is a visual-audio message recorded in reverse so that the actual message is hidden when it is played forward.

Now, how exactly do these messages influence your behavior? One of the proposed theories is that subliminal priming works to distribute activation in the semantic network. Humans have semantically connected links of concepts in the brain, and each concept exists in a bigger network of interconnected concepts. Take Microsoft as an example: When prompted about Microsoft, you will probably think of Bill Gates, computers, Windows, etc. Microsoft is often associated with innovation. So, if you were to briefly flash a Microsoft logo to someone and then ask them to complete a task, they are likely to be more innovative in their approach because their subconscious has picked up on what Microsoft is associated with.

Because subliminal messages are targeted at your subconscious so that an advertiser, politician, and other people can influence you to do things that you ordinarily may not agree to do, they count as a form of manipulation. This explains why people think the media is all-powerful. They understand the power the media has and how they use that power. Media manipulation and subliminal influencing should be considered unethical and treated as such because they perfect the art of exploiting a person’s unawareness..

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CHAPTER 9: WHAT IS PSYOP?



Definition of Psychological Operation

The term “psychological warfare” is often used interchangeably with “psychological operations” or “political warfare.” The techniques are similar, but the terms have distinctive meanings.

According to the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, psychological operations are synchronized and coordinated activities, planned by military leaders, targeted against enemies, that are designed to instill in their target audiences the desired reaction in support of a military operation or larger strategy.

Psychological operations (PSYOP) is considered a sub-set of psychological warfare and are designed to influence human psychology to the point of view of change and/or action in support of an agenda. The objective of military psychological operations is to induce or reinforce foreign beliefs and attitudes favorable to the originator’s objectives.

The term is often used by the military to refer to the use of propaganda techniques including leaflet drops, radio broadcasts, and loudspeaker broadcasts.

Psychological Operation in Everyday Life

Here are simple examples of the techniques used in everyday, ordinary life.

Think about how a police officer will direct traffic. They will position themselves on the street corner. They will direct you where to go.

Think about how a police officer will stand on the corner of the road. He will be seen frequently enough to seem like he is doing something. He will seem busy. He will also direct traffic off the road and into the parking lot. He will direct traffic to a specific parking area for a specific person, like the President of the United States or a celebrity.

These people are practicing a time-honored technique that has been used by this group of special people; those who were trained in psychological operations.

Think about how you may be directed to the parking lot in an airport or for a big event. They will direct you and change your way of thinking. You will be directed another way, to where they want you to go.

The Psyop Person

The psyop person may look the same as someone you know or any normal person. The person may be someone from your workplace or your friend. The person could be a co-worker. They could also be your leader. The person may be working under an identity, a so-called personality, or even a new appearance (such as a new hairstyle and new facial hair).

They could be a person of influence in your religious and your spiritual activities. They could also be in your police station and your court system. They could be placing themselves inside your armed forces and the military.

They can be ministers, pastors, police officers, tax collectors, doctors or nurses, lawyers, judges, teachers, social workers, and many others of importance.

The psyop person is someone who is disguising themselves as a normal citizen. They are not a real citizen and they are just playing at being a citizen.

They could be someone you have known for a long time. They could be your friend or acquaintance. You may trust them. They may have asked you to trust them. They could be someone who has been building a relationship with you for a long time. They could be your counselor, a working partner, your confidante, or even a close friend.

They could be someone you work with who you know to be one of the good guys, but who has actually been altered to believe something different.

Consequences of Having a Psyop Person Around You

When you have a person who you know and trust, who is planning to cause you harm, you may not see it coming and you will not be able to avoid it.

The person who you know and trust will explain why they have to hurt you in order to further their agenda. They will explain how they “have no choice” and that you “would understand” if they explained the reasons.

When you believe that your loved ones have done something harmful to you, what do you do? You want answers. You want to understand what happened. You want your voice heard. You want to be informed of what transpired. You want the truth and you want the truth to be known. You don’t want to be deceived or lied to. You want to be acknowledged.

If you are close to a psyop person, they will want you to remain close to them and they will want you to remain as you are.

Ways to Overcome a Psyop Person—Face the Psyop Person and Speak the Truth

When a psyop person speaks with you, they will try to lie to you. When a psyop person is lying to you, they will be nervous. When they know that you know, they will become nervous and they will try to hide/mask their nervousness. This will be a giveaway that they are hiding something.

If the psyop person wants to harm you, they will be more aggressive when they hide/mask their nervousness. This will also betray them.

Another thing will be when the psyop person speaks words that are not related to your conversation (words that are irrelevant). When you speak to a psyop person and their response veers away from the “main” conversation, this will betray them as well.

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CHAPTER 10: WHY DO PEOPLE JOIN CULTS? HOW DO CULTS WORK?



What is a Cult?

Ask 10 people and you will receive 10 different answers.

For some, it's the mindless groupies of a rock or sports star who hang off their every word.

For some, it's a religious sect that chooses to worship in a non-traditional way or at non-traditional times.

For others, it's an umbrella term that encompasses a variety of supposedly dangerous non-traditional beliefs or ideologies that are considered to be in some way damaging to the followers of that belief system.

I prefer to think of a cult as one person who has found so-called “truth” and then, spreads the word, not to seek criticism or further knowledge, but to bring everyone else in line to have the same belief system.

Cults are a breeding ground for easy prey. They target people who are desperate to escape from their lives, to be part of something bigger than themselves.

They are led and fed, fed and led. They give their lives to their cult and, if they were never to leave, they would never have to think for themselves again.

People crave leadership, they crave instruction.

How Cults Work

Instead of demanding that people think for themselves, they change the definition of leadership and teach people that to be happy and healthy, you must become just like their cult leader.

The leader instructs people to be followers, but also to be the teachers of the next generation; to tell the new generation that their leader is always right. You cannot question or doubt a leader. No, I don't think it's even possible.

By the time the teaching has finally filtered down through the generations of a cult, the last few generations have been lured to think like perfect little minions and pledge their lives to a leader they barely know. And the cycle continues.

This is the nature of cults; they slowly increase their membership with each new generation that is taught the same way of thinking from the teachers. And a leader will push their membership up further and further as they grow.

A cult is, therefore, one person who has the power and the means to make sure that everything they believe is disseminated on a wide scale so as to become larger and larger and become as “true” to a society.

Why Do People Join Cults?

From the outside looking in, there are four main reasons:

1) The hope of a better life

2) Power

3) Money

4) Closeness to a higher power

As humans, we need optimistic belief systems to help us get through the strains of our day-to-day lives and we are drawn to strong personalities that lead to a sense of togetherness, security, community, and safety.

People love to be part of something special and they will pledge their life to that special thing, be it a sports team, a religion, or a cult.

Correlation between Cults and Brands

There are many cults born from the corporate sector, i.e. a brand that is sexy and cool at first glance, but once you get into the details, it may be highly conducive to a certain type of group that the CEO secretly wants to grow.

The cult leader will have a vision and plots to implement that vision at all costs.

If you are a small independent company, you can choose to watch your competition and copy what they are doing in order to grow your own customer base. This is fine.

But if you are a large corporation, you may be in a position where you do not have that luxury.

As you grow, so too must your market. If you have a cult-like style of management that you have chosen to propagate, you will be stuck with this model of management forever and you will never be able to change.

Corporate cults are, therefore, highly dangerous. They lead to a defeatist attitude for employees.

Brands are more of an ideological system; a religion more than they are a product. If you think you cannot let go of any belief system that you've embraced, you are probably trapped in your institution.

Brands and Self-Concept

In 2004, the “real beauty” campaign was launched by beauty brand Dove with the purpose of redefining the beauty concept by taking into

consideration that in real life there are natural variations in beauty. The brand image of Dove was given symbolic meaning by this campaign. Specifically, by consuming the Dove brand, women had the opportunity to communicate to their social environment that they shared Dove's notion that our current society's beauty values need to be reconsidered and reformulated. As this example shows, a brand is not only a schema or category that directs attention and information processing, but it responds to identity-based motives in that it communicates consumers' characteristics, values, and attitudes to their social environment.

For example, a consumer can use a brand to express the opinion that the pursuit of a sustainable and healthy lifestyle is important. Consequently, when a consumer observes another person using a brand that is associated with identity-relevant attributes, such as a healthy lifestyle, he or she may make similar inferences about the characteristics, values, and attitudes of the brand user. Because brands provide consumers with a way to express their identity and socially categorize themselves, it is reasonable for consumers to prefer brands that are consistent with their self-concept.

The idea that individuals are motivated to perceive themselves as consistent in their values, attitudes, and behavior is a central idea of early theories in social psychology, such as consistency theory or dissonance theory. In connection with these and more recent approaches, several studies have demonstrated that individuals invest resources such as effort, time, and money to appear consistent and thereby verify their self-concept (self-verification).

To be able to classify and organize their experiences and to guide their behavior, an individual is enabled to this by a consistent and stable self-view. Also, consistent behavior that promotes a coherent environment for social interactions increases predictability by others. For instance, a consumer holding values of sustainability might actively avoid driving a car brand that is linked to power (and gas consumption) and might instead choose a brand that is known for its low gas consumption. By doing this, the consumer provides a small window into his or her personality that others can "peek into" to predict his or her future behavior, which in turn influences their responses to the consumer and makes the environment more predictable for the consumer as well.

To some degree, the self-concept that drives consumer behavior is flexible wherein it will depend on which aspects of the self are accessible in a given context. The accessibility of self-concept components is higher if the components have been repeatedly activated in the past and if they have been made salient more recently. Also, it is not necessarily the case that the self-concept has to be conscious of it to influence consumer behavior.

A self-concept can represent a consumer's viewpoint (how a consumer sees him or herself) or the viewpoint of significant others (how the consumer thinks others see him or her). As a consequence of this dichotomy, consumers think of the discrepancies between their own self-views and the way others perceive them. In connection with the consistency theories mentioned above, consumers are usually motivated to reduce such discrepancies. Using brands that are in line with their self-view helps to resolve this conflict because such brands bring other individuals' representations closer to an individual's representation of his or herself by allowing consumers to publicly display who they are. A consumer who possesses the self-view that he or she is a creative person but thinks others do not share this self-view may, for example (consciously or unconsciously), use brands associated with creativity to signal his or her creativity to others.

The best-known example of a brand application to influence others' views of one's identity is the application of brands as status symbols. When you think about it, it seems irrational that individuals would buy expensive brands that fulfill the same functions as cheaper brands. However, this is usually due to subconscious thinking of the fact that since a consumer can afford to buy expensive brands, it symbolizes his or her possession of resources such as money or power. Furthermore, in evolutionary psychology, the use of status symbols is described as a costly form of signaling that men might apply to appear attractive to females.

Indeed, some studies have found that men are more interested in purchasing conspicuous luxury goods that signal wealth when mating goals are primed compared with when such goals are not primed. However, some research opposes this idea and has also shown that this is a short-term mating strategy that is also perceived as such by women. An interesting finding is that the social-signaling function of brands is not limited to luxury brands. For example, green products such as hybrid cars can similarly be regarded

as status symbols, but only when it is transparent that these products are more expensive than comparable non-green products.

Most importantly, not only might symbolic brand benefits communicate a person's actual self-view, but they also provide consumers with an opportunity to express their personality as they would ideally like it to be and to reduce a possible conflict between their actual and ideal self. This idea can be derived from the self-discrepancy theory. It says that consumers can use brands for symbolic self-completion and self-enhancement and that brands can become part of the self. An interesting thought, a reduction in self-discrepancies is related not only to a consumer's ideal aspects of the self but also to the personality aspects that a consumer thinks he or she should possess.

For instance, a consumer might think that it is his or her duty to take care of the environment, but he or she might sometimes also feel that he or she does not fully live up to this responsibility (discrepancy with how he or she perceives herself). Consumers are prompted to use brands to reduce this discrepancy as well. For instance, they are inclined to purchase products from a supermarket associated with sustainability such as Whole Foods.

Similarly, the feeling of uncertainty about one's self-concept can motivate brand use. The feeling of uncertainty about one's self-concept is supposed to yield the motivation to reaffirm the self. In one study, participants were more likely to choose a product consistent with an activated self-view (competence or excitement) when participants felt uncertain about their self-view.

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CHAPTER 11: PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE AND STRATEGIC THINKING AT WORK



Not all manipulation is a bad thing. There are times when you might want someone to agree with you on something. You probably don't want to take it to the extreme and make your victim do everything you want and take over their lives. But there are certain moments when you may need someone to agree with you on something, such as when a vote is going one way or another, if you need help with a project, or something similar.

This chapter looks at some of the different ways you can manipulate the people near you in order to get the things that you would like.

Similarities Are Key

The first thing you should concentrate on is finding similarities between yourself and the person you are manipulating. Nobody is going to want to be around you or do the things that you want them to if they have nothing in common with you. You need to find the places where you mesh together and can form a bond of some kind, if not a friendship.

There are a lot of different ways that you can work to find similarities between you and the person you want to get on your side. First, consider how you will be able to help them out with something they need.

Take the time and have a lunch break with this person, if you work with them.

Work is not the only place where you can start to make a bond with someone. You can bond after work without all of the stresses that come with work.

Of course, you need to ensure that you are doing something that the other person enjoys. You don't want to seem like a bother or go around just inviting them to things that you like.

Once you are able to build this bond, it will be easier for the two of you to get along and you will be able to convince them to do the things that you want later on.

Give Them a Reason Why

No one will have any desire to help you out unless there is something in it for them. This means that you need to look through the situation and make it work out well for the both of you.

There are two ways this can go. In most cases, when you are being manipulated, both of you are going to get something out of the deal. One person might get the better thing, but you are still going to be rewarded for your hard work.

Then there is the more evil way of manipulating someone. A manipulator may promise something that is going to entice you to help them out. The issue with this, though, is that the manipulator doesn't actually plan to give you anything in return.

But in most cases, when you want to manipulate someone, you will want to go with the first method so you can keep them as friends in the long run. This means that you need to make sure they have a good reason to help you out.

Language Patterns

The words you use in your speech and communication will determine whether someone is going to listen to you or do what you would like. A simple thing like switching around words to make them sound positive can make a huge difference in the way that people associate with you.

Take Small Steps

This means you need to take things slowly. You need to go from step one until the final step without skipping anything in between. But what are some of the steps you may have to take in order to get to your end goal? Here are some ideas to ensure that you are getting people on your side in the right way:

1) Get to know the person—the best cases of manipulation happen once you know at least a little bit about the person.

2) Determine if they will meet your goal—before you put in too much effort, make sure that they are willing to go along with your goal.

3) Start laying the groundwork—now that you have someone who is going to be on your side, it is time to start laying a bit of groundwork to help you out. Let them know a bit about the plan and see if they are interested in helping you out.

4) Show them what they can get out of this process. If they feel like they are going to do the work and you are the only one who is benefiting, they are going to run away and find something else to do. Start out with all of the benefits that they are going to receive, perhaps limiting the information about what you will receive, to ensure that you are getting them on your side.

5) Work towards the goal together—during this time, you both need to be doing the work. While an evil manipulator will require their victim to do all of the work on their own, this is not going to work in most situations, and you should spend time working together with the other person so that you reach the goal.

6) Reap the rewards together—if this goes as plan, you and your partner are going to see all of the rewards possible. This

can make your bond closer and will make it easier to influence your partner later on.

When you take small steps together, it becomes much easier for you to get to your goal without having to pull your hair out.

Go for the Emotions

One thing that you should always try when you are trying to get someone to work with you is to go for the emotions. People are more likely to follow and do something when they feel emotional about it.

There are a lot of different emotions that you will be able to play with. It is important to realize that the emotions that people respond to the most are anger, joy, and sadness. In most cases, you might find that it is easiest to manipulate someone if you can get them angry about the same kind of topic as you.

If Your Friends Jumped Off the Bridge…

With this option, you are going to try to convince the person that your goals are in their best interests. This is the “everyone is doing it” method of thinking. You want to portray this as something that everyone is doing, or at least that if they do what you want, they are going to be envied by everyone else.

Be the One in Control

No matter which method you are using, you need to make sure that you are always in control. If you let someone else be in control, you are no longer the manipulator; you are pretty much giving this power to the other person.

You want the other person to start relying on you, to start coming to you for their questions, or even just for company. This can help to make you into the most important person in their lives.

There are many techniques throughout this book that you can use to make sure you are the one in charge. Establishing this early on will make things so much easier in the long run.

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CHAPTER 12: PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE AND STRATEGIC THINKING IN RELATIONSHIPS AND THE POWER OF WORDS



Many master manipulators have psychopathic tendencies, but not all are true psychopaths or sociopaths. Some persons do not even understand that they are trying to exert their will onto another against that person's wishes, though there are those who have the express intent of manipulating others. Psychopaths will actually go out and prey on individuals to manipulate. But again, not every manipulative person has a mental defect, nor does every manipulator acknowledge or understand what they are doing.

Being able to determine when someone is attempting to sway you is a fine art. By learning to master the arts of manipulation, influence, mind control, and NLP, you are also mastering the art of spotting these tactics sooner and saving yourself from undue influence.

The techniques in this book cover an array of relationships, from strangers and new acquaintances, to persons that you may already be close to. The most difficult aspect of these tactics to digest is when they are employed against another person in an intimate relationship. The psychological damage that these techniques may cause to a significant other or spouse who has been victimized or targeted by a manipulative person can last for years. Many persons manipulated in intimate relationships need to seek out professional psychological help to move past this kind of emotional and psychological abuse. And make no mistake, these techniques when employed against a loved one without a doubt can be identified as abuse.

So, how do you keep from becoming involved with a master manipulator before the relationship develops too far? Well, it depends if you are

engaging in a relationship with someone who just has manipulative tendencies but means you no harm, or a master manipulator who explicitly wants to control or manipulate you.

Most intentional manipulators have a few characteristics or traits in common. Lack of empathy is normally an ear-mark for a manipulator. They are narcissistic or self-absorbed, and they truly are indifferent to others who suffer for any reason. Their indifference may extend to everyone, and that may make anyone feel special. But special or not, you will eventually be just another person they feel indifference towards. If you experience a little setback that upsets you, a loss, or an illness, take note of your new partner's actions. Do they state that they care verbally, but refuse to engage with you in person or excuse themselves from you to avoid you during your time of duress? If you notice an indication that they might not care as much as they say they do, pay attention to other signs.

While we are on the subject of their words and actions, another easy way to separate the manipulators is not by what they say, but in what they do. Master manipulators are known for being charismatic and saying all the right words at precisely the right times but rarely do their words and actions match each other. Look for unfulfilled promises, saying one thing and then doing another, and opinions that flip-flop, depending on who else is around to hear what they are saying. Manipulators may seem to be all-encompassing to their partners, but in public, they may tend to stay in the background for the purpose of observing others or completely change their stances, opinions, or ideas to fit others, whom they are engaged with. Watch out for inconsistencies.

Manipulators who intend to cause harm will tell you they adore you, but find small ways to shoot digs at you that may hurt your feelings. If you are currently in a relationship with someone who states that they want to spend every minute of their free time with you, then calls you "needy" or "codependent" when you want to spend time with them, it means that individual is sending mixed signals that you may try to excuse away. There could be different reasons why neither of you can spend every day together, but there is never a good excuse to indicate that you are the one with issues, particularly when they are the ones who initiated the response from you.

Another consideration is the right and wrong in a disagreement, and what the manipulator will say and do during an argument. Manipulators will fight dirty, insult you, try and use information you have given them against you, and will never plead guilty. At times, master manipulators will deny words or actions that they have said or done, hoping that this confusion will make you question your view or beliefs on events that have occurred. They may continue to speak about things that you have expressly stated, but no longer want to discuss, creating unease in you regardless of your discomfort.

Master manipulators will disregard the emotions you express to them. They may refuse to validate the way you feel or express to you that the way you feel is not accurate or correct. Some manipulative people will start to completely refuse to acknowledge the feelings of their significant others as the relationship progresses.

Despite all of these negative aspects of the manipulator's persona, many individuals will find that even though they know the relationship is unhealthy, they will continue to engage in that relationship or have an extremely hard time cutting loose from the manipulator. The soaring thoughts that excited you at the beginning of the relationship will make you all the more likely to fear losing those strong emotions, and therefore fear losing the manipulator themselves. You may find yourself increasingly unsatisfied in the relationship, and the loved one may notice a change in your mood too.

Despite your unhappiness, you may find yourself dreading life without them. Your own mood will directly correlate to the mood of the manipulator, and you may find yourself attempting to find favor with this person, even though you have done nothing untoward or wrong. Because of the conflicting and confusing aspects of the relationship, you may find yourself overanalyzing. You may notice an increased state or level of anxiety in yourself, as you are unsure of what is happening or where you stand with the manipulative partner. Apologizing or compromising who you are regularly, whether you understand why you feel the need, feel insecure about yourself in general, or are experiencing feelings of guilt or inadequacy are often strong indicators that you are in a manipulative environment.

The best way to protect yourself from engaging in a manipulative relationship is to be aware of your partner's subtle manipulation tactics.

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CHAPTER 13: PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE AND STRATEGIC THINKING FOR ENTREPRENEURS AND BUSINESS



Principle 1: Embrace the War Game of Chess

The metaphor for war strategy is chess, not checkers.

Checkers is a simple game with few possibilities and ramifications for each move. There are few if any differences between the pieces. And victory is often easily judged in retrospect as having been brought about by a single logical error of the loser.

Chess, on the other hand, is far more complex. There is a much greater variance in the power of the pieces. Pieces can move differently and can work powerfully for or against you in combination. Your king-piece is incredibly vulnerable. When you lose at chess, it's not always as easy to pin it on a single erroneous move.

The war game, like chess, can be mentally and psychically draining, but you must learn to play it if you wish to protect or advance your self-interest.

I urge you to at least understand the principles of war strategy waged against you or you'll be completely exploited. Well, you'll probably be completely exploited anyway, but by understanding the patterns behind the strategies waged against you, you'll be better prepared to find true peace of mind and have a much better chance of self-protection.

Do not be afraid of the chess-like war game. It's a lot less intimidating than you may have been led to believe. You have all parts inside of you to be a

master at this game.

Principle 2: Embrace Master Plans and Strategies

Many people today have attention deficit disorder (ADD). Having access to the Internet often means that you have ADD. If you own a smartphone, then you have ADD. In today's age, we are all bombarded with enormous distractions. Thus, no one thinks they have time to think several steps ahead and it's a rare opponent who can competently think consequentially. Use this to your advantage.

You may find it helpful to think through things in writing. It can be done manually using a pen and paper or a word processing application on your computer, tablet, or smartphone. Keep your brainstorming and plans in hidden locations where your opponents cannot reach them. Thinking things through while writing will allow your plans to reach a much higher level than trying to think through everything in your head.

The strategy doesn't have to be complicated or intricate. It is simply a series of sub-goals and items which come together to achieve a larger goal. Embrace this strategic planning process and you will become brilliant at war.

It's important to stay flexible and constantly revisit your plans as the battlefield is constantly shifting, and you must stay adaptable to the moment at hand. Nonetheless, master planning will allow you to stay ahead of the game.

Principle 3: Engage in Small Scale Test Attacks to Assess the Opponent's Skill and Game Plan

If you sense someone might be an opponent, then it may be worth it to test them in order to get a sense of what they've got in them.

Let's say a new person enters your social circle. If you wanted to do a test attack, then you could pay them a backhanded compliment or mild insult to

test how they respond. If they attack back ferociously, then your test attack was successful and you uncovered their true villainous nature before they could surprise you with it. If they respond with grace or apologetic insecurity, then they are likely not a threat to you.

I know the above scenario may sound petty and even vile. But it is done in a myriad of ways all the time. Watch for it. Oftentimes an opponent will test attack you first to see how easily you can be exploited.

When someone comes at you with a test attack, it is usually worthwhile to counterattack them in a similar way. Simply mirror them and this usually does the trick, unless they have a more complex master plan in store for you.

Principle 3: Feign Peace, but Anticipate Attack

Act like a peaceful person and you may be able to avoid large-scale attacks, for opponents won't view you as much of a threat and will only come at you with a small amount of their might. Thus, when you put on the pretense of peace, you'll typically be attacked in only small and predictable ways. In other words, the king is only mildly exploiting you, because he can.

You must, however, quietly prepare yourself for being attacked so that you are not caught off guard. There is a fine line here. You must remain psychologically strong, which means anticipating being attacked without becoming paranoid. If you do become paranoid, tthe opponent has won a major psychological battle against you. When you anticipate an attack from an opponent without giving in to paranoia, it tends not to catch you off guard, and therefore its psychological effect on you is next to nil.

When you are attacked after feigning peace, the best defense is usually, again, to mirror the opponent. This typically gets them to back down. You can also choose to gracefully ignore them if you don't feel the exploitation is very severe.

Feigning peace is ironically a master tactic when it comes to psychological warfare. Master the art of this tactic.

Principle 4: Boldly Attack First, but Pretend You Are the Victim

This is a classic technique of psychological warfare and can go a long way toward psychologically wearing your opponent down.

Come up with a rationale that makes you look like the victim of your opponent, then boldly attack them. It's best to attack them privately or confidentially so that others will see you as the victim should the opponent try and attack you back.

Often your opponent will be furious and threaten you with many things. Here you can shout in your opponent’s ear that you are already a victim of their wrath and that everything they threaten you with will only make you appear more of a victim. This can have a powerful demoralizing psychological effect on the opponent.

Playing the victim card while fiercely attacking the opponent is high art in the world of psychological warfare.

Principle 5: Use Bald Morality to Shame Your Opponent

Most people in life who attack you have little or no shame. However, shaming them to their face can sometimes have a strong effect. Try to guess their insecurities and shame them for succumbing to them. If you are bold, then threaten to go public with broader shaming of them, as you reveal their hypocrisy and exploitation to others.

Be careful if you live in a glass house here, for many opponents will shame you right back. It helps if you have done nothing close to what you're accusing your opponent of. This is tricky stuff here, so be careful.

Shaming is usually best applied as a threat of embarrassment for the opponent. For example, if a vendor threatens to not refund you or to not fulfill their pledge, threaten to go public to their other customers with this shame.

Principle 6: Stay Adaptable and Agile; Maintain an Escape Route

Victory often goes to the nimble and deft, not the powerful and strong. Being adaptable to changes as they occur is paramount. And in a world that is constantly shifting and transforming, being adaptable and agile is now more important than ever.

This is another reason why creative brainstorming is so important. Your rational and analytical mind is your most powerful weapon, and when you are engaged in creative brainstorming, you are strengthening your plan and your arms. Use creative brainstorming to rationally and imaginatively conceive of as many tactics and contingencies as you can.

The strategic planning process is not as complicated as you've been led to believe, so please do not be intimidated. If you were smart enough to seek out and read a book like this, then you are smart enough to be strategic and agile.

When you launch your attacks, it's often useful to have an escape route, so that you can quickly backtrack and retreat if you are confronted with enormous resistance. In general, you always want to leave yourself some room to escape, if necessary.

Principle 7: Embrace Retreat

Retreat can be an effective tactic during an intense battle, as it can allow you an opportunity to reflect and regroup, and can sometimes have a psychological deflating effect on the opponent—at just the moment they think that victory is imminent, you retreat and take away that opportunity from them.

I can't tell you when the best time to retreat during battle is. It's something that comes with experience. Just remember it is a tactic available to you in

the heat of battle. As such, it's best to give yourself an escape route so you can easily retreat if necessary.

This is why the best lies stay as close to the truth as possible. When your lie begins to get you in trouble, you can fall back on the parts that are true. In general, though, I don't recommend lying, but it is a tactic available to you when attempting to defeat an opponent.

Principle 8: Scare Your Opponent with the Unknown

Make vague references to your opponents about resources and allies you have at your disposal. Put up appearances as though you are powerful, strong, and a force to be reckoned with. Feign relationships with powerful figures so your opponent will think you have powerful allies.

Most of all, keep your opponent in the dark. Make attacks that would suggest you have more resources and allies than you do. What you want is to evoke fear in the opponent. You want their mind to wander. You want them to imagine and fear attacks upon them that you haven't even thought of.

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CHAPTER 14: DEFENSE STRATEGIES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE



Psychological warfare is out there and it is real. You may just find yourself a victim at some point in life. Or you have already been a victim without even realizing it. After reading this book, you may become aware of psychological warfare attempts that have been made on you. You are not defenseless. Awareness is the first step to victory.

Who are your potential abusers? They may be neighbors, exes, or even family. Anyone who has an agenda against you may be trying to run your life and influence your actions unfavorably. If you feel like a victim, then you probably are.

Prevent Psychological Warfare

Choose what you allow into your life. You do not need to give certain people or situations the time of day. You are very busy and your time is precious. You need to protect your energy, resources, and intellect by associating only with the positive. Being selective about the people that you associate with also helps you keep your reputation intact so that you can preserve it in the event that your enemy attacks it.

You should also be selective about the media and information that you take in. Psychological warfare is usually very covert. If you take in lots of information, you raise your risk of exposure. Only choose a few reliable sources of news, and avoid listening to people that do not seem trustworthy. Do not believe everything that you read; question everything and perform your own research on even your most reliable sources of information and news.

Choose your relationships wisely. You really cannot trust anyone. Avoid trusting people. You never know what information they may glean about you to use against you. As you have learned from employing psychological warfare, manipulative and emotionally abusive people are able to glean the tiniest clues about you from your conersations. They then use this information later to hurt you in some way.

Always be wary of people who try to bait you or distract you. Usually, their actions are not innocent. Why do they want your attention? By distracting you, they may be trying to give you a subliminal cue or they may be trying to control you through the power of suggestion. Either way, they are trying to dominate and monopolize your time. You can ignore or politely but firmly tell them no when they demand your attention.

When people try to exert power over you, they may begin by stating you have glaring flaws. They do this to lower your self-esteem and make you sensitive. You do not need to fall for this. Just change the conversation or suggest that they have the same flaw. If someone says you have a bad temper, for instance, you can grin and say, “I know! But at least I don’t hold everything in like you do. It is actually healthier to have a bad but controlled temper like mine. How is your project coming along, by the way?” This is called deflection and it works miracles.

Remove yourself from drama and conflict. Stonewalling people is better than arguing with them. When you argue with people, you fuel their anger and animosity. You add power to the fight. When you pull away and act like a stone wall, you become unreachable. You win through silence. You also avoid making the enemies that may eventually attempt to perform psychological warfare on you by using stonewalling.

Do not let the opinions or actions of others change you. It is a natural human instinct to mirror the behavior of others to earn social approval. But social approval is highly overrated. You will be more at peace if you keep to yourself and do your own thing. Act the way you want to act. Be who you want to be. By not buying into the need for social approval, you lower your risk of falling victim to mass fads. People can be controlled through things like social proof and fads. If you are not one of the herd, you can avoid falling into trends that are created for mass control by the government or

some other untrustworthy agent. You can be more discerning and determine what is safe, rather than blindly following other people's leads.

Avoid all contact with enemies. Again, this is important because your enemies may be trying to get pertinent information from you. It is also important because your enemies may be trying to poison you with their negative vibes. They may even be performing psychological warfare on you. Limit your exposure to avoid any harm. You don't need to waste time with people who do not care about you.

Establish a good reputation. This will make it difficult for your enemies to discredit you. People are more likely to believe your claims and rally for you if you have a good reputation. You can create a good reputation by always being nice and kind to others. Always be honest so that you look like a good person with unfailing integrity. You want to be someone that other people like.

Protect Your Mind and Your Heart

Protect your mind and your heart; they are the main targets of psychological warfare, more so than your physical body. By overturning the fear and hurt that your psychological war-monger inflicts upon you, you essentially win the war. Fear and pain are the primary weapons of psychological warfare. They are aimed at the primary targets; your heart, and your mind. The only way you can defeat psychological warfare is by blocking the fear and pain. If you can reverse the fear and pain back on your attacker, you are even more of a victor in a psychological war.

Avoid falling victim to the power of suggestion. If someone suggests that you have a flaw or that you should do something, understand that they are using the power of suggestion to make you believe a self-limiting belief. Someone is trying to plant a bad thought about yourself in your head. By believing what they say, you become a victim. But you can fight their beliefs by believing in yourself. Undermine self-limiting beliefs that others try to plant into your mind by suggesting an alternative truth.

Also, continue to hold positive beliefs about yourself. Know that you are a good person and that you are loved. Believe that you are smart and capable.

Think positive thoughts that build you up, rather than tear you down. When you do this, you give yourself the power and deny others the ability to take control of your low self-esteem. You protect your mind from bad suggestions and your heart from the pain that these suggestions can cause if you believe them.

Search for your enemy's weaknesses. Psychological warfare is very successful and effective, but its use suggests that your enemy is too weak to actually attack you. He or she can only employ covert methods.

Likely, your attacker uses the power of intimidation. This power is great and it can make you cower in terror. But realize that intimidation is usually just a front that a scared bully erects for his or her own protection. Has your intimidator ever actually attacked you or anyone you know? Or is it all a façade? Test intimidation and see how easily your intimidator's façade crumbles when you challenge it.

Try relaxing and reducing your stress level. Your attacker probably knows just how to get to you mentally and emotionally. Because your attacker has designed careful attacks on your heart and mind, you take these attacks very seriously. They hurt you and trouble you. But come to think of it, you may realize that these attacks are really nothing you need to worry about. Maybe these attacks are based on lies, or maybe they do not matter in the overall scheme of things. Take a day to yourself at some relaxing place, far away from the person who is using psychological warfare on you, and think about the attacks and whether or not you are blowing them up in your mind. When you begin to relax and let go of stress, you take back power from your attacker. Things stop bothering you so much and your heart will feel better.

Your heart and your mind are usually the victims of psychological warfare, not your body. If the psychological war-monger really wished you dead, he or she would have killed you already. Considering the fact that you are still alive today suggests that either your antagonist does not want to kill you, or else they cannot get away with killing you. Perhaps he or she does not have the means to get away with murder and is terrified of legal repercussions. You are at least temporarily safe from bodily harm. Do not let your attacker instill fear of death in you.

But time is of the essence. You cannot let your temporary safety give you a false sense of permanent security. Things can quickly change as your antagonist's plan unfolds. You need to act to protect yourself immediately, in preparation for future physical harm. If someone hates you enough to perform psychological torture upon you, then that person is also capable of murdering you.

Even if you are never physically harmed, mental destruction can be just as disastrous for your life as physical destruction. You may develop a host of mental illnesses in response to the trauma wreaked upon you. You will never be the same. You will deal with self-delusions, hallucinations, depression, and other issues for the rest of your life. Your mind will no longer be your property, but rather the plaything of another person or persons whom you do not know. As you have seen in this book, psychological warfare can take hold of you and transform you into another person. It is insidious and it is effective.

They are taking your life slowly but surely. They may as well kill you since they are stealing your willpower, your freedom of will, and your will to live. You need to put an end to it before they truly disable you and ruin your life. Take back your power now before more of it is stolen from you.

Protecting Your Loved Ones

Protecting your loved ones starts by limiting the use of social media and other forms of media. The less that they are exposed to certain media, the less likely they are to be exposed to any propaganda that can affect them adversely.

You can also teach your kids to think for themselves and to respect themselves. Teach them what manipulation looks like and tell them that it is never OK. Teach them to research everything that they hear, even in school, and to always be suspicious of things.

Be frank and open about the reality of psychological warfare with your loved ones. Provide plenty of real-life examples. This way, your family can

become aware of the danger. Awareness can enable them to take steps to fight the problem.

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CHAPTER 15: TRAIN YOUR MIND TO BE CALM IN EVERY SITUATION



Self-Hypnosis

One of the keys to entering your own mind and making changes is self-hypnosis. Self-hypnosis lulls your mind into a state where you can access your subconscious effortlessly. Once in the hypnotic state, you can make suggestions that your subconscious mind will hear and process. Self-hypnosis works by reducing distracting conscious thoughts, leaving your mind bare and free to receive more sensitive messages directly in the subconscious. Hypnosis also lowers your natural inhibitions so that your mind is more receptive to messages and does not argue with itself or block thoughts or messages out.

Here are simple steps on how to perform self-hypnosis:

Lie in a comfortable position or sit down. Now, look at a specific spot somewhere on the ceiling. It is important to strain your eyes a little bit in order to induce concentration so pick a spot that is behind you and hold your eyes on it.

Change your breath to be slow, firm, and deep. Breathe in through your nose, out through your mouth. Feel yourself fill your chest and concentrate on the sensation of your lungs expanding with air. Then, let all your breath out and feel it rushing through your windpipes, over your teeth, out through your lips.

Recite out loud or in your mind the word “sleep” as you inhale, and then recite “deep sleep” as you exhale. Keep doing this until

sleep overtakes your body. Your entire body should feel leaden with sleep.

Now is a good time to tell yourself to shut your eyes. Your eyes should just close without any effort on your part.

At this point, you are in a hypnotic state. Welcome! Deepen this state by counting. Tell yourself, “I am going to count to three and as I do that, I shall slip deeper into this hypnotic state. By the time I reach three, I will be more relaxed.” You can come up with your own version of this mantra, but just be sure to say something like that to yourself. Repeat your mantra a few times, either out loud or in the privacy of your own mind.

Count to three, all the while repeating the command with each count: “One… I am feeling more relaxed. Two…. I’m feeling even more relaxed…Three… I am feeling completely relaxed and I am truly in a hypnotic state now.”

Counting past three can help you enter a deeper hypnotic state. If your mind still wanders and you can’t focus, you can try longer counts. The more you practice self-hypnosis, however, the easier a short count will work.

Once in the hypnotic state, start telling yourself things you want to manifest in waking life. Some examples:

- “On the count of ten, I will overcome this grudge.”
- “On the count of ten, I will no longer hurt.”
- “On the count of ten, I will start chewing gum when I crave nicotine so that I can stop smoking for good.”
- “On the count of ten, I will start to crave healthier foods to lose weight.”

The more you use hypnosis, the faster you can slide into it. Also, the more you practice it, the more you can get into your deep mind and make a change. Finally, realize that you don't have to regard the examples above. You can use this technique to achieve weight loss, quit smoking, letting go of grudges, or ending other bad habits.

Remember to always replace bad behavior with a good one. So instead of saying "On the count of ten I will quit smoking," suggest to your mind that on the count of ten you will start chewing gum instead of smoking cigarettes. Find an alternative to your old habits. If you are working on changing your personality, you might want to suggest that on the count of ten you will become more of whatever you want to become.

Avoid using negatives like "stop," "don't," etc. Your mind does not respond to negatives so well and will leave off the "Don't" to adopt the following behavior. So instead of saying negatives, state positives. Say "I will" and "I am going to start." Use lots of strong action verbs.

Mind Hacking

Whether you drink a little too much to deal with stress or you tear yourself down with overly critical self-talk, your bad habits are preventing you from shining at your very best. To end bad habits, you can start to hack your own mind. It is surprisingly easy to do and it helps you break bad habits by changing the patterns your subconscious mind follows on autopilot, as I mentioned before. Mind hacking is an excellent form of subliminal psychology to use upon yourself.

Mind hacking works by using loops. The concept behind loops is that you reach into your thinking and adjust it. Each thought you think leads to more thoughts of the same vein. So, to change your thinking, you want to create loops of positive thoughts rather than negative ones. Instead of following the loops you create with each negative thought, be innovative and chase the negative thought with a positive one to redirect the consequential thought loop.

So how can you use this to adjust your personality and change bad habits? When you start to reach for a bad habit that you normally turn to in order to

comfort yourself, such as a drink, think a positive loop about how you deserve better. Follow that with another positive thought that will encourage yourself to do something else that you will thank yourself for later. For example, instead of drinking to unwind after a stressful day of work, do some yoga to relax or take a hot bath. You will not hate yourself when you wake up thoroughly well-rested and without a hangover. Find what you want to feel and then find healthy ways to encourage that feeling without engaging in your bad habits. The more positive loops you make in your own mind, the more positive emotions you feel. And then the happier you are.

Subliminal Trick for Waking Up

Waking up earlier is one of the difficult and elusive secrets to success. When you wake up early, you have more time to get things done. You are more productive. Even if it seems like you will get the same number of hours in a day no matter when you wake up, waking early is good for the human mind and allows for better productivity.

But if you struggle to get out of bed, you can try the exhaustive old advice of going to bed early and just forcing yourself awake at an earlier hour. However, this seldom works well for people. That is when subliminal psychology for self-improvement plays a fun little role. One excellent trick for waking up at an earlier hour is to chant the time you want to wake up to yourself as you fall asleep. So, as you begin to drift off into sleep, which is basically the hypnotic state, you should tell yourself, “I want to wake up at seven.” Say this three times.

Anchoring

You can start to train yourself using anchoring. Through this process, you teach yourself to reach for positive behaviors when you receive a stimulus.

So, to create an anchor, first set a clear goal.

Next, pick a stimulus. Anything can work, but a stimulus that already has a profound meaning for you will work best.

Once you choose the stimulus, you need to start playing it or expose yourself to it, and then immediately pick up the task you want to learn to perform by the anchor. Keep doing this until you have hammered it in. Soon, you will notice that when you see or hear this stimulus, you want to do a particular thing. That's when you know it has set. Keep using it and the anchor will only get stronger and more infallible. After some training, it will start to work on its own to motivate you.

Continue Education and Further Experiences

Make it a goal to keep learning and experiencing life. This simple desire can really transform your attitude about life and your zest for doing new things. You will want to get out of bed if you dedicate your days to learning and experiencing more.

I love the saying: Do something every day that scares you. I think this is the best advice you could possibly apply to your life. Try new things, approach new people, and take advantage of new opportunities. Even if you feel scared, do it anyway and surprise yourself as your life improves. Do not be complacent and let your life get stale and stagnant.

Adjust Your Self-Talk

All day long, a monologue runs in your mind. Take a moment to listen to how you speak to yourself. How does your internal monologue sound? Is it the way that you would talk to a friend? If not, you need to change your self-talk to be kinder and more encouraging. Your self-talk is a direct reflection of how you feel about yourself, so it is very important to your overall mental outlook on life. To change your overall outlook, you need to start speaking kindly to yourself. You can vanquish lack of motivation, discouragement, fear, and depression by talking to yourself in a kinder manner and giving yourself confidence boosts throughout the day.

It’s OK to Be Mean

Sometimes it is just necessary to be mean. No, I don’t mean become the new bully in the office or an abuser to your family. But start to be a bit harsh and firm when you stand up for yourself. Be selfish and demand what you deserve without an apology. Give yourself permission to be mean when you need to be. Being nice will only open you up to being taken advantage of.

You must work to always stick up for yourself. Even if it requires being mean to someone, you must put yourself first.

It is also acceptable to ignore the conventional rules of social politeness to defend yourself. Take care of yourself and conserve your precious time and money by not tolerating sitting there listening to someone’s rambling.

Similarly, stop letting people insult you. Maybe you have accepted it before to be polite. You know that you are supposed to laugh and take it as a joke even though it is not very funny to you. But why do this?

Say no when you want to. You may feel that it is polite to say yes, but doing so can really tax your resources and make you overextend yourself.

Fearlessly confront people when you feel you have been ripped off. Never tell people that you are sorry for what you say or feel guilty for sticking up for yourself.

Being mean can help you gain both dominance and confidence. It shows you that you are worth something, so your mind starts to believe it. Soon you will not even have to try. You just stand up for yourself because you know you don’t deserve any disrespect or poor treatment.

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CHAPTER 16: PERSUASION VS MANIPULATION



Seeing how individuals structure assessments and contentions, and display and incorporate realities into their psychological models is key to your capacity to persuade anyone to become tied up with a thought and afterward follow up on that thought. That is the embodiment of influence.

The distinction between influence and manipulation lies in:

1) The expectation behind your craving to convince that individual,

2) The honesty and straightforwardness of the procedure, and

3) The net advantage or effect on that individual

Manipulation suggests that you are disguising a craving to move someone to see things from your perspective, such that it will profit you. What's more, if this advantage were uncovered, that disclosure would make the other individual far less open to your message since it would either:

Demonstrate a solid inclination towards their absence of advantage in the trade,

Demonstrate an ulterior thought process, or

Some mix of both.

So, for instance, suppose I was selling someone a vehicle. That individual strolled into my business with a group of six children, and it was evident that they were searching for and truly required a family-sized, reasonable vehicle.

In any case, I at that point utilized the entirety of my powerful capacities to persuade the parent that he shouldn't purchase a little van, but rather a two-seater convertible to relive his youth, knowing that I would make double the commission on that vehicle and it was totally unsatisfactory for the customer.

That Is Manipulation

Now imagine a scenario where that same parent came into my business with six children and said to me, "Man, I simply need to blow some money. I should purchase an eight-seater. I know it's silly, and I truly can't legitimize this. However, I'm only here for the two-seater convertible."

Also, imagine a scenario in which I then utilize my convincing capacities to gradually and deliberately drive this parent to comprehend the advantages of acquiring the more moderate and appropriate family vehicle.

That Is Influence, Not Manipulation

I utilized similar skills to persuade someone to accomplish something that I truly accepted was to their greatest advantage, rather than persuading them to accomplish something that was not to their greatest advantage.

It's the hidden expectations, the net advantages, and the veracity with which you breathe life into this toolkit that makes the distinction between influence and manipulation.

This has been a subject of discussion for truly a huge number of years. In Greece, during the fourth century BC, the father of influence, Aristotle, held a gathering of educators known as the Sophists. Aristotle conflicted with the Sophists over the way that they couldn't have cared less about truth yet

would advance any thought for an expense. He stated that the Sophists were taking part in manipulation since they purposefully misdirected individuals and caused hurt.

Why Persuasion Is Good

To accurately perceive the distinction between influence and manipulation, it is fundamental to comprehend the morals that undergird influence. There are some scholars who have proclaimed that influence is morally impartial. In other words, that influence is neither acceptable nor terrible, however simply a fair-minded procedure. I don't acknowledge this position. I would argue that the Aristotelian perspective that influence isn't nonpartisan, however honorable, is right.

Influence is intrinsically acceptable in light of the fact that it is one of the essential methods through which truth gets known. Through the influential strategy, a thought is advanced with proof, and an individual is permitted to decide to either acknowledge or dismiss that powerful intrigue openly. Influence does, without a doubt, include moving individuals to a position they don't right now hold, however not by asking or persuading. Rather, it includes cautious planning, the best possible encircling of contentions, the introduction of distinctive supporting proof, and the push to locate the right passionate match with your crowd.

The conviction that influence is a fair and powerful method for landing at truth is seen in the way that it is the reason for present-day financial aspects, directing practices, and the lawful framework. What's more, influence is additionally the establishment of majority rule government. Majority rules systems utilize attentive moral influence at whatever point they choose pioneers, set up laws, or attempt to ensure their residents. Indeed, even the individuals who become alarmed with the thought of influence can't get away from it.

Influence is imbued inside human correspondence. When imparting their will, individuals both deliberately and unexpectedly advance certain convictions and practices. Thus, influence doesn't involve decisions; it is innate in social connection. Indeed, it is so inescapable in human

correspondence that, on occasion, it turns out to be practically undetectable. The supposed individuals' callings – legislative issues, law, social work, advising, business the board, promoting, deals, advertising, and the service – should be called influence callings.

At its center, influence is the quest for truth. It is through influence that positive change happens. For instance, influential messages have been logically demonstrated to incite students to abstain from smoking, and from joining packs. Influence helps manufacture harmony between countries.

Influence persuades drivers to forgo driving when they've had a couple of drinks and are too drunk to drive. Influence is utilized to persuade a drunkard to look for proficient assistance. Influence is the manner by which the mentor of a dark horse group moves the players to give it their everything. Influence is an apparatus utilized by guardians to ask kids not to acknowledge rides from outsiders or to permit anybody to contact them in a way that feels awkward. So, influence is the foundation of various positive, pro-social attempts. Barely any of the decency that we find on the planet could be practiced without influence.

However, the integrity of influence and the way it is implanted inside human instinct isn't what causes concern. What causes nervousness is the debasement of influence. Undoubtedly, when influence is mutilated, it can get manipulative, which is perilous. Through manipulation, scallywags, religious pioneers, and tyrants have mishandled, oppressed, and even slaughtered millions. In any case, as unfavorable as manipulation may be, it ought to never be mistaken for influence.

Manipulation is the corruption of influence. It isn't worried about truth but instead based in double-dealing. Aristotle remarked on this in his acclaimed work, *Rhetoric* when he accentuated, "maltreatment of the explanatory workforce can work extraordinary evil, a similar charge can be brought against every beneficial thing spare righteousness itself, and particularly against the most helpful things, for example, quality, wellbeing, riches, and military aptitude. Properly utilized, they work the best gift; and wrongly utilized, they work the best damage.”

Therefore, the appropriate inquiry is how you might recognize influence and manipulation? Coming up next are the three clear, yet dependable ways that you can break down if a message is manipulative.

1. **Intention**

The aim is an essential factor in deciding whether a solicitation is manipulative. In the event that an individual endeavors to exhibit a thought or conduct that isn't to the greatest advantage of another, they are participating in manipulation. Unfortunately, this is very normal. Individuals habitually fall into the snare of manhandling others in the quest for what they want. One of the underlying drivers of this Machiavellian point of view is not seeing others with equity. The famous scholar Immanuel Kant expounded on this attitude when he recommended that the central statute of ethical quality is regarding an individual as a person and not as a thing.

2. Withholding Truth

Manipulation includes misshaping or retaining truth. Regularly, this is seen through overstating the upsides of conduct, a thought, or item. It was this type of manipulation that incited the expression *Caveat Emptor*, which is Latin for "Purchaser Beware". The expression was especially far-reaching during those chronicled periods when there was little responsibility for venders. The maxim was an admonition to potential purchasers to be suspicious of those selling merchandise, and to ensure that they confirmed, before buying, that the nature of the item was indistinguishable from the cases made by the dealer. Indeed, even today, a great many people have encountered being told about the highlights or advantages of an item, and afterward, in the wake of obtaining it understood that they had been misdirected. This isn't right, as something outside genuine portrayal is conspicuous manipulation.

3. Coercion

The pressure is the third and most clear segment of a manipulative intrigue. It is the expulsion of free decision, the final proposal – do it, or something bad might happen. Interestingly, influence includes impact, but never power. A characterizing facet of influence is free decision. At some level, the individual must be fit for tolerating or dismissing the position that has been encouraged by the person in question.

Interestingly, a manipulative intrigue is one that, whenever embraced, will adversely affect another. Manipulation is ethically off base and counterproductive to all included. The deliberate utilization of misdirecting impact strategies turns into a mentally and monetarily self-harming process. In this manner, through a precise and powerful comprehension of both the rightness of influence and the three essential components of manipulation, you will be ready to convince others morally and shield yourself from manipulative solicitations.

The Most Effective Method to Develop Your Influencing Skills

We frequently need to convince and impact those over whom we have no genuine position. The question is how to do this in a viable and unpretentious manner.

Persuasion requires empathy

Give the other party the feeling that you have met them midway or further.

An inconspicuous, compassionate methodology is suggested as opposed to a more straightforward or powerful style.

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CHAPTER 17: EARN RESPECT



While life would be fantastic if it worked this way, you can't snap your fingers and just decide to be more charismatic and confident. You can from a mental and psychological standpoint, but acting more confidently takes time and practice, just like anything else in life.

What I would recommend for is to read through this part of the book and let the information settle, and then start practicing a bit at a time. Some aspects will resonate more with you than others. Some things you might do already, and some you may never have thought of, so take the bits you want and work with them. If you're feeling adventurous, then sure, try a bit you may not have thought about trying.

My point is, try things out and find what works for you. This way, you'll be discovering yourself and your style of charisma along the way. Let's go!

Method 1 – Becoming More Charismatic

To be charismatic means to have a charm and attractiveness about you, both physically and intellectually, that makes other people want to be around you and want to know more about you. You may draw people in with how you talk and the way you are, you may have people hanging off your every word, or you may inspire something in people that makes them want to be better.

I'm sure you know some charismatic people in your life; the kinds of people who make you feel like you want to be them, but not in an egotistical way—more in a natural way that just gives you a certain sense of peace around them. Fortunately, anyone can be this kind of person. It's

something you learn and practice, although it does come more naturally to some people. Here's how:

Awareness of Your Values

This means you need to understand your values and what your abilities are. What do you stand for, what do you believe in, and what potential do you have to do amazing things in your life?

Own Your Integrity

Integrity is the ability to stick to your values and do the things you say you're going to do. This is essential when it comes to trusting others around and believing in yourself.

Think for Yourself

The most charismatic people think for themselves, regardless of what the status quo thinks, which makes them such inspiring people to be around.

Have a Flame Inside You

There is nothing more satisfying than having a flame or a spark inside you that makes you go out and get what you want in the world.

Step Out of Your Comfort Zone

Charismatic people are comfortable with getting uncomfortable.

Be in Control of Your Emotions

Being emotional is not a great place to be. Now, I don't say this because emotions are bad. Emotions are useful because they're a clear indication of who we are as individuals and what we care about. However, if you allow your emotions to consume you and take over, this is where things can get problematic.

Method 2 – Everything You Need to Know about Confidence

The official definition of being confident is having the willingness to act accordingly when meeting life's challenges and having the drive to succeed. This goes hand in hand with stepping outside of your comfort zone, settling into uncomfortable situations, and even going on a journey to becoming more charismatic while believing in yourself.

If you don't have confidence, you're not going to have what it takes to be the best version of yourself. You need that passion and inner motivation to step forward into your true self and be yourself. Your relationship with yourself requires this, and it ripples out to every other relationship you'll have in your life.

Find Your Limiting Beliefs

There will be moments where you are naturally confident already, so a great place to start when trying to expand this confidence "zone" is to take some time to think about where you are not so confident.

Define Your Confidence Style

The best way to do this is to think about the times in your life when you felt the most confidence.

Minimize Comparison with Others

Comparing yourself to someone else is only going to make you feel bad about yourself and diminish your achievements. The only person you should be comparing yourself with is yourself.

Keep on Learning

When you take time to learn something new, whether it's a fact about the world or a new skill, you'll give yourself a little boost in confidence because you're proving to yourself that you're enough and you're fully capable.

Be True to Yourself

Suppose you're masking yourself and pretending to be someone you're not for the supposed benefit of others. In that case, you're not going to be confident in yourself because you're spending all your energy focusing on hiding this person.

When you can freely be yourself and truly embrace who you are, there's no reason to spend energy on hiding yourself.

Method 3 – Your Outside Reflects Your Inside

It's all well and good being a good, genuine person, but if you don't look after yourself, you're going to be pushing people away. More realistically, if you're not looking after yourself, you're probably not going to be confident in yourself, which will lead to you being even more socially anxious than you already are, which will ultimately make relationships harder to form and maintain.

It pays to look after yourself and to treat your body with respect, both for the attraction of others and for boosting the confidence you have in yourself. If you look and feel the part of the person you want to be, everything else will fall into place naturally.

Find Your Style

Everybody has their own style, so it’s important for your confidence and self-esteem to find yours.

Develop a Daily Routine

Proper hygiene is vital if you want to be confident in yourself, and if you want others to be attracted to you.

This means taking the time to look after yourself, thus helping you love yourself more and making yourself incredibly attractive to the people around you.

Exercise Regularly

Endless studies prove that exercise is important for maintaining a balanced state of mental health, reducing stress levels, and building up your confidence. You'll also improve your social relationships when you exercise with a partner or friend, join a team, and improve your abilities to successfully create powerful and beneficial habits.

Eat a Healthy Diet

Eating a healthy diet goes hand in hand with exercising properly and making sure you’re keeping yourself healthy in the best possible way, therefore allowing all the positive benefits to come into your life.

Method 4 – Trust is Everything

If you’ve ever been lied to or betrayed by someone, then you know how much it hurts to have trust in a relationship broken. Having trust is fundamental to any relationship. Even though you might see yourself as a trustworthy person, it’s vital that you think about how you can be more

trustworthy and prove this to the people around you consistently and naturally.

Think about how often you tell little white lies. The lies that don’t mean anything, but you tell them anyway. In sales, I used to say all the time that work on a project was done, and I’ll send it over Monday because my internet was acting up. The work wasn’t done. I was just at home feeling sorry for myself and was making up excuses to give myself more time. Now, you might think these lies are harmless, but when people can see through them, they create an impression of you, and they damage your relationships.

From the other person’s perspective, they see that you’re going through a rough time but don’t want to approach you. Obviously, you’re lying because you don’t want to talk about it. However, that person will feel negatively towards you because you lied to them, and while it may seem little, they’re not going to trust you on much bigger, more important topics.

A 2016 global study on some of the top CEOs in the world found that 55% of CEOs in the world’s biggest companies said that a “lack of trust” was among the biggest threats to a company's stability and success. Just like in my example above, if you don’t trust the people you’re working with, this creates a huge shift in the team's dynamic because nobody knows who is telling the truth. Problems are guaranteed to arise at some point.

The same applies to your relationships. If you break trust in a relationship, both romantic relationships or friendships, the person involved may never fully trust you again, and there’s no stability. It doesn’t matter what you say to that other person; they can just say, “I don’t believe you,” and there’s nothing you can do to make things better.

As a general rule of thumb, always be honest with people from the moment you meet them. Never give them a reason to think you’re untrustworthy. If people can trust you with their lives, your relationships will be stronger than you can imagine. So, how do you do it?

How to Be More Trustworthy in Your Relationships

People all have different life experiences, and if you meet someone who's been lied to by the people in their lives for as long as they can remember, they may not trust you, even if you're a trustworthy person. You need to have the integrity to prove that you are, and you can do this by following the points below.

Start Off Slow and Build Up Trust

Start slowly when you're getting to know someone and build up to the more intimate and vulnerable details of your thinking as you go. Remember, while you want the other person to trust you, you always want to be able to trust them, so find the right balance between giving and taking.

Putting in the Time

If you want someone's trust, you need to put in the time and have experiences with this person. The more positive time you put into the relationship, the more you'll be trusted.

Avoid Emotionally Harming Someone

When someone tells you something that they're trusting you with, you must pay them respect and avoid damaging them and hurting them, even if you do it unintentionally. This is one of the most assured way to break your trust with someone.

Remember, your words have the ability to create magic, and it's up to you what spells you cast.

Be Honest with Your Feelings

The best and most fulfilling relationships are formed between people who can be open and honest, even if it would be easier not to. This will create a

huge amount of respect for you among the people in your relationships, and the trust will only help strengthen these connections.

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CONCLUSION



The message of the book is awareness of the various languages of psychology warfare including what they are, and who is fighting with these languages. Basic psychology involves a person's inner systems that can be used for a better and more positive result. Psychological warfare on the other hand has been termed as mind and behavior manipulation.

The art of psychological warfare is present due to the inherent dark side of all people. The book mainly emphasizes the dark “I” and its impact on the psyche of the person.

The book is about the manipulation of minds and how people live through the minds and the transformations it brings.

The book's main focus lies on the common person who is unaware of the powers that they have inside them.

There are different main arts in psychological warfare.

Deception is one of them. We must understand the various facets of deception as the word itself has multiple shades. For instance, camouflage is a part of deception. In camouflage, we learn to hide our inner self and give out the appearance that we are different from what we actually are. Another form of deception is to appear friendly on the outside and promote some other hidden agenda on the inside. This is but one of the many forms of deception used in psychological warfare.

Influence is another word used in psychological warfare. The art of influence is used for various purposes, but it can also be used for inducing some positive change in the person's behavior. Another form of influence that is used for psychological warfare is influencing the person to believe they are in control of the situation while they actually are not.

Domination is another art used in psychological warfare. This art helps make the person feel disempowered. The art of domination is applied in psychological warfare through the use of high-ranking titles. The army generals are known by their ranks and so are the police officials. This, therefore, gives a sense of power to the people around them while they have lower ranks.

Blackmail is another art used in psychological warfare. It is one of the forms of fear used in psychological warfare.

Manipulation is another art used in psychological warfare. This is used to encourage a person to do stupid things that are in the interest of the manipulator.

Brainwashing is also another art used in psychological warfare. The art of mind control is used on those people who have witnessed trauma in their lives. The art utilizes that trauma for advantage. Due to the person's inner difficulties and fears, art like this is used to make them feel that they are controlled, and free from any responsibilities.

Psychological warfare is based on how to control the mental processes of individuals. This is done by the use of these arts. The goal is to direct the individual towards some purpose that is accomplished by using psychological warfare.

The techniques employed in psychological warfare can be applied at the workplace. This includes distract the employees by giving them some false promises. The employee ends up not focusing on the work because they have been distracted.

It can also be applied in relationships. The attachment created through psychological warfare is not a healthy form of attachment. In unhealthy relationships, the other person can be constantly trying to persuade the person to do some favors or sell their inner self.

Different principles of the art of psychological warfare can also be applied to entrepreneurs and businesspeople. The psychological warfare that aims at influencing the decisions of the people who invest in the business is an art that can be utilized to boost the economy by offering investors more value for their money.

The mission of the book is to raise awareness of the varieties of psychological warfare in order to protect people from these tactics.

The psychological warfare that we face every day is not at all as easy as it seems. These people try to manipulate our minds, and with that belief in mind, the author decided to write this book.

The dangers of psychological warfare are real, and the author wanted to raise the awareness of the readers to fight the art. It is about realizing your power, working with the art of positive psychology, and ensuring there is a balance between the inner and outer self.

We need to take note of the fact that we are on enemy grounds and we need to have defense strategies in place.

We need to raise awareness about the different psychic attacks that people are suffering. We need to create a balance between the outer and inner self and this is done by raising awareness of the art of psychological warfare.

Thank you for reaching the end and hopefully, I was able to impart a lot of knowledge to you.

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ATTACHMENT THEORY

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INTRODUCTION



Whether we are aware of it or not, the experiences of our childhood play an enormous role in determining the people we are today. The relationships we had as children with our parents, or other primary caregivers have a profound effect on the way we react to situations in our lives, and the way we interact with the people around us.

As young children, we respond instinctively to the kind of love and support offered to us by our parents or carers. While a strong bond to our primary caregiver is critical for our development in these early years, difficulties arising from this attachment can lead to problems with relationships and self-image in later life.

Extensive scientific research has proven that everyone has a certain “love style” or manner of behavior within relationships, based on their experiences as a young child. For example, children who grow up with strict, disciplinary parents often learn early to bury their emotions out of fear of being reprimanded. This trait often continues long into adulthood, with such people finding it hard to share their feelings and connect with others. Those who grow up with unpredictable or inconsistent parenting with often seek attention through raising their voice or expressing anger and frustration in other ways. Their self-image is, as a result, less than positive. Conversely, children who grow up feeling a secure and loving attachment to their primary caregiver usually become trusting adults with a positive self-image.

Of course, these behaviors are often unconscious and instinctive, making them difficult to recognize. These unidentified behaviors can cause us to have problems as adults when it comes to making friends, finding love and developing meaningful relationships.

Think back to the environment you grew up in. Was your relationship with your parents or caregivers a healthy and secure one, or did you recognize a little of yourself in any of the above situations? Perhaps you have never thought to examine the way your upbringing is affecting you today.

But if you have identified with any of these issues, all is not lost. The patterns and beliefs we develop as children, though often deeply ingrained in our psyche, can be unlearned and replaced with more helpful beliefs and approaches to life.

In this book, you will discover the specific ways in which our childhood attachment experiences shape and affect our adult experience, along with proven methods for reducing their effect and eliminating your own troublesome behavior in many areas of your life.

Are you unable to maintain a successful romantic relationship? Do you see the same patterns emerging in your relationships with partner after partner? Perhaps you have questioned what you are doing wrong, or why you always seem to attract the same kind of person, who will treat you in the same negative way. Or maybe you are aware that you yourself are the problem. Perhaps you have found yourself repeatedly sabotaging your relationships and turning people away. Do you see the same behavior in yourself again and again, but are unable to make changes? If this sounds like you, it may be time to examine this behavior and the way your romantic relationships are affected by your childhood experiences of attachment.

In order to do this, we will examine the four attachment styles of love, and the way attachment affects your ability to interact with your significant other. Understand your love style and conversely, the *way* you love, will assist you in recognizing – and putting an end to – any destructive behavior. By identifying your instinctive behavior, you will be able to anticipate your reaction to specific situations and alter your behavior accordingly. Understanding your love style will help you form the healthy and fulfilling romantic relationship you have been waiting for.

Of course, it is not necessary to have a life partner in order to be happy. Our attachment style has as profound an effect on our relationship with ourselves as it does on our relationship with others. Addressing the ways our self-worth and self-image is affected by our past relationships is crucial to finding lasting happiness. This book will address these issues, along with

the many ways of feeling good about yourself and your life when going it alone, whether you have chosen to be single, or are yet to find the one you have been searching for.

Perhaps you have found your behavioral patterns resurfacing when interacting with people other than your romantic partner. Our attachment styles come into play in many other relationships too, such as with close friends, colleagues, family and even strangers. We will examine how personal attachment can affect your relationships in many different facets and will look at ways to adapt your behavior accordingly. This can help you build lasting friendships, productive working relationships and a strong support network.

Finally, we will take an extensive look at attachment wounds and examine proven ways to heal them, resulting in stronger and healthier relationships in all facets of life.

By implementing the strategies presented in this book, you will be able to identify, address and remove harmful beliefs and behavioral patterns you have likely carried around since childhood. Though removing these deeply ingrained beliefs is no easy task, it is an extremely worthwhile investment of your time and energy. By healing attachment wounds and replacing learned negative behavior with more positive traits, you will see marked improvements in your relationship with both yourself and others.

So are you ready to release negative behavior caused by your attachment and love styles once and for all? Are you ready to embrace a healthier, happier life full of rewarding relationships?

Let’s get started.

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CHAPTER ONE: HOW OUR CHILDHOOD AFFECTS US IN LATER LIFE



Early childhood is a time of discovery. Everything around us is new, and each day is full of exploration and learning. It the time that we begin to make sense of the complex world around us.

As children, we absorb information at a particularly rapid rate. At a young age, it is far easier to learn a foreign language, or to play music by ear, for example, as we are so open to taking in new information. But as children, we also absorb beliefs and patterns of behavior that come about as a result of those around us.

Primarily, our beliefs and behaviors are shaped by our connection to our primary caregivers – in most cases, our parents. Our relationship with our mother and father can instill patterns of behavior deep within us that can affect us all through our lives. These behavioral patterns can be either positive or negative.

The concept of attachment theory was introduced by British psychologist John Bowlby in the 1950s and 60s. To formulate the theory, Bowlby sought information from a variety of fields such as biology, developmental psychology, cognitive science and evolution to understand the mechanisms behind a child's ties to its mother.

Secure Attachment

As children, we learn ways of responding to those around us, along with methods of coping and reacting to the situations we find ourselves in. When we are offered love, support, and attention, we will respond positively, forming a ***secure*** attachment style.

As young children, our instinct is to examine and explore the world around us, in order to make discoveries about ourselves, our bodies and the environment we live in. Research has proven that a secure bond to our primary caregiver is crucial for our development. When we have a secure, loving connection to this caregiver, we feel safe going out into the world to explore, knowing that Mom or Dad will always be there to keep us safe. Our primary caregiver becomes our safe haven; someone to whom we can always return to and find comfort.

Having a secure connection with our primary caregiver usually leads to children becoming trusting adults who have no difficulty connecting to others and forming meaningful relationships. If a child feels secure at the age of one or two, they will go on to make friends at kindergarten, then at school, all the way through to college and work. They are optimistic, with a positive self-image. Most children with a secure attachment style go on to have successful adult lives, including happy marriages, strong relationship with their children and a large income.

Insecure Attachment

But not everyone is lucky enough to have had a strong and loving relationship with their parents. What about those among us who struggled for attention from distant, overworked parents? Or, worse, those who grew up with a caregiver who was physically or emotionally abusive? Sadly, these situations are anything but rare. Let’s take a look at how these situations affect us, both as children, and in later life.

If our bond with our caregiver is weak, the thought of venturing out into the world can seem frightening. We do not have the trust that we will have a safe place to return to when our adventures are over, and nor do we trust that Mom or Dad will always be there to protect us. If we are insecurely attached to our primary caregiver as a child, it can lead to trust issues as an adult, along with a lack of social skills and problems forming meaningful relationships. Insecurely attached children often struggle to make friends at an early age, a pattern which can continue throughout their life.

There are three types of insecure attachment styles that can affect us throughout our life. Let’s take a look at the causes and characteristics of

each:

Anxious Ambivalent Attachment

Let’s say we grow up with a single mom who works long hours to make ends meet. While this mom may be loving, as children we focus on the fact that she is not always there for us. We view the relationship as inconsistent and insecure. As a result, we can become clingy, needing to take advantage of our mother’s attention when we feel lucky enough to have it. But Mom always has work to do, and even though she might have the best of intentions, she is not able to give us attention as much as we would like.

We come to believe the only way to get her attention is to raise our emotional state, by screaming and throwing tantrums. And when we finally receive that predictable, loving response from Mom we have been seeking, we act ambivalent and detached, disguising our true feelings.

Children who have an anxious ambivalent attachment style often grow up to be unpredictable, moody adults. They struggle with self-esteem issues and often have a less-than-positive image of themselves.

Anxious Avoidant Attachment

Now let’s imagine we grow up in a home in which our primary caregiver is a strict father. Dad loves us and wants the best for us, but he believes – perhaps due to his own upbringing – that heavy discipline is the best way to raise a strong and resilient child. When we get too loud, or express to much emotion, Dad gets angry and punishes us. As Dad is frightening when he is angry, we quickly learn not to show our emotions, in order to avoid antagonizing him.

We come to believe that showing our feelings equates to punishment and, consequently, fear. We quickly learn that it is best to keep our feelings hidden deep inside – both in front of Dad and in other situations, such as in the classroom, or among friends. We see this as a way of protecting ourselves from harm.

Children who have an anxious avoidant attachment style will often carry this same belief throughout their life. They find it difficult to express their

feelings and often have trouble forming meaningful relationships. This leads to a negative self-view and lack of self-worth.

Anxious Disorganised Attachment

This attachment style differs from the other two insecure attachment styles (and the single secure attachment style) by acting in a chaotic, disorganised manner when faced with distress.

Let's say we grow up with parents who are distant and self-absorbed. Sometimes they may even be physically abusive. When placed in such a situation as a child, we become anxious to be around the people we rely on for security and care. This inner conflict completely disorganizes our beliefs about love, safety and security. Being in such an environment causes us to feel fear, without any resolution (in the form of a show of love). In response, we seek to avoid all social situations and contact with others. We see this as a way of protecting ourselves from harm. We become withdrawn and are starved of love.

Children with an anxious avoidant attachment style often grow up believing themselves unworthy of love. This, in turn, affects their ability to form relationships, and express themselves effectively. Their self-worth, as a result, is usually extremely low.

Toxic Stress

Our attachment style is formed in the very first years of life, at a time in which we are too young to communicate our anxiety effectively. As a result of this struggle to convey our concerns, we can experience high levels of stress. This stress activates the fight or flight response, which causes our adrenal glands to produce the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol. Our heart rate and blood pressure increase and we become increasingly alert. When the fight or flight response is engaged frequently, it becomes what is known as ***toxic stress.***

As you are most likely aware, stress is one of the major issues in our busy, modem lives. It can lead to all manner of health issues, from heart disease to cancer and everything in between. But toxic stress can have an even more severe effect on children. Increased levels of adrenalin and cortisol

can impair a child's brain development and weakens their immune system. Prior to birth, or in the first months of life, toxic stress can go so far as to switch the expressions of our genes, which can cause health problems to appear years, and even decades, later.

The Long-Term Effects of Our Attachment Styles

As you can see from the above examples, our attachment styles have a great effect on us all the way through our lives. But these effects are far from theoretical. In the 1970s, researchers at Minnesota University began a study through which they were able to predict from the age of three whether or not a child would drop out of high school, as based on their attachment style. Their results were proven to have 77% accuracy.

Another study, conducted at Harvard University in the 1950s, asked its undergraduate subjects how close they felt to their parents. Thirty-five years later, these same subjects were surveyed about their health. Ninety-one percent of those who claimed they had a negative or broken relationship with their primary caregiver were suffering from health issues such as heart disease, high blood pressure and alcoholism. Conversely, among subjects with a warm and loving relationship with their parents, only 45% reported suffering from health issues.

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Although we have the ability, to some degree, to choose who we are and what we want to become, there is no doubt that the experiences of our childhood shape us to an extent. Understanding exactly what our attachment styles are and how they affect us in our experience and perception of the world can go a long way to helping us manage any negative behaviors springing from our attachment style.

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CHAPTER TWO: UNDERSTANDING LOVE STYLES – ATTACHMENT STYLES IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS



As we have learned, there are four distinct style of attachment when it comes to a child's relationship with his or her primary caregiver. Our childhood attachment style can have far-reaching implications on the way we react to situations in later life.

One of the greatest facets of life affected by our childhood attachment styles is our ability to love and build romantic relationships.

Perhaps this is what drew you to this book. Maybe you always seem to attract partners with similar characteristic. Or perhaps you continually date people who don't turn out to be as compatible with you as you first thought.

But have you ever stopped to think about why you are attracted to the people you are?

Falling in love and building relationships involves constant choice, commitment and work. While love can be extremely rewarding, and even exhilarating, it is often far from easy. Connecting with a romantic partner requires us to develop an understanding of the behavior of both our loved one and ourselves.

Researchers have determined that everyone has a certain ***love style***, based on their upbringing. A love style is constituted of our behaviors and inclinations with regards to how we respond to our romantic partners. By making sense of the way we love, we can learn how our love styles affect our relationships. Understanding our inclinations and tendencies in relationships can help us to make sense of our own – and our partner's – behaviour, and build stronger, long-lasting relationships.

The four attachment styles of love are closely linked to the childhood attachment styles discussed in the previous chapter. Let's take a closer look:

Secure Love Style

Those of us lucky enough to have a secure love attachment style have a significant advantage when it comes to finding partners and maintaining meaningful, loving relationships. People with a secure love style generally feel able to go to their partner with any issues or problems, allowing for meaningful, productive discussions. A secure love style also means you have great trust in your partner, allowing them the freedom to explore their own interests and pursue their own goals.

This leads to open, loving and honest relationships in which both partners are equal. It provides an environment in which both parties can thrive, grow and be happy.

Having a secure love style means we are comfortable having separate interests from our lover, but also understanding how to mesh and work together to build a loving and secure partnership with which to go through life.

Maybe you're thinking this all sounds too good to be true. But it's important not to confuse a secure love style with perfection. Because, as we know, perfection is something unattainable, especially when it comes to love and relationships.

Having a secure attachment style does not mean we are immune from conflict, arguments and bad days. Far from it. The nature of building a romantic relationship means there will always be disagreements. But where those with a secure attachment style differ is in their ability to work with their partner to problem solve, in order to reach an agreeable resolution to any conflict that may arise. Those with a secure attachment style also have a higher emotional intelligence, which leads them to seek solutions, rather than acting rashly, striking out or attacking their loved one.

Great resilience and self-awareness are typical characteristics of people with a secure love style – traits that assist them in moving past obstacles and conflicts in a mature and loving way. Secures have the capacity to

reflect on their own emotional states, along with the emotional states of their partner. This allows them to communicate more effectively. As a result, secures perform well in partnerships and are able to respond appropriately to the emotional messages they are sent by their loved one.

Outside of romantic relationships, people with a secure attachment style make excellent colleagues, due to their ability to work well in teams. On average, they have higher incomes than those with insecure attachment styles.

Though we will look more closely at ways of assessing attachment style in the following chapter, if you can answer yes to most or all of these questions, you may exhibit a secure attachment style:

> Do you feel a strong emotional connection to the loved ones in your life?
> Are you comfortable with emotional and physical closeness?
> Are you equally comfortable with independence?
> Do you feel as though you communicate effectively?
> Do you have the ability to resolve conflicts when they arise?
> Do you feel as though the relationships in your life are fairly stable?
> Do you trust your partner?
> Do you feel comfortable opening up and being vulnerable around your partner?

Anxious Preoccupied Love Style

For people with an anxious preoccupied love style, love is often a thing relegated to the world of fantasy. They romanticize love, and are prone to falling for a fantasy, or unobtainable ideal, as this is far easier to manage than the often-challenging reality of maintaining a relationship.

This romantic view of love often leads anxious preoccupied lovers to be attracted to partners who they perceive as “needing saving,” or, conversely, partners they believe can save them. Anxious preoccupied lovers often find themselves seeking an unobtainable fairy-tale ending.

People with this attachment style often suffer from insecurities and self-doubt and struggle to find a strong sense of their own identity.

Whilst in a relationship, people with this attachment style can be clingy, demanding and obsessive. They often overthink and overanalyze situations and can be moody and unpredictable. As a result, their relationships can be tempestuous and troubled, with anxious preoccupied lovers mistaking this constant conflict for passion.

Outside of romantic relationships, people with an anxious preoccupied attachment style are often dissatisfied with their jobs and have a lower income than those in a secure relationship.

If you answer yes to some or all of the following questions, you may exhibit and anxious preoccupied love style:

> When you argue with your loved one, does it make you feel extremely anxious and overwhelmed?
> When your partner requests a little alone time, do you hound them for attention until they give in?
> Do you feel the need for constant reassurance within your relationship?
> If your partner is away, does it make you question their love for you?

The anxious preoccupied love style is closely tied to the anxious ambivalent attachment style. Generally, those who exhibit one will also exhibit the other.

Dismissive Avoidant Love Style

A dismissive avoidant love style is characterized by being distant and detached in relationships. People with this attachment style often have strong personalities and come across as independent and self-sufficient.

But this strength is often just a cover for their inability to share feelings and express their emotions. People with this love style often withdraw at the first sign of conflict, cutting themselves off from any chance at true emotional intimacy.

It’s important, of course, in any relationship, for both people to have personal space and time away from their partner. But those of us with a dismissive avoidant love style will seek solitude far more often than most people. They will often push their partner away and deflect their advances, seeking the safety of their own personal space. In the eyes of someone with a dismissive avoidant love style, spending time with a romantic partner puts them at risk of being vulnerable and getting hurt.

When crisis hits a relationship, in the form of conflict, or even a breakup, people with this love style have the ability to close themselves off and convince themselves – at least for a while – that they don’t care about what’s happening. Their strong, independent personality kicks in, and they convince themselves they are happy on their own.

But this steely independence can only last so long. As humans, we need contact with others in order to survive. None of us can prosper on our own. The reality is that the steely façade portrayed by people with a dismissive avoidant love style is just a front for a deep-seated lack of self-worth.

Those with a dismissive avoidant love style will avoid shows of affection such as hugs, and will often avoid making eye contact.

A dismissive avoidant love style can manifest itself outside of romantic relationships too. People with this love style have difficulty maintaining close relationships of all kinds, whether with friends, family or lovers.

The most extreme avoidants are almost entirely incapable of talking about their feelings. The feelings they do have are primarily negative and they have great difficulty putting them into words. This is known as *alexithymia* – a syndrome referring to the inability to find words for feelings. It is important to note that this is not the same as *not having* feelings. Extreme avoidants suffering from alexithymia are often only able to express themselves through rage and tantrums. Their emotions can also manifest as physical symptoms such as unexplained stomach pains or rushes of adrenalin.

Outside of romantic relationships, people with an avoidant attachment style are prone to being workaholics. Letting work take over their life is often a ploy to avoid social situations. Avoidants generally prefer to work alone. Because of their work ethic, their incomes are often as high as those with a

secure attachment style, but they are often just as dissatisfied with their jobs as anxious preoccupieds. However, their work ethic and ability to act alone makes people with avoidant personalities excel in roles that require individual effort. Their lack of empathy and concern for others' feelings can also be beneficial in fields such as litigation.

If you can answer yes to some or all of the following questions, you may exhibit a dismissive avoidant attachment style:

> Do you feel closest to your loved ones when you are apart?
> Do you find yourself pulling away when your partner is seeking emotional or physical intimacy?
> Do you seek to remove yourself from stressful situations of conflict?
> Do you feel emotionally disconnected from others?

The dismissive avoidant love style is most often exhibited by people with an anxious avoidant attachment style.

Fearful Avoidant Love Style

For people with a fearful avoidant love style, maintaining a relationship is something of a juggling act. They simultaneously fear being both too close and too distant from their partner. For those with fearful avoidant attachment issues, love can be akin to a terrifying roller-coaster ride.

Such people understand that, in order to build a strong relationship, they must allow themselves to get close to another person. But doing this makes them fearful, as they are scared of being abandoned. They struggle to build trust and rely on their partner, and often have little confidence in the strength of their relationship.

Unsurprisingly, this leads them to behave unpredictably, and they can become overwhelmed by the intensity and inconsistency of their own emotions. People with this attachment style struggle with endless inner conflict: on one hand, they crave intimacy, and on the other, they resist it, out of fear of getting hurt.

For fearful avoidant lovers, relationships are often full of highs and lows. They often find themselves clinging to their partner when they start to feel rejected, which, in some cases, can lead to emotionally and physically abusive relationships.

Just like with the dismissive avoidant love style, these traits can lead a person to have few close friends and meaningful relationships in all facets of their life.

If you can answer yes to any of the following questions, you may exhibit a fearful avoidant attachment style:

- Do you desperate seek emotional intimacy, but simultaneously feel as though it's safer to be on your own?
- Do you feel like emotional or physical intimacy will led to you getting hurt?
- As a child, was your primary caregiver physically or emotionally abusive?
- Did your primary caregiver show love one minute and hurt you the next?

The fearful avoidant love style is most often exhibited by those with an anxious disorganized attachment style.

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Can you see yourself in any of the above examples?

If it is all still a little hazy, don't panic. In the next chapter, we will look more closely at exactly how to determine your own attachment style, particularly with regards to romantic love.

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CHAPTER THREE: WHAT IS YOUR ATTACHMENT STYLE?



We have begun to explore the attachment and love styles, as theorized by a number of prominent psychologists. Perhaps you have already begun to identify some of these characteristics within yourself, your partner, or your children.

No doubt you are also beginning to realize just how beneficial knowing your attachment style can be. For parents, identifying their child's attachment style can assist them in recognizing the challenges their children face on a daily basis, and how their own behaviour may be contributing to their child's issues.

And for those of us seeking to understand how attachment style affects our romantic life, understanding our own and our partner's tendencies and inclinations can go a long way towards anticipating and resolving conflict.

As attachment style is such a key thing to determine, psychologists have developed a number of tests to determine attachment and love styles in both adults and children. Let's take a look at the methods used to ascertain these crucial pieces of information:

Determining Attachment Style in Young Children

Experts believe that our attachment style is formed as early as the age of one. Tests have been developed in order to determine attachment style in babies and young children, in hope that this can help eliminate insecure attachment as soon as possible.

The test involves allowing the child to play with its mother, or primary caregiver, inside a room for several minutes. Then the child is left alone.

After several minutes, the mother returns to the room. They key moment is the child's reaction to the return of the mother.

If a child is securely attached, they will usually hug their mother, before quickly calming down and returning to the game they were playing. Children with an insecure attachment style can react in a number of negative ways; from acting ambivalent and avoidant to crying and refusing to continue playing, despite their mother's attempts to soothe them.

Determining Attachment Styles in Adults

But what about determining our own love and attachment styles?

Widely accepted as one of the most meaningful advances in 20th century psychology, a short questionnaire used to determine attachment style was devised by University of Denver psychologists, Phillip Shaver and Cindy Hazan.

The questionnaire first appeared in 1985 in The Rocky Mountain News, a local Colorado newspaper.

The questionnaire provided readers with three simply statements about behaviors in love, and asked them to pick which they felt most closely resembled them. This presented readers with three possible love style options – secure, avoidant or anxious.

So let's go ahead and take Shaver and Hazan's questionnaire:

Which of the following to do you feel most closely resembles you in love?

A. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely, and find it difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, others want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.

B. I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.

C. I find that others are reluctant to get as close to me as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me or won't want to stay

with me. I want to get very close to my partner, and this sometimes scares people away.

(Note that, in this case, “close” refers to emotional attachment, and may or may not include sexual intimacy.)

As you may have already determined, those selecting choice A are experiencing an ***avoidant*** love attachment style. (Either dismissive avoidant or fearful avoidant) Choice B represents ***secure*** attachment, while choice C indicates an ***anxious preoccupied*** love attachment style.

Over the years, psychologists have built on Hazan and Shaver’s initial questionnaire developing further tests to determine attachment styles within adults.

The following quiz is a variation of a study devised by the Fetzer Institute in Michigan, US.

1.	I'm afraid that my partner will stop loving me.	1234567
2.	I often worry that my partner will leave me.	1234567
3.	I often worry that my partner’s love for me is not real.	1234567
4.	I worry that I will care about my romantic partners more than they care for me.	1234567
5.	I often find myself wishing that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him or her.	1234567
6.	I am constantly worrying about the security of my relationships.	1234567
7.	When my partner and I are apart, I worry that he or she might become interested in someone else.	1234567

8.	When I show my feelings for romantic partners, I get nervous that they will reject me, or will not feel the same about me.	1234567
9.	I often worry about my partner leaving me.	1234567
10.	My romantic partner sometimes makes me doubt myself.	1234567
11.	I can’t help worrying about being abandoned.	1234567
12.	I feel like my romantic partners never get as close to me as I would like them to.	1234567
13.	Sometimes my romantic partners seem to change their feelings about me for no apparent reason.	1234567
14.	My need for physical and emotional intimacy often scares people away.	1234567
15.	I'm afraid that once my partner gets to who I really am, he or she won’t like me.	1234567
16.	I get made when I do not get the support and affection I need from my partner.	1234567
17.	I constantly worry that I am not good enough for other people.	1234567
18.	My partner only seems to notice I’m around when I get angry.	1234567
19.	I feel uncomfortable showing my partner how I really feel.	1234567
20.	I don’t like sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner.	1234567
21.	I don’t allow myself to depend on my romantic partners.	1234567

22. I do not feel very comfortable being close to my romantic partners. 1234567

23. I don't feel comfortable opening up and sharing with my partners. 1234567

24. I prefer not to get too close – emotionally or physically – with my romantic partners. 1234567

25. When my romantic partner wants to get too close, it makes me uncomfortable. 1234567

26. I sometimes have difficulty building emotional closeness with my partner. 1234567

27. I sometimes have difficulty building physical closeness with my partner. 1234567

28. When I have concerns and problems, I find it challenging go to my partner for help and advice. 1234567

29. Turning to my partner in times of need is something I find difficult to do 1234567

30. I share very little about myself with my partner. 1234567

31. I talking things over with my partner makes me uncomfortable or nervous 1234567

32. I get nervous when my partners get too close. 1234567

33. Depending on my romantic partners makes me uncomfortable. 1234567

34. I do not find it easy to depend on my romantic partners. 1234567

35.	I do not find it easy to be affectionate with my romantic partner.	1234567
36.	I do not feel as though my partner really understands me or my emotional needs.	1234567

(Adapted from http://www.psych.uiuc.edu/~rcfraley/measures/ecrritems.htm)**:**

How to analyze your results:

The first eighteen questions reflect your responses to attachment-related anxiety. To determine whether or not you display any anxious preoccupied attachment tendencies, take your average of questions 1 to 18. The higher your score, the more attachment anxiety you exhibit.

Question 19-36 can be used to determine your attachment-avoidance related issues. To determine whether or not you display avoidant attachment tendencies, take the average of questions 19-36. The higher your score, the more avoidant attachment issues you have.

If you scored low on both the attachment- anxiety and attachment-avoidance questions, you likely exhibit a secure attachment style.

Multiple Attachment Styles

But what if you find yourself identifying with more than one attachment style? If this is the case, you are certainly not alone. As human beings, we are complex creatures, and our behaviour and tendencies can rarely be neatly categorized.

Even those among us who have a primarily secure attachment style may exhibit occasional avoidant or anxious tendencies. While it is possible to have more than one attachment style, and to fluctuate between them, it can be helpful to take a close look at your behaviour and tendencies to determine which style is the most dominant.

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CHAPTER FOUR: HOW ATTACHMENT SHAPES OUR LOVE PERSONALITIES



As psychologist John Bowlby famously said, “What cannot be communicated to the mother cannot be communicated to the self.”

This famous quote highlights the fact that those of us with attachment issues often have trouble understanding ourselves. We struggle to make sense of what it is we are feeling, and as a result, find it difficult to express our feelings to our partners and other loved ones.

Hopefully by now you are beginning to recognize the attachment style, or styles, that you exhibit. Perhaps you are beginning to make correlations between any attachment anxiety you have and the way you behave, both in relationships and in everyday life.

Let’s take a look now at how our attachment styles can manifest into what we term ***love personalities.*** Through extensive research, marriage and family therapist Kay Yerkovich and her husband Milan Yerkovich have devised five love personalities that can help make sense of how we love. See if you can recognise yourself in any of these five love styles:

The Pleaser

Those of us who grow up to become pleasers were often raised with overly critical parents. As children, pleasers’ primary goal was to keep their often-irritable parents happy and went out of their way to be good and do the right thing. All their actions were driven by a need to avoid provoking a negative response from their primary caregiver. These children rarely received comfort from their parent, and instead, devoted their time and energy to providing comfort to those they relied on for love and support.

As both adults and children, pleasers do their best to avoid conflict at all costs, even if that means refusing to stand their ground in an argument, or accepting responsibility for something they did not do. Pleasers are also prone to lying, in order to avoid confrontation or conflict.

The pleaser often finds it very difficult to say no, often leading them to do things they do not want to do.

As they grow, pleasers become adept at reading the moods of others. They see this as an integral part of avoiding conflict and keeping everyone happy.

In romantic relationships, this constant need to please can often lead to a breakdown. If a pleaser believes they are letting their partner down in any respect, they will often flee from relationships, unable to face conflict.

In trying to keep everyone happy, pleasers often spread themselves too thin, neglecting their own wellness and requirements. Pleasers put the needs of others before their own and often suffer from the belief that they are simply not good enough.

While caring about the needs of others is an honorable trait, pleasers need to remember to make time for themselves. In order to build strong relationships, they must learn to be honest about their feelings, even if that opens them up to conflict and disagreements. They must realize that always doing what is expected of them can lead to exhaustion and burnout.

The Pleaser generally identifies with an ***anxious ambivalent*** attachment style.

The Victim

Victims often grow up in a home full of chaos and insecurity. Their parents may be abusive or violent. As a coping mechanism, victims often attempt to disappear into the background, doing everything they can to avoid bringing attention to themselves. Hiding and staying silent become ways of slipping under the radar, in order to avoid provoking their angry or violent parents.

For victim children, reality can be unbearable. To cope, they often create a fantasy world in their heads, in which they can disappear into, allowing them respite from the horrors and struggles of the real world around them.

Victim children often grow up suffering from low self-esteem and depression. Often they will end up marrying someone who exhibits the same abusive behavior as their parents.

Because victims spend so much of their life surrounded by chaos, they come to see this as the norm. When they find themselves in situations without conflict, this can often be a source of stress. So used to existing in a state of chaos, the victim will often spend their time anticipating the next blow-up, with their mind constantly leaping to the worst-case scenario.

But it is possible for victims to cultivate secure and loving relationships. In order to do this, they must work on developing their sense of self-love and learn to stand up for themselves in difficult situations.

Victims generally identify with an ***avoidant*** attachment type.

The Controller

Children who become controllers usually come from homes in which there was little security or protection. They learn from a young age that, in order to survive, they must toughen up and take care of themselves.

As adults, controllers fear the vulnerability they felt during childhood resurfacing. In order to prevent this, they feel the need to be in control in every situation.

This need for naturally spills over into controllers' romantic relationships. They attempt to exercise control over their partner in order to avoid feeling vulnerable, humiliated or helpless. Controllers see their anger as a weapon, which can be wielded over their partner in order to remain in control. Stepping out of their comfort zone is a big challenge for controllers, as it causes them to feel weak and unsafe, often recalling negative experiences from their unprotected childhood.

Controllers often have a rigid personality, believing that there is only one way to do things, and that their way is right. Relationship-building can be a big challenge for controllers, as they often prefer to do things on their own. Diverting from "their way" of doing something can lead controllers to become angry and malicious.

For controllers to develop long-lasting, meaningful relationships, they need to learn how to develop trust in others and let go a little. As anger is often a big problem, they must learn to successfully manage this emotion, instead of using it to intimidate their partner.

Many controllers identify with a ***dismissive avoidant*** love attachment style.

The Vacillator

Vacillators often grow up in households with unpredictable parents, such as those who work long hours, or are rarely at home. They come to learn that their own needs are not the top priority for their often-busy parents. Craving attention, vacillators spend their energy seeking attention from their unpredictable caregivers. But when vacillators finally receive their parents' attention, they are often too angry or exhausted to properly receive it.

As adults, vacillators seek the reliable and consistent love they did not receive as children. One of their tendencies is to idealize new partners and relationships. While this can make for a blissful "honeymoon period," when the inevitable conflict arises (as it does in all relationships), they quickly grow disheartened, feel let down and allow doubts and insecurity to creep in.

Vacillators are often extremely sensitive, particularly when it comes to operating within a romantic relationship. They exhibit keen skills of perception, which allows them to easily observe changes in others – namely, their romantic partner.

For vacillators to succeed in building a secure and healthy relationship, it is essential that they learn to pace themselves. People with this love style are prone to throwing themselves into relationships too quickly, in their search for consistent love, opening themselves up to disappointment and hurt.

Many vacillators identify with an ***anxious ambivalent*** attachment style.

The Avoider

Those of us with an “avoider” love style often grew up with less affectionate and “hands-on” parents. They likely come from a household in which independence and self-reliance are cultivated and prized. Getting little comfort from their parents, or other caregivers, avoiders learn quickly to push their emotions and anxieties to the background, allowing them to focus on their day-to-day needs for survival. They learn from a young age how to take care of themselves.

This practice of disregarding their feelings leads avoiders to rely on logic, rather than emotion. While this can be a positive trait in some situations, it can also lead to them behaving detached and aloof. Being around people showing extreme emotions can make avoiders very uncomfortable.

To build healthy relationships, avoiders must learn to stop bottling up their feelings. By expressing their emotions and being honest with their partner, they will slowly develop trust.

As the name suggests, avoiders generally identify with ***dismissive avoidant*** or ***fearful avoidant*** love styles.

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Each love style has its own set of unique challenges. Understanding your own attachment style and love personality will help you to identify and manage any negative behavioural patterns that surface within your romantic relationships. This is a powerful, and often life-changing exercise that can truly transform your relationships with those around you.

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CHAPTER FIVE: DATING AND ATTACHMENT



Do you find yourself on an endless cycle of awkward first dates and relationships that fizzle out before they've even begun? Can you see the same patterns of behavior emerging in all your relationships – both your own behavior and that of your partner? Do you find yourself always dating the same kind of men or women? Or do you constantly find yourself sabotaging relationships the moment they show any kind of promise?

If your answer to any of these questions is yes, you've likely come to realize that your attachment style is to blame. Depending on our own tendencies, we are drawn to people who exhibit particular characteristics, which explains why we can constantly end up dating people with the same damaging traits and behaviors.

So what are we to do? Sit at home in front of the TV every night? Resign ourselves to a life of being alone? Not at all. Even for those of us with an insecure attachment style, dating doesn't need to be a struggle. It all comes down to understanding ourselves and, wherever possible, our partners.

By now, you're familiar with the traits of each attachment style and the love styles they give rise to. So when you're next with your partner, or on a date, use this information to determine the attachment style and corresponding traits, of your partner.

In this chapter, we will take a look at what you can expect when dating people with each love attachment style. We will then look at all the possible attachment style combinations and some of the challenges that each coupling may face – along with methods for managing conflict and working towards building a healthy, long-lasting relationship.

Dating Someone With a Secure Attachment Style

It goes without saying that dating someone with a secure attachment style can be far less stressful than someone who exhibits anxious or avoidant tendencies. A person with secure attachment will not be afraid to be upfront and honest about what they want. They will likely “put their cards on the table” in terms of what they want out of a relationship and where they see their life heading. A person who is secure will likely have no problem expressing interest if they wish to continue dating, and will not hesitate to be honest and tell you if they don’t wish to continue seeing you.

Once the relationship is established, a secure lover will seek to integrate you into their life, through introducing you to their friends and family wherever possible. A secure lover will never try to keep you from knowing who they truly are, and will welcome your own efforts to share. When they speak about their experiences and memories, secure partners will also share how they felt at the time, fostering a deeper sense of understanding and stronger emotional intelligence.

A partner with a secure attachment style will likely be empathetic and honest, unafraid to share his or her true feelings, due to their strong sense of self-worth. Unlike the other attachment styles, secure partners do not have fears related to love, and they can often assist their avoidant or anxious partners in opening up, or feeling more secure within a relationship.

When conflict inevitably arises, a partner with a secure attachment style will not shy away from it, but will make an effort to understand your point of view, and work towards a compromise that will suit both of you. Secures partners have no difficulty showing anger, but they will seek to communicate their distress in a rational way. They will not suppress their unhappiness, nor will they hold grudges.

Secure partners differ from the other attachment styles in their ability to more accurately read the feelings of their partner. Their peaceful attachment style allows them to tune into others, making them not only better romantic partners, but also great parents, friends and colleagues. They will freely express both positive and negative feelings within a relationship, thanks to their heightened emotional intelligence.

It’s estimated that a little under half the population exhibits a secure attachment style. However, thanks to their ability to form healthy, long-lasting relationships, you’ll find less and less “secures” in the dating pool.

To recap, let’s take a quick look at the characteristics you can expect when dating someone with a secure attachment style:
A great ability to resolve conflict
They are not threatened by criticism
They are open and honest
They have great communication skills
They will not play games
They are comfortable with physical and emotional closeness
They are quick to forgive
They see sex and emotional closeness as being intrinsically connected
They treat their partners with love and respect
They take responsibility for their partner’s well-being

Dating Someone With an Anxious Preoccupied Love Attachment Style

Behind the secure attachment, anxious preoccupied is the next largest love style, meaning there is a good chance you will come across someone with these tendencies in the dating pool. It is estimated that up to 20% of the population belong to this attachment group.

As we have learned, an anxious preoccupied attachment style is formed when a child’s early needs for attachment and security are not met, usually through an absent or overworked parent. The challenges they faced as children – intense efforts to gain their parents’ attention, along with the accompanying anger, disappointment and frustration – often remain unresolved and unprocessed.

In a relationship, people with an anxious preoccupied love attachment style can be clingy, or needy, in an often unconscious attempt to make up for the attention they were denied at a young age.

Anxious preoccupied lovers can often be unreliable; a trait that manifests not only in romantic relationships, but also at school, work and among friends. Their internal conflict leads them to be self-centred, unable to notice the emotional messages they are being sent by those around them.

What anxious preoccupied people crave – and what they have been searching for all their life – is stable, patient and reliable love. They require constant reassurance of their partner's love, making them less likely to venture out into the world on their own, afraid that, when they return, this love will no longer be waiting. This need for constant attachment makes the anxious preoccupied type less likely to pursue their own individual goals, or go off on their own adventures.

When single, someone with an anxious preoccupied attachment style will desperately want a partner, throwing themselves into the dating pool again and again, in an often-frantic search for love.

If you find yourself dating someone with an anxious preoccupied attachment style, you will see them "put their best foot forward," doing their best to win your approval early, often to the point of trying too hard. They feel a need to constantly prove themselves, believing that they need to do this in order to maintain your interest.

As the relationship progresses, they will seek constant interaction and constant physical and emotional contact, which can be a challenge for their partner. Provided you are giving them the attention they crave, they will allow you to behave badly, even to the point of being cruel and manipulative. After all, in the eyes of the anxious preoccupied, negative attention is still attention, and that is what matters.

Anxious preoccupied partners have strong feelings, many of which are centred around their need for attention. They will often blame their partner for not providing them with the love and support they feel they need. Compounding this issue is the anxious preoccupied's inability to properly open up and honestly express their feelings. While it's true that people with this attachment style can be very emotionally expressive, they are often unable to get to the root of the problem and honestly convey what is causing their distress. This comes from a place of bot not understanding themselves, and also from a place of not feeling safe in the relationship.

They fear that, by sharing who they truly are, they will scare their partner away.

People with an anxious preoccupied love style are at risk of settling into a dysfunctional and damaging relationship with a similarly damaged partner, which mirrors the parenting they experienced throughout their childhood. This often leads to co-dependency, a state which prevents both parties from maturing emotionally and moving past their issues. An anxious preoccupied partner will hate being alone, even for short periods of time.

When in a relationship, anxious preoccupied lovers may find themselves constantly thinking about their partner, having difficulty concentrating on anything else. Unsurprisingly, this leads to overthinking issues, and perceiving problems that do not exist They are also prone to putting their partner on a pedestal, and focusing only on their good traits. As they revere their partner, they tend to forget about their own skills and unique talents. They are often unwilling to leave relationships that are clearly failing, believing that this could be the only chance they ever have to find love. Coupled with this, they often have the belief that they can change their partner, in order to make them more compatible.

In the same way that children throw tantrums in order to gain attention, you'll find anxious preoccupied partners engaging in their own negative or "protest" behaviour in an attempt to secure your attention. This may include:

Constant calling, texting and/or emailing

Loitering at your workplace in hope of running into you

Hostile behavior such as rolling their eyes or walking away when you try to speak to them

Making empty threats about leaving

Pretending to be unapproachable, such as leaving messages unanswered or pretending to be busy

Attempting to make you feel jealous

So what does all this mean if you find yourself dating someone who exhibits these traits and tendencies? Is the relationship doomed to fail from

the beginning? Not at all. The key to cultivating a successful relationship with an anxious preoccupied is building their feelings of security and independence. While much of this work must naturally come from your partner (we will discuss this further in following chapters) there are plenty of things you can do to assist in this process.

Remember that an anxious preoccupied person's issues stem from the lack of safety or consistency they received as a child. In order to cultivate security within the relationship, do your best to be consistent. Answer messages in a timely manner and be sure to be reliable, and keep your promises. When you behave "hot and cold," it can trigger your partner's old, deep-seated insecurities. They may respond through anger, seeking to punish you through the silent treatment, or even by breaking up with you.

When conflict arises in your relationship, as it inevitably will, be sure to let your partner know that having a fight does mean you are leaving them. People with an anxious preoccupied attachment style are prone to jumping to the worst-case scenario and, as they so deeply fear abandonment and rejection, their instinctive reaction to conflict is the adopting the belief that the relationship is about to end. In order to avoid the pain of rejection, they may even seek to end the relationship first. Be sure to let them know that, even though you are fighting, it does not change how much you love and care for them.

People with an anxious preoccupied attachment style have difficulty feeling assured in a relationship. So be sure to tell them how you feel on a regular basis. Be as honest and open about your feelings as possible. It could be as simple as a text to let them know you are thinking of them. Don't assume they know you love them. Anxious preoccupieds will rarely make this assumption on their own. Be proactive in telling them how you feel.

Above all, don't invalidate their feelings. Remember that their behaviours are often unconscious, and come from a place of trauma way back in their early years. Acknowledge that there is nothing foolish about the way they are feeling and, even though you may be able to see the situation logically, understand that this may be impossible for them. Do your best not to judge, instead offering a place in which they can feel safe and secure.

Dating Someone With a Dismissive Avoidant Love Attachment Style

Thanks to unreliable caregivers in childhood, people with a dismissive avoidant love style have a fear of intimacy, and a belief that they do not need attachments. However, as these beliefs and fears are subconscious, you will likely still come across several dismissive avoidants in the dating pool.

The lack of love and security dismissive avoidants receive as children often leads to an inflated sense of self-importance. They have grown up with no one to rely on but themselves, which leads them to believe that they don't need anyone else in order to survive and succeed.

People with dismissive avoidant love styles pride themselves on their independence and self-sufficiency. They believe that needing others is a weakness and a trait that will hold them back. They can be distant, hostile and condescending.

Dismissive avoidant have a tendency to end relationships without giving them a "real go." Often, they will hold an ideal in their mind of a previous relationship; an ideal to which they believe no one can ever measure up to. And when your relationship does end, the dismissive avoidant will act aloof, thanks to their belief that they are fine on their own.

In order to cultivate their protective shield of independence, dismissive avoidants often hate being asked to look inwards and examine their behaviour, both past and present. They will often struggle to remember their childhood, having repressed the negative memories that led to the formation of their dismissive behaviour. When they do recall attachment issues from their past, they often do so in a flippant or dismissive way, believing attachment is unimportant. They carry the belief that any negative experience – such as physical or emotional abuse from their parents – simply helped them become the strong, resilient person they are today.

The more you ask for attention and closeness, the more dismissive your partner will likely become. But of course, as humans, even dismissive avoidants have a biological need for connection. And when they are starved of this, they will engage in unhealthy behaviour in order to compensate. For example, single dismissive avoidants may become workaholics, or obsessed with hobbies or sports. In relationships, being separated from their partner

for an extended period of time may elicit similar behaviour, only to have them act distant and hostile on their partner's return.

Dismissive avoidants will often seek to fulfil their biological needs for emotional and physical connection from less demanding partners – often anxious preoccupied lovers who require constant attention, regardless of whether it is based on real intimacy and connection.

If you find yourself dating someone with a dismissive avoidant attachment style, you will likely find them charming at first. They know well what is expected of them when dating and can play the role perfectly at first. But dismissive avoidants' view subconsciously sees being attached to others as a negative thing. They compare all new relationships to that one unobtainable ideal and are prone to quickly discarding new relationships when they come time consuming or inconvenient.

If the relationship does continue, dismissive avoidants will find faults in you and, contrary to the behaviour of the anxious preoccupied, will focus only on your negative traits and shortcomings. But dismissive avoidants will go to great lengths to avoid talking about their feelings. The first inkling you have that something is wrong may well be when your dismissive partner breaks up with you.

But if you experience this, it is important to realize that you are not to blame. A dismissive avoidant's upbringing renders them incapable of tolerating real intimacy, and when anyone tries to get close to them, their knee-jerk response is to run away. While outwardly, the dismissive avoidant may seek to blame others for his or her relationship failures, the reality is that, at their core, his or her self-esteem is so low they do not believe themselves worthy of love and affection. If you succeed in breaking through a dismissive avoidant's defensive shield, catching a glimpse of their insecurities beneath, they will panic and run, seeking either solitude, or someone who does not realize they are not exactly what they seem.

In relationships, dismissive avoidant people engage in protective behaviour known as "distancing," in order to keep their partners from getting too close. These behaviours include:

Not returning phone calls or messages

Telling their partner they are not ready to commit, but staying together anyway

Focusing on their partner’s flaws

Comparing their partner to their ex

Flirting with others to introduce insecurity into the relationship

Refusing to say “I love you”

Pulling away after positive interactions. (For example, not calling after a great date.)

Forming relationships that do not have a future, such as with someone who is married.

Avoiding sex

Not wanting to share a bed with their partner

So what should you do if you find yourself dating someone with a dismissive avoidant attachment style? While this attachment style can lead to potentially destructive and hurtful relationships, the first step in building a healthy relationship is understanding that this avoidant behaviour is not your fault. Understand that it comes from your partner’s deep-seated beliefs that began to take root in the very first years of their life.

Firstly, understand that anger or throwing a tantrum might be the only way a dismissive avoidant is able to communicate his or her feelings. It may be tempting for you to respond with anger of your own. But this will only add fuel to the fire. Instead of engaging with this negative behaviour, take a step back. Walk away if you need to, and return to the issue when you feel you can operate with a clear head and a calm state of mind. Express your needs in an adult way, without making demands or issuing ultimatums. After all, this is a sure-fire to get a dismissive avoidant to run in the opposite direction!

Do your best to calmly come up with solutions to the conflict that will benefit you both. For example, perhaps you’re angry that your avoidant partner has failed to return your messages for three days straight. Instead of attacking him or her, understand that this is simply a characteristic of their attachment style and is not intended to hurt you. Ask that the next time he

or she feels the need for space, they agree to let you know and to contact you the following day. This way, your partner will have the space they need, and you will not feel as though the relationship is being threatened.

People with dismissive avoidant attachment styles have a tendency to overthink things and get lost in their heads. To overcome this, it can be helpful to have dates that involve physical activity, such as hiking, playing sport or going dancing. The physical exertion will cause your partner to get out of their head and be present in the moment and they will be more likely to connect and form a lasting bond.

Having an avoidant partner requires patience. While you may logically see that opening up and sharing their feelings will be beneficial, understand that this process does not come easily to people with an avoidant attachment style. Allow them personal space when they need it and be sure to be engaged and present when they are finally ready to share. The other key thing to remember is that for many avoidants, learning to share their feelings can be as simple as just naming their emotion. By encouraging this simple step, it can open the door to greater connection and openness.

Though they may not always act like it, the reality is that dismissive avoidants want – and need – love just as much as the rest of us. For dismissive avoidants to cultivate a healthy relationship, it is essential that they learn to open up and share with their partner. The exercises in the following chapter will be of particular benefit to couples with a dismissive avoidant partner.

Dating Someone with a Fearful Avoidant Attachment Style

Just like dismissive avoidants, fearful avoidant attachment styles come from a deep distrust of a person’s caregiver. Because of the similarities between these two attachment styles, dating a fearful avoidant can be a similar experience to dating someone with a dismissive avoidant attachment style. Unlike dismissive avoidants however, people with a fearful avoidant attachment style do not have the defensive shield of high self-esteem. They accept that they both want and need intimacy and attachment in their life.

Problems can arise, however, as the relationship develops. Fearful avoidants crave intimacy, leading them get closer to their partner. But when they do, their old fears kick in and they suddenly feel the need to pull away. This can lead to an endless series of short relationships, in which the fearful avoidant seeks closeness, only to flee when they actually receive it.

In the dating pool, fearful avoidants often put on a façade; a front they believe makes them more likeable. They can maintain this “false self” even in moments of intimacy. Just like dismissive avoidants, fearful avoidants have difficulty sharing their feelings with their partners. They are also characterized by weakened empathy, meaning they are often difficult to communicate with.

Dating someone with a fearful avoidant attachment style has many similarities with a dismissive avoidant partner. It can be helpful to go back and read the previous section.

If you find yourself dating someone with a fearful avoidant personality, once again, understand that their behaviour is not a reflection of you. Their trait stems from the damaging belief that they are not worthy of love and affection.

Just as with dismissive avoidants, people with this attachment type will greatly benefit from learning to open up and reveal their true selves to their partners. The exercises in the following chapter will be of particular benefit to people with a fearful avoidant attachment style.

Attachment Type Combinations

Knowing both the attachment styles of yourself and your partner can be of incomparable benefit to your relationship. Being able to anticipate the behaviour of both parties within a relationship – and the possible obstacles you will face can help smooth the path to a healthier, long-lasting connections.

Let’s take a look at what to expect when people with each attachment type form a couple:

Secure + Secure

While secure couples in relationships have problems just like everybody else, their relationship is often characterized by great communication and empathy. They resolve conflicts more easily and know that they can rely on each other, in good times and bad.

The secure + secure coupling is the most common type of relationship, owing both to the large number of people in the population with secure attachment styles, and secures' abilities to cultivate healthy, long-lasting relationships.

Anxious Preoccupied + Secure

In this relationship combination, the anxious preoccupied partner is likely to test the patience of the secure partner, by seeking regular assurance. If the secure partner does not act quickly, the anxious preoccupied partner can become anxious and stressed. Despite their inherent securities, this behaviour can test the patience of the secure partner and can cause them to act distantly or pull away, much as a dismissive avoidant would.

However, a secure partner can be of great benefit to an anxious preoccupied person. The secure can cultivate their partner's trust in the relationship through patient and constant reassurance.

In such a combination, the secure partner can often feel as though they themselves are responsible for the upkeep and security of the relationship. The anxious preoccupied's insecurities can cause them to become self-centred, causing the secure partner to feel as though their loved one is not invested in the relationship.

Through gentle reassurance from the secure partner, however, this problem should improve over time.

Dismissive Avoidant + Secure

When partnered with a dismissive avoidant, a person will often experience distance and coldness within a relationship. This behaviour can cause even

the most secure of people to feel attachment anxiety, leading them to question their self-worth. Even though the secure's requests for assurance will likely be reasonable, the dismissive avoidant partner will usually not respond to these requests.

In order for such a combination to work, the secure partner must be aware of their partner's issues, and demonstrate enormous amounts of patience in order to cultivate more security and openness with the relationship.

It is equally important for the dismissive avoidant partner to recognize the role they are playing in the relationship's struggles and do their best to respond positively to their partner's requests, even if it at first feels like a challenge.

If this does not happen, it will likely be the secure partner who ends the relationship. They are comfortable and confident enough in their own abilities and self-worth to know there is someone out there who will treat them right.

Fearful Avoidant + Secure

This combination has much in common with the dismissive avoidant + secure pairing. The difference is, however that it is likely to be the fearful avoidant partner who ends the relationship at the first sign of trouble. This behaviour comes about thanks to the fearful avoidant's fear of being seen for who they really are. They are afraid of loss and believe that ending the relationship on their own terms will be far less painful than the rejection from their partner. They often come to believe that this rejection is inevitable, once the secure breaks through the fearful avoidant's façade.

Dismissive Avoidant + Anxious Preoccupied

This potentially damaging combination is one of the most common. Because of an unconscious need to replay the events of their childhood, the anxious preoccupied will seek out the inconsistent attention provided by the dismissive avoidant. The dismissive avoidant undervalues their partner,

while the anxious preoccupied overvalues them, leading to a relationship characterised by stress and anxiety.

While the dismissive avoidant likes to shy away from intimacy and connection, their needy partner will act to confirm the dismissive avoidant's view that all people are clingy. This confirmation makes the dismissive avoidant more comfortable in the relationship than they would otherwise be, and they often settle in to this coupling for the long-haul.

Meanwhile, the anxious preoccupied partner is unhappy with the sporadic attention doled out by their partner, but they are too afraid of being alone to do anything about it.

These negative patterns can be extremely difficult to break, largely because each partner sees the other as the cause of the relationship's problems.

But change is possible. If you find yourself in this coupling, return to the previous chapter and take a look at the ways of managing partners with avoidant and anxious attachment styles. The avoidant partner must learn to be more consistent and assuring in the relationship, while the anxious partner must work on building their inner-assurance and self-worth, instead of constantly relying on their partner for validation.

As in all couplings, open and honest communication, along with empathy is the key to making this relationship work.

Fearful Avoidant + Anxious Preoccupied

This coupling is among the most negative and damaging. It is also one the most insecure couplings. The anxious preoccupied partner's constant need for attention will scare off the fearful avoidant partner, who will usually be unwilling to be involved in a relationship in which they are constantly fending off intimacy.

If the fearful avoidant partner acquiesces to their partner's need for closeness, it will likely trigger their anxiety. Conversely, if they remain in their comfort zone and keep their distance, the anxious preoccupied partner will respond by increasing their requests for attention.

Anxious Preoccupied + Anxious Preoccupied

This is another coupling that very rarely has a happy ending. The often self-absorbed anxious preoccupieds will have trouble anticipating the needs and desires of their partner. With both partners having a deep-seated need for attention and closeness, it is unlikely – although not impossible – that they will be able to satisfy each other's desires.

Fearful Avoidant + Dismissive Avoidant

This partnership is an uncommon one, due to both parties being bad at positive attachment. Even though, on the surface, it may appear that both partners want a less "hands-on" approach to the relationship, the fearful avoidant has a deep-seated need for attachment that the dismissive avoidant will rarely fill.

Dismissive Avoidant + Dismissive Avoidant

Unsurprisingly, this coupling is very rare. As cultivating a relationship requires communication – something dismissive avoidants seek to avoid – a relationship between two people with this attachment style rarely gets off the ground. If they do manage to form a relationship, they are prone to ending it at the first hint of conflict, in order to avoid having to communicate and resolve the issue.

Fearful Avoidant + Fearful Avoidant

This is the most uncommon matching, but this is primarily due to the fact that there is only a small number of fearful avoidant people in the general population. The fearful avoidant's difficulties with regards to communication and self-esteem will make this coupling a challenge, however it is not necessarily doomed to fail. As both parties have a deep-seated need for intimacy, there is the chance that they can satisfy this need for each other. They have a better chance of being successful if they

understand the challenges faced by both themselves and their partner – something which is true for every coupling.

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It is interesting – and often encouraging – to note that we are not necessarily stuck with one love style forever. Over time, our tendencies and inclinations within romantic relationships can evolve as we grow as lovers and people. So if your relationship has hit a rough patch, don't be discouraged. Just because you and your partner may have seemingly incompatible attachment styles, it does not necessarily mean you have to end things. Instead, look at it as an opportunity for you both to develop as people and strengthen the bonds of your relationship.

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CHAPTER SIX: WORKING WITH YOUR ATTACHMENT STYLE TO FIND YOUR LIFE PARTNER



Now that you've recognized your attachment style, and that of your partner, you can use this information to strengthen your romantic relationships. Identifying and understanding the struggles we face in relationships, and the traps we are likely to fall into helps us see and manage problems before they manifest and ultimately doom the relationship.

The reality is that over half of us do not exhibit a secure attachment style, instead exhibiting one of the two "damaged" styles – anxious or avoidant. On top of this, those of us with an avoidant or anxious love style have an above-average chance of falling in love with someone from the other damaged side. Unless we are careful, being with someone from the "opposite" side of the love style spectrum can aggravate our insecurities and cause us to act rashly or put up defenses.

Here are a few things to keep in mind about your own behavior when it comes to dating and building relationships:

If You Have an Avoidant Attachment Style…

> Particularly if you are in a relationship with someone who exhibits anxious preoccupied tendencies, learn to recognize the extent to which you check out emotionally, particularly in tense situations, or when your partner is offering or seeking closeness.
> Begin to recognize the way you prefer sex and physical intimacy with strangers, rather than with your significant other. You may also begin to notice how uncomfortable you feel when cuddling,

kissing or during any other displays of affection. It is also highly likely that you don't like the light on during sex and intimacy.

Notice your behavioral patterns that lead you to sabotage the chance for building healthy, long-term relationships. Can you see that you are afraid of what you really want? How does this internal conflict make you feel? Do your best to have compassion and forgiveness for yourself.

Think back to your childhood. Can you see where this behavior may have taken root? In all likelihood, closeness would have been a frightening thing, because those you relied on for love and support continually let you down. Can you see the way you adopted a strategy in order to protect yourself from harm?

Remember, the present is different from the past. By bringing in behaviors driven by fear, you are ruining your chance at a happy present and future. Can you see the way that these behaviors belong to the past? Can you that they do not belong in your present and future?

With this in mind, now take a closer look at your partner's behavior. Perhaps it may seem as though they are behaving aggressively, and are causing you to feel upset, and perhaps even afraid. Take a moment to reframe their behavior. Understand that they are doing what they are doing because they want to be with you, and, if they have an anxious preoccupied attachment style, they likely have difficulty expressing this in a healthier way. Next time they attack or nag you, try and look beneath the irritation of this and see this as their deep-seated need for love.

If You Have an Anxious Attachment Style…

If you are an anxious preoccupied person with a partner who exhibits avoidant tendencies, firstly bear in mind that things are usually not as bad as they seem. Perhaps your partner is being quiet and withdrawn. Likely, your mind is jumping to conclusions, interpreting this as a lack of love, or deep-seated troubles within the relationship. But take a moment to consider that this is likely not the case. Your partner's quietness is more

than likely just that – a momentary need for peace and stillness. There is every chance it has nothing to do with you at all. Recognize that those with avoidant love styles require greater amounts of personal space. If your partner exhibits these tendencies, it is far more to do with them, than you.

However, it is not unreasonable for you to want more closeness and intimacy from a partner who can often seem aloof and detached. There is nothing inherently needy about this. But it is important to take note of *how* you are asking your partner for this intimacy. Are you being too direct? In all likelihood, you are probably doing so with too much rage and desperation. Recognize the frightening affect this can have on an avoidant partner, and tread lightly when requesting closeness. Accepting, and even creating, a little more distance between you and your partner can have a positive effect on your relationship.

Above all, recognize that your partner's behavior does not come from a place of spite. He or she is simply acting out negative behavioral patterns learned in childhood – just as you are.

Increasing Your Attachment Security

While many of us are not lucky enough to naturally have a secure relationship attachment style, there are many things we can do to build our attachment security. Let's take a look at few of the ways we can work with our partners to build up our own – and each other's – security within our relationships:

Asking Questions:

Asking each other questions can be an invaluable way of opening up to your partner and sharing details about yourself that even you might not have previously been aware of. A structured questionnaire can take away the overwhelming aspect of having to come up with your own questions. Here is a selection of questions, beginning rather light-hearted and increasing in emotional intensity. Particularly if you or your partner find it difficult to open up, you might choose to begin with a few of the early

questions, moving down the list as far as you feel comfortable. These are a great way to get to know your partner a little better – and to know your yourself a little better in the process!

1. Who are your top five dream dinner guests?
2. Would you like to be famous? Why? And in what way?
3. Do you ever rehearse conversations of telephone calls? If so, why?
4. Describe your perfect day.
5. When was the last time you sang a song? Was it to yourself, or to someone else?
6. If you could live to the age of 90 and retain either the mind or body of a 30 year old, which would you choose and why?
7. Do you have an inkling about the way you are going to die?
8. What are three things you think we have in common?
9. What are you the most grateful for in your life?
10. If you could change one thing about your childhood, what would it be?
11. Tell me your life story in three minutes, in as much detail as possible.
12. If you could suddenly acquire one new ability, what would it be and why?
13. If a crystal ball could accurately tell you the future, would you want to know it? Why or why not?
14. What have you always dreamed of doing? Why haven't you done it yet?
15. What is your greatest achievement?
16. What do you value most in a friend? A partner?
17. Describe your most treasured memory.
18. Describe your most horrible memory.
19. If you knew you were going to die in one year's time, what would you change about the way you are living your life?
20. How important are love and affection in your life?
21. List five positive traits about your partner.
22. How close do you feel to your family? How do you think your childhood compares to other people's?
23. How positive or negative is your relationship with your mother?
24. Make up three statements about things you and your partner are sharing right now. For example: "We are both sitting on this sofa…"
25. What is the one thing you wish you could share with another person?

26. What is the one thing you need your partner to know about you in order to become closer to them?
27. Tell your partner three things you really like about them. Be honest.
28. What is your most embarrassing moment?
29. When was the last time you cried? Was it by yourself or in front of another person?
30. What do you believe is too serious to ever be joked about?
31. If you were to die today with no chance of communicating to anyone ever again, what is the one thing you wished you'd shared with someone?
32. Besides you loved ones, what are three things you would rescue if your house was one fire? Why?
33. Which of your loved ones' deaths would you find the most difficult to handle? Why?
34. Tell your partner about a personal problem you are having and ask their advice.
35. This exercise can also be done between two couples. Studies have shown that asking these questions when doubling dating can increase not only closeness between the couples, but within the couples at the same time.

Engaging in Joint Activites

As discussed in the previous chapter, engaging in physical activities with your partner can be a great way of getting out of your heads and being in present in the moment, which can allow for greater bonding. Take this a step further by taking part in activities designed for couples. You might like to consider:

Couples yoga
Get a couples massage
Visit each other's hometowns
Choose a new TV series together and binge watch it
Create a scrapbook of your relationship
Have a picnic
Play mini golf
Cook dinner together

Take a trip somewhere neither of you have been
Volunteer together
Watch the sun rise
Dress up in a couple's costume for Halloween
Climb a mountain or go on a hike
Start a new tradition together
Go bowling
Go horseback riding
Create a music playlist as the soundtrack to your relationship
Take a bubble bath
Go to the beach
Take a dance class
Go camping
Sit in front of an open fire
Go on a tandem bike ride
Do a fun run together
Read each other your favourite book

Keep a Journal

Writing in a journal each night can be a great way to make sense of your emotions and feelings. Journaling has been scientifically proven to reduce stress and anxiety, and can provide you with greater mental clarity, greater problem-solving abilities and a greater ability to manage conflict.

But journaling and sharing the contents with your partner can also have a profound effect on your relationship's security. It provides a platform for greater honesty and openness, and improves trust between you and your partner. Reading from the written page can also take the stress and spontaneity out of sharing your feelings, which can be of particular benefit to those with avoidant personalities, who will likely find this exercise a challenge.

Reflecting on Positive Relationships

Research has proven that the act of simply focusing on your previous positive relationships can have a profound positive influence on your current romantic relationship. This could be done either through journaling, discussion with your partner, or even just taking a few moments for yourself to conjure up these positive memories.

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The abovementioned activities and questionnaire is likely to have a greater effect of increasing the attachment security of those with an avoidant attachment style, as these exercises encourage openness and honesty, while pushing participants out of their comfort zones.

Hopefully, the above suggestions have shown that developing a more secure attachment style does not need to be strenuous. Increasing the security of your attachment with your loved one can be an enjoyable experience. And it can be as simple as learning to open up and share a few details about your lives. Remember to above all, do your best to be honest and show compassion, both to yourself and your partner.

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CHAPTER SEVEN: HOW TO FEEL GOOD WITHOUT PARTNERSHIP



Given the images our media constantly bombards us with, it's easy to develop the belief that there is something wrong with being single. So much of what we see on TV, in magazines, and in films seems to suggest that the one goal in life is to find a loving partner and settle down and have a family. And then there's an ever-growing number of social media sites which portray endless collections of photos of our friends and acquaintances showing off their loving partners, or their beautiful kids… Little wonder many of us see romantic attachment as our main goal or achievement in life.

But the nature of life means that we are all bound to be single at one time or another. This could be due to luck on the dating scene, commitments in other areas of our lives, or even death and bereavement.

For some of us, being single can be a traumatic process. This may be due to our attachment style, and/or the circumstances that led to us being in the situation. It is important to develop skills to cope with being single, or else we may find ourselves heading blindly into unsuitable and damaging relationships, driven by the fear of being alone. It may lead us to settle, agreeing to spend our life with someone we do not love, or who does not love us in return.

While some of us relish time alone, and may choose to be single, many people prefer, and even crave the company of other people. While there is nothing inherently wrong with this – after all, it comes down to our personality and attachment styles – it is important not to fall to pieces the moment we find ourselves alone.

Attachment Style and Single Status

Our upbringing, unsurprisingly, can have a big effect on the way we respond to being alone. Our response to this situation is due largely to what is termed our *family script*. If you grew up in a large family with people constantly around you, you may have a more difficult time adjusting to being on your own. Conversely, those who grew up with distant or absent parents are able to more quickly adjust when they find their relationships ending.

But as we have learned, our attachment styles can always be changed and improved. It's just a matter of understanding ourselves more thoroughly, and determining why we have particular behaviours or fears.

So if you are experiencing stress over the thought of being single, or alone, here are a few strategies to help manage the anxiety:

Facing Your Fears

Start with asking yourself exactly what it is about being single that scares you. Is it the belief that people will judge you? If so, this can be a good opportunity to recognize how much you are letting other people's opinions of you inform your sense of self-worth.

Perhaps you are afraid that not having a partner will cause you to miss out on a lot of things. In this case, you could examine why you feel you need a partner to take part in experiences. Are there are things you have been waiting for a partner to do, such as traveling, when you can just as easily do them on your own?

It's also worth examining just where this fear has come from. Can you identify incidences from your past that may have contributed to your fear of being alone? Perhaps, like the above example, you grew up surrounded by your large family, and not having company feels strange and unnatural. Or maybe there was an incident in your early childhood that sparked this fear – for example, you may have wandered off as a child and lost your mother in a shopping mall.

Understanding the underlying causes of this fear can go a long way towards addressing and removing them.

Understanding What You Want

As we have discussed in many aspects throughout this book, understanding yourself and your desires is of great benefit when it comes to managing your instinctive thoughts and behaviours.

If you find yourself struggling to be single, take the time to really ask yourself what you want from life. This can be with regards to your goals and aspirations, and also as related to your attachment style. What is it that your attachment style demands? Do you need validation from others in order to feel secure in yourself? Or do you crave alone time? (If you have not done so, go to Chapter Three in order to determine your love attachment style.)

Understanding yourself in this way can help you feel more secure in yourself, and less like you need another person to “complete” you.

This is also a great opportunity to explore new interests and hobbies. What have you always wanted to try, but have never done? Is there a hobby from your past that used to bring you joy? Can you incorporate this back into your life?

Relationship Counselling

While it might seem silly, the reality is that relationship counselling is not just for couples. As we know, one of the most important relationships we have is with ourselves. If you are struggling with your single status, it might be worth seeking the help of a qualified counsellor in order to get to the root of exactly what it is that is causing your distress. See Chapter Ten for some tips on how to find the right counsellor or therapist for you.

Being Happy and Single

Depending on your desires, personality and attachment style, the thought of being happy and single might seem impossible to achieve. But the reality is that there are plenty of men and women who are extremely happy without a partner, both through personal choice and external circumstances.

There are plenty of benefits to being single – you have the freedom to decide what you're going to do and when, you rarely have to compromise, plus you get the whole bed to yourself!

But despite this, it can be difficult to be happy and single when you really want a partner. Society teaches us that we must find love in order to be happy. But in reality, it is the other way around. When we are happy with ourselves and our lives, we are far more likely to attract love.

So let's look at a few of the techniques that can be employed if you find your single status is getting you down:

Engage in mindful and meaningful activities.

Let's break this one down, as it contains two elements. When we're single, it's a great opportunity to engage in activities that make us happy. After all, we don't have to seek anyone's approval, or compromise with a partner about how we will spend our weekend! As discussed in the previous section, it can be of great benefit to take some time to identify activities and experiences that you love, or have always wanted to do. Rather than sitting at home obsessing over your single status, or the next series of awkward first dates you'll have to go on, get out in the world and take part in activities and experiences that are meaningful for you.

So what does it mean to be mindful, when you're engaging in these activities? Basically, it means being present in the situation, not lost in your thoughts, or in some fantasy world. If you find yourself drifting into your head, a great exercise to cultivate mindfulness is to focus on all five of your senses. Mentally list three things you can see – and be specific. Rather than just saying "I see a bird," take time to describe the bird to yourself: "I see the white tips on the feathers of that bird…" etc. Now do the same for each of your five senses. What do you hear, smell, feel and even taste?

Recognise it's okay to do things alone- and then do them!

When it feels as though everyone else in the world is happily coupled up, it can be difficult to get out and do things without company. But doing things alone can be a liberating experience. Go to the movies. Go shopping. Go out for a meal. Each time you do this, it will become easier and easier.

Take time to foster your other relationships

Despite what you may have led yourself to believe, your significant other is not the only key relationship in your life. Especially while you are single, take the time to cultivate relationships with the other special people in your life. Spend time with family, friends and colleagues in order to strengthen your relationship with them. Give your undivided attention to others when you are with them- don't be distracted thinking about your ex or your single status.

You can also use this opportunity to meet new people and cultivate new interests. (We will discuss this in more details in Chapter Nine.) And, importantly, allow yourself to meet people without viewing everyone as a potential partner.

Recognise that not all of your thoughts are based in reality.

Particularly for those of us with an anxious preoccupied love attachment style, you may find being single causes an endless cycle of inner dialogue to go charging through your head. Likely, it's filled with negative and self-deprecating thoughts along the lines of: "*I'm not good enough,*" "*I'll never find love,*" or "*I'm so unattractive.*"

If you find yourself thinking such things, take a moment to step back and see these thoughts as what they are: your own misinterpretation of reality, not facts.

Next time you find yourself entertaining this negative dialogue, replace it with a more positive belief. For example: *"I'll never find love"* could be replaced with "*today I will meet someone incredible."* Repeat this new belief to yourself in the form of an affirmation, or mantra. Say it to yourself over and over, either aloud or in your head. You can even write your new positive beliefs down and put them in places where you will see them often, such as on your bathroom mirror, on your desk at work, or inside your car. In time, you will find your negative inner dialogue replaced with these far more positive and productive beliefs.

Accept your emotions and allow yourself to really feel them.

Understand what you are feeling – give a name to your emotions. Is it grief? Embarrassment? Hopelessness? Joy? Do you feel as though you need to cry? Allow yourself to do so without feeling guilty. You will likely feel much better afterwards, and letting those emotions out is far healthier than bottling them up inside.

Understand how being in a relationship would change you – and make those changes now.

Take some time to determine exactly how being in a relationship would change your behaviour. Would you allow yourself to relax and feel less stressed? Or maybe you would no longer feel the need to spend an hour doing your make-up each morning.

Once you have identified these actions, start doing them now. Cultivate a sense of relaxation through activities such as mediation or yoga. Allow yourself to be that person who spends five minutes on their makeup before they run out the door.

This also applies to achieving your life goals. Are you waiting for that perfect partner to travel the world with? Why wait? Traveling solo can provide you with the most amazing experiences for growth and self-understanding. And who knows, you may even meet someone amazing in the place you least expect!

The same goes with having children. If your fear of being alone stems from your need to have a family, consider the possibility of doing it solo. Fostering, adoption and egg freezing are all valid avenues for exploration.

Don’t put unnecessary pressure on any dates you might have

Especially if you have been single for a long time, or exhibit anxious attachment tendencies, it can be tempting to blow things out of proportion when you finally land a date. We can convince ourselves that this will be the one, placing an unnecessary amount of pressure on ourselves to not ruin what we see as our one chance at happiness.

On top of this added pressure, fantasizing about our dates, and convincing ourselves they are The One can be dangerous. It means we are often shut off to any negative behaviours and we may convince ourselves we can be happy with them, even in the face of red flags. This can lead us into unsatisfying and even damaging or abusive relationships.

Instead of focusing the future when you’re on a date, remember the value of mindfulness, and focus on the present. Ensure you are fully present during the date, without focusing on past experiences or present fantasies.

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Next time you find yourself without a romantic partner, focus on all the positive aspects of being single. Use it as a time to really understand yourself and your desires and for really exploring what makes you tick. Above all, allow yourself to recognize that we do not need romantic attachment in order to feel complete and happy.

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CHAPTER EIGHT: HOW OUR ATTACHMENT STYLE AFFECT OUR FRIENDSHIPS



By now, it should be evident just how deeply our attachment style can affect our romantic relationships, along with our relationships with our parents and/or children. But our attachment style can also have a significant impact on our friendships and wider social networks. This includes our interactions with friends in person, along with our behaviours on social media sites such as Facebook.

Attachment Style and Friendship

The table below gives us a quick overview of the way the both our self-esteem (our opinion of ourselves) and our sociability (our opinion of others) is reflected in our love attachment style. We can use this as the basis for understanding our challenges and instinctive responses when faced with social situations, such as making or interacting with friends:

	Self Esteem (Our opinion of ourselves)	
Sociability (Our opinion of others)	**Positive**	**Negative**

Positive	Secure love attachment style	Anxious preoccupied love attachment style
Negative	Dismissive avoidant love attachment style	Fearful avoidant love attachment style

Friendship for Secure Attachment Personalities

As we have discussed in earlier chapters, people with a secure attachment style have a heightened emotional intelligence which allows them to communicate effectively with those around them. They are able to interpret both verbal and non-verbal cues, giving them strong empathetic skills. For this reason, people with secure attachment styles generally have no problem instigating and maintaining friendships. They make reliable friends and colleagues and flourish in group environments.

Friendship for Anxious Preoccupied Personalities

The anxious preoccupied's desperate need for attention and validation within romantic relationships also shows itself among friends.

People with an anxious preoccupied attachment style often feel as though they are giving far more to their friends than they are receiving. As those of us with these tendencies can be very emotionally expressive, we like to show our friends just how much they mean to us – and can occasionally overdo it. Anxious preoccupieds often see themselves as less valuable than their friends, and will behave accordingly. But for secures who don't view their friend as a "lesser person" than themselves, this anxious preoccupied behaviour can be difficult to understand. As a result, anxious preoccupieds often have difficulty building close connections with their friends.

If you have this attachment style, you may find yourself drawn towards friends who also exhibit anxious preoccupied tendencies. This will result in a friendship in which you both go out of your way to ensure the other

knows how much you mean to them. While this can work, it is often characterised by desperation and neediness, and does not lead to the healthiest of relationships.

People with this attachment style are unlikely to maintain friendship with avoidant types, as the anxious need for attention is likely to drive the other person away before the friendship has time to develop.

Friendship for Dismissive Avoidant Personalities

While the way dismissive avoidants relate to their friends is completely opposite to anxious preoccupied personalities, the result is the same: a lack of close friendships. As we have learned, dismissive avoidants prize themselves on their independence and their perceived belief that they do not need anyone else in order to prosper. This can cause them to be distant and dismissive – something their secure friends will perceive as coldness, disinterest or even rudeness.

Friendship for Fearful Avoidant Personalities

While we all have versions of ourselves that we put out into the public eye, fearful avoidant personalities are adept at presenting a carefully cultivated persona, or ***false self*** when showing themselves to the world. This façade is a defense mechanism to prevent any spontaneous display of emotion and to keep their innermost feelings hidden away.

People who consider themselves friends with a fearful avoidant personality can often find themselves surprised and hurt when distress causes the fearful avoidant's "mask" to fall away. Their friends will then discover that the true personality of the person they had believed themselves close to was little more than a lie.

As a result of this false self, the fearful avoidant often has a group of friends that has been attracted to his or her fake persona and has little idea who they really are. When their true self is revealed in times of crisis, they may find they have no one who truly understands them – or perhaps even likes them – and consequently, they have no one on whom they can really rely.

Not being able to be vulnerable with friends who are vulnerable with you puts a strain on the relationship, making close friendships a challenge for fearful avoidants. It is important for people with this attachment type to recognise that real intimacy and friendship are based on loyalty and honesty. Pretending to be something you are not – while it can be an effective defense mechanism – will leave you with few friends you can count on in times of trouble.

Tie Strength and Multiplexity

Researchers at Australia's Deakin University and the Middle East Technical University in Turkey have determined the role of attachment styles as related to our friendship groups and social networks.

Their study examines "tie strength" and "multiplexity" within their subjects' social networks.

"Tie strength" refers to how close the ties in your network are; in other words, how comfortable you feel going to your friends for love and support in times of emotional distress. It also takes into consideration how often subjects interact with those in their network.

"Multiplexity" refers to having many different roles fulfilled by the same members of a subject's network. For example, a person who is both a colleague and a fellow member of a sports team has a high level of multiplexity. Similarly, if a subject feels close enough to a work colleague to go to them for advice and support, it also shows a high level of multiplexity.

Within an Avoidant Style…

The study shows that people with avoidant attachment styles have a weaker tie strength to members of their social network. This makes sense, given the avoidant's tendencies to shy away from affection. Similarly, avoidant behaviour also leads to lower multiplexity within friendships, meaning the bond an avoidant has with their friends and colleagues is weaker and less

reliable. They are less likely to actively maintain ties and are more likely to actively dissolve their friendships.

Within an Anxious Attachment Style…

Those with an anxious preoccupied attachment style are also likely to see the frequent dissolution of friendship ties. However, in their case, it is likely to be instigated by their contacts, rather than by themselves. As we know, people with an anxious attachment style have a need for constant attention and validation. This behaviour can be smothering, leading to their friends and contacts to step away and dissolve the friendship.

Size of Your Social Network

You may assume that the larger a person's friendship network – either on or offline – the more popular and secure they are. However, this is not always the case.

Think about the size of your own social network. If you have hundreds, or even thousands, of connections on sites such as Facebook, think about how often you connect with the majority of people in this network. In all likelihood, not very often. The sheer numbers involved usually make this far too difficult. Similarly, if you have a huge circle of friends in "real life," it can be difficult to maintain close and meaningful relationships with all of them.

Studies support this, proving that the larger the friendship network, the weaker the ties and multiplexity of those connections.

Does this mean we should cull our Facebook pages and cut down our number of friends? Not necessarily. But it is important to recognize social media connections can never take the place of real life friendships. While it can be easier to cultivate friendships behind the safety of the computer screen, putting yourself out into the real world and facing the challenges thrown up by your attachment style is the only way to build valuable, long-lasting friendships.

Increasing your Attachment Security Among Friends

So how can we go about increasing our attachment security with regards to making and maintaining lasting friendships?

Remember those questions we discussed in Chapter Six as a way of developing intimacy between you and your romantic partner? These are just as effective when it comes to really getting to know your friends, or anyone you are seeking to build a deeper connection with. You can also make up your own list of questions, in order to avoid answers becoming routine.

If asking these questions makes you shy or uncomfortable, do your best to focus on the answers given by your friend, rather than your own responses. After all, showing interest in others and making them the focus of attention is a great way to make a person feel valuable and showing them you care.

In the following chapter we will be looking at ways to both build new friendships and maintain existing friendships, regardless of your attachment style.

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CHAPTER NINE: HOW TO MAKE GREAT FRIENDS REGARDLESS OF YOUR ATTACHMENT STYLE



Making friends gets more and more difficult as we get older. Sociologists put this down to a number of reasons. Firstly, building friendships takes time. Think of all the hours you spent with your friends at school. Being forced to spend day after day together was what led your relationship to develop from being classmates to becoming friends. But as adults, our lives are often so busy with work, children and numerous other responsibilities that we simply don't have as much time to cultivate friendships as we did when we were young. In addition, we generally spend much less time in one place than we did back in our school days. As adults, the only place we spend large proportions of our time is often our workplace, and some of us are reluctant to build friendships with our colleagues.

Then there's the issue of energy. Spending time with new people can be a major energy drain, especially if you suffer from an insecure attachment style. In today's modern life, so many of us are at risk of burnout, so we are understandably reluctant to introduce more stress into our lives.

But while making – and keeping – friends as a busy adult can be a challenge, it is well worth the effort. Let's take a look at some of the many benefits of friendship:

The Benefits of Friendship

Being around friends improves your mood. Surrounding yourself with positive, happy people makes you feel better, and is proven to increase positivity and optimism.

Having friends helps you reach your goals. Encouragement from those around you can boost willpower, while sharing your goals and aspirations with others helps hold you accountable.

Having friends reduces stress and depression. Studies have shown that an active social life can boost your immune system. It also reduces isolation, which is a major contributor to depression and stress.

Having friends mean you have someone to rely on in difficult times, such as unemployment, bereavement, illness, or difficulties in your romantic relationship.

Surrounding yourself with friends can boost your self-worth. This can be of particular benefit to those of us with attachment styles characterized by low self-esteem.

Making – and Keeping – Friends

Meeting New People

So we understand the value of making new friends. But, as we've discussed, meeting new people is not the easiest thing to do, particularly when our modern-day lives are so busy.

Here are a few ways to go about meeting people and forging new friendships:

Volunteer at your local charity, or for a cause you are passionate about.

Join a club or take a class. This will put you in contact with many people who share your interests.

Attend book signing, lecture, gallery, recital and other event in your community in which you might meet people with similar interests.

Go to a sporting event. While it can be daunting being in a crowd on your own, bonding over shared loved of your sports team can be a great way to meet new people. If you don't feel comfortable attending the match on your own, what about going to watch the

game in a bar? You'll have the same opportunity to connect with others, but on a much smaller scale.

Turn off your phone. No matter where you are, it is difficult to meet new people if you are wearing headphones, or if your head is buried in your smartphone. Put down the phone and engage with the world – and the people – around you.

Strengthening Existing Acquaintances

Making new friends does not necessarily have to mean meeting new people. In many cases, making new friends can be a matter of simply strengthening your existing acquaintances. Here are a few ideas for turning acquaintances into friends:

Break the ice by inviting a colleague or neighbor out for coffee or a drink.

Track down old friends on social media and rekindle the friendship by inviting them to meet in person.

Connect with your college alumni.

Dealing With Fear of Rejection

Just like when you're in the dating pool, making new friends means putting yourself out there and opening yourself up to rejection. This can be scary, particularly for those who suffer from an anxious preoccupied attachment style. In Chapter Ten we will be looking at ways of addressing and healing our attachment issues in order to deal with rejection, among other things. But here are few other key points to keep in mind if you find yourself being rejected by someone you had hoped to build a friendship with:

If someone rejects your invitation, remember it does not necessarily mean they are rejecting you as a person. Everyone has their own busy life, of which we likely know very little about. Their refusal may just be because they are busy or distracted.

Similarly, if someone rejects you, it does not mean you are inherently unlikeable, or unworthy of friendship. It's possible that the person just misunderstood you, or are having a bad day. Or

perhaps their behavior is more to do with their own insecurities and attachment issues.
Keep rejection in perspective. Instead of beating yourself up over it, see it as a learning experience – and one that strengthens you, allowing to learn for next time and become a stronger person.

Cultivating Long-Lasting Friendships

What Makes a Good Friend?

Knowing what we look for in a friend can go a long way towards helping us build long-lasting friendships. It reduces the potential for conflict and drama, and helps us manage any problems that may arise due to our attachment issues.

Firstly, take some time to determine what makes a good friend in your opinion. Perhaps they are those who:

Show genuine interest in you and your life
Are always there for you in times of need
Don’t judge you, even when you make mistakes
Never deliberately hurt your feelings
Never put you down
You enjoy their company
Are loyal and trustworthy
You can laugh and cry with
Will tell you the truth, even when it is hard to hear
Will always listen
You feel comfortable sharing your emotions with

Ask yourself how you feel when you’re around a particular person. Does spending time with them make you feel better or worse? Are you yourself when you’re around this person, or do you put on a façade, uncomfortable of revealing your true self? Does this person treat you with respect? Do you feel as though this is a person you can trust? (Incidentally, these are all excellent questions to ask yourself when navigating early romantic relationships too.)

How to be a good friend

The best way of maintaining lasting friendships, of course, is to be a good friend yourself. Think back to the characteristics that you determined make a good friend, and ensure you are exhibiting these traits in your own relationships.

Here are just a few of the ways you can work towards being a good friend towards those you care about:

Listen: If a friend is sharing his or her problems with you, ensure you engage in active listening; concentrate, do your best to retain information and offer a well-thought-out response. Ask questions. Do your best to see the situation from your friend's point of view. If you don't have all the answers, don't worry. Likely, your friend is not coming to you for a solution to their problem, they just need a sympathetic ear on which to unload. This can be a particularly difficult thing to do if you suffer from an avoidant attachment style, which is characterised by a lack of empathy.

Ask What You Can Do to Help: If your friend is facing a difficult situation, don't wait for them to ask for ask help. Instead, actively ask them what they need and what you can do to help. This will lead them to reciprocate when you find yourself in a challenging situation.

Show physical affection: This can be another big challenge for those with avoidant attachment styles. But hugging your friends is a great way to show you care, and the physical contact increases the bond between you. All humans need physical contact with others in order to survive. An act as simple as a hug can prevent both you and your friend from feeling alone.

Keep in Touch: Keeping in touch with our friends can be difficult at times, especially for those of us with large friendship circles and social networks. But taking time out of your busy schedule to connect with a friend is a great way to maintain closeness and strength in the friendship. It doesn't need to be a long-winded phone call. If you are short on time, send a short text or message on social media, just to let your friend know you are thinking of them.

Share Your Feelings: Tell your friends what they mean to you. Just as in romantic relationships, your friends can’t be expected to know how you feel if you have not told them. This is especially true for friends with anxious preoccupied personalities. This kind of honesty and openness goes a long way towards building lasting friendships. And for those of you who feel uncomfortable opening up and sharing your feelings, remember that the more you do it, the easier it will get.

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CHAPTER TEN: HOW TO HEAL ATTACHMENT WOUNDS



As we have learned throughout this book, without intervention, those of us with an insecure attachment style will go on to relive the negative experiences of their childhood, resulting in strained, stressful and painful experiences throughout their life. These issues can manifest in romantic relationships, friendships, relationships with family and colleagues, as well as the way we relate to ourselves.

But, deep-seated as those these attachment wounds may be, they are able to be healed. It is important to believe that secure attachment is possible for everyone. There are many ways in which attachment trauma can be healed, and in this chapter we will address both self-healing methods and some of the many methods that may be used when working with a therapist.

Self-Directed Healing

Healing becomes possible when we focus on rewiring our brain and creating new experiences of positive emotional connection. In time, these new thought processes will replace the old behavioural patterns that were brought about by our negative childhood experiences.

Let’s take a look at some of the ways you can work at healing your attachment wounds:

Allow Yourself to Grieve

The healing process is a process of grieving. When you become aware of the incidents and situations that caused your attachment issues to form, it is

likely that you will feel some degree of loss and sadness. This grief will come about with the realization that you suffered neglect as a child, or from the absence of any real emotional connection to your primary caregiver.

Accepting the need for new patterns and getting rid of the old is a grief process. You are mourning both what did happen, and also the safe, secure relationships that *did not* happen. Allow yourself to feel and accept this pain, before releasing it and moving on.

Make Sense of Our Story

If we can understand exactly what the narrative is that is driving our attachment issues, it helps us to see how it is affecting us in our adult lives. It may also make us aware that we are passing down the same narrative and issues to our own children.

These issues may be things we usually associate with the word “trauma” such as bereavement, abuse or other life-threatening situations. But the reality is that most of us carry around the effects of smaller “traumas” – many of which are unconscious. These can be things like dealing with a parent who was always at work, or was too busy dealing with their own emotional issues to really be present when in our company. This trauma could be related to one particular moment, or a series of incidents that took place over time and cumulatively resulted in your attachment style.

The issues that brought about our trauma may not always be obvious, as any emotional abuse we suffered as a child may not be immediately clear. For example, we may have had an outwardly loving and participatory parent who, despite their best intentions, did not offer any true emotional connection or engagement. Often due to their own attachment issues, this parent may have been either available, or been unwilling to really understand the workings of their child’s mind. This kind of chronic emotional absence can have the same negative effect on a child as more obvious emotional abuse.

By facing and understanding our past traumas, we can change our attachment patterns; in time altering the course of our relationships and our, ultimately, our lives.

Find a Partner with a Secure Attachment Style

As we have seen in previous chapters, partners with secure attachment styles can be invaluable resources in assisting their loved ones to break out of their negative attachment patterns. Developing a secure relationship with someone who already exhibits a secure attachment style can help increase our self-worth and sense of security, as our new partnership forms an active model for how successful relationships operate. Possibly, those of us with insecure attachment styles have never been part of a secure relationship before, owing to the constant recreation of the negative patterns experienced in childhood.

But entering a healing relationship with a securely attached partner can be a frightening experience for many people suffering from insecure attachment styles. Many insecurities, particularly those with an avoidant attachment style struggle to open up and connect with others, and the idea that a partner may seek emotional intimacy can be overwhelming.

Some people with insecure attachment styles may believe it is necessary to handle all their issues themselves and never ask for help. Others may believe that sharing their problems is futile, as no one could possibly understand what they are going through. Sharing and opening up might also make them feel weak. And for those with dismissive avoidant or fearful avoidant attachment styles, being alone might be the only thing that makes them feel safe.

But for those of you struggling to connect with a secure partner, understand that cultivating a healthy relationship has the power to repair even the most deep-seated of emotional wounds.

Choose a life of connection; not just with your significant other, but in all relationship aspects. Shift your focus about how you define relationships and realise that all relationships are important. Counter the patterns of disconnect you have previously experienced by actively inviting connection into your life.

Make a plan to live a life of connection and value all your relationships. Remember, as humans, we need connection to survive. Surrounding us with those we care about gives us security, comfort, inspiration, clarity and grounding.

Question Your Core Beliefs About Yourself

Remember those who caused your attachment issues had their own problems. These may have come in the form of addiction, preoccupation, work issues, their own dramas, or marriage issues. Very rarely, if ever, was their behaviour a direct reflection on you.

Nonetheless, our attachment issues create a set of negative core beliefs we have about ourselves. We tell ourselves stories about what happened, and draw our own, often unconscious conclusions. For example, “Dad was always at work, therefore I don’t matter.” Or “Mom never real listened to me, so I must be unlovable.” We personalise the events that took place during our childhood and develop deep-seated core beliefs about ourselves that effect our adult life.

These negative beliefs form obstacles when it comes to building relationships. How can we have a successful relationship when we are lugging around the belief that we are unlovable and do not deserve to be in a relationship? How can we have a successful relationship when we don’t believe we are good enough, or don’t’ believe that we matter?

Successfully healing our attachment wounds requires us to really confront our core beliefs and examine just what it is we feel about ourselves. Most often, these beliefs leave us to have a diminished sense of self-worth.

Confront the Romantic Narrative

As we touched in Chapter Seven, our culture is constantly presenting us with an ideal of what a romantic relationship should look like. We’ve all seen and heard this story countless times – a couple falls in love at first sight, and they are deliriously happy. They get to know each other more

which leads them to discover that they are each other's soulmate. And of course, they live happily ever after.

But as even those of us with the most secure attachment styles know, the reality of being in a relationship is often far removed from this ideal. Comparing our relationships to this fantasy ideal is unrealistic, immature and unhealthy, particularly for those of us struggling with negative attachment issues.

In the same way that we must identify and question our core beliefs about ourselves, healing attachment trauma requires us to look at our beliefs regarding what a relationship should look like. As yourself how you believe couples "should" meet, interact, grow, share passion and otherwise relate. Then ask yourself where this belief has come from. Is it based on the fantasy of the ideal relationship the media presents us on a regular basis?

If we continue to compare our relationships to the fantasy romantic narrative, we are setting ourselves up for disappointment, as real-life partners will never compare to this ideal.

Strengthen our Self-Compassion

This point ties into the previous two, in which we questioned our core beliefs and our beliefs about the world around us. It calls on us to actively cultivate a greater sense of kindness to ourselves. By doing this, we are not only undoing any negative beliefs we might have about our self-worth, but we are replacing these damaging beliefs with a kinder inner dialogue.

By doing this, we will be able to more easily set boundaries, along with raising our standards and expectations in relationships of all kinds.

A big part of this is teaching ourselves not to accept anything less than true connection. This can be very difficult for those of us with anxious attachment styles, who have grown up accepting whatever miserable scraps of connection we can manage. People with attachment issues have taught themselves to live with emotionally unavailable, or emotionally demanding partners, often out of the fear that they will never find anyone better. They stay in damaging relationships, or with partners they don't feel connected to, believing that a flawed relationship is better than no relationship at all.

To break out of this pattern, allow yourself to question your relationships and the quality of the love and connection you are receiving. Realign your core belief to accept that you are worthy of true love and connection.

Pay Attention to Your Physical Body

Like all other psychological issues, attachment trauma can manifest itself in our physical body. In Chapter One, we discussed some of the physical effects of attachment issues, from an increased fight of flight response, to the altering of our genes as infants, which can cause health issues in later life. We have also discussed the correlation between healthy familial relationships and health and later life, and seen how suppressing our feelings can manifest as physical symptoms such as stomach pains.

When you are working at healing your attachment injuries, it is important to pay attention to the way your physical body is feeling. The link between our mind and our body is undeniable, so observing the way you physically respond to these healing activities can provide you with a good gauge as to their effectiveness.

Pay attention to any pain or discomfort you are feeling within your body and any areas in which you might be carrying stress or tension. Listen to your body as you go through the above healing exercises and notice the appearance or disappearance of any pain or discomfort.

Working With a Therapist

While self-directed healing can produce amazing results, sometimes our attachment wounds are simply too deep or too complex for us to manage on our own. This is when it becomes important to enlist the help of a licenced therapist.

A productive therapy session will help clients identify different parts of themselves that they may not have been aware of. A trained therapist will

help you understand that your perceived strengths are often covers for underlying hurt and trauma and understand how these issues relate to your everyday behaviour and tendencies.

Therapy can help us connect to our inner child – that often-scared part of us that needs emotional connection, love and support. Therapy can teach us to offer kindness and compassion to this inner child, instead of responding to our own perceived failures with negative self-talk.

Therapy can also help us to identify the opportunities for secure attachment that exist all around us. In all likelihood we have a network of caring friends or family – no matter how big or small – who are eager and willing to offer support when necessary. Remember, our survival depends on staying in close contact with those we love. Even the most independent of humans cannot survive alone.

While therapy sessions may incorporate many of the self-healing techniques we have discussed, there are also a number of different techniques and processes therapists may use in order to get to the root of your attachment injuries.

Let’s take a look:

Psychoanalysis Therapy

Psychoanalysis aims to release repressed emotions and experiences, in other words, to make us aware of previous unconscious memories. Although there is some variety in technique from therapist to therapist, this generally involves the patient lying on a couch, unable to see the therapist. They will be asked questions about their day-to-day thoughts and conflicts. This then leads the therapist to ask more probing and confronting questions, along with the analysis of dreams and fantasies, with the ultimate intent of uncovering hidden memories from early life.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Unlike psychoanalysis, cognitive behavioural therapy, or CBT, does not aim to take the patient back in time. Instead, it helps you make sense of what is

going on in your head, and provides techniques for dealing with seemingly irrational fears and emotions. This is done through the analysis of five different areas in your life; situations, thoughts, emotions, physical feelings and actions, all of which are intrinsically connected. Through in-depth discussion, therapists will help patients identify the core beliefs at the root of their problems and help them replace their damaging inner dialogue with more positive thoughts, implementing behaviors that support these new beliefs.

The Hoffman Process

The Hoffman process, created by Bob Hoffman in 1967, is a guided process of group therapy that aims to uncover the root causes of our attachment issues and injuries. Over an intense week-long retreat, the process teaches participants to trace the root of their negative behavioural patterns, and dissolve their damaging beliefs. The process combines a number of techniques, including psychoanalysis and CBT. Participants also engage in journaling, guided meditation and visualization, with the end goal of cultivating compassion for both themselves, their parents and others in their lives.

Hypnotherapy

Hypnosis can be a useful technique for uncovering hidden memories and discovering the root cause of our emotional issues. By entering a hypnotic state, patients are more likely to obtain access to deeply buried memories and uncover the underlying causes, or causes, of their attachment issues.

How to Find the Right Therapist

With so many therapists out there, finding the right one for you can seem like a daunting task. In a way, it’s a bit like dating – finding someone with whom you resonate, and who you feel truly understands you. While it can be time consuming to find the right therapist, it is well worth putting in the time. Studies have proven that a good relationship with a therapist or

counsellor can cause the brain to literally rewire itself, leading to real, long-lasting positive changes. So here are a few things to keep in mind when you're trawling through a seemingly endless list of available therapists:

Start by narrowing down the list. This can be as simple as filtering out those who are not in your vicinity. By taking this small step, it can make the process immediately feel more manageable.

Read through your list and get an instinctive feeling about each therapist. Learn a little about each of the professionals on your list – their background, their professional views, their life experiences. Rule out any with whom you don't feel as though you resonate, or could connect with.

Develop a vague idea of the approach you want. Do you want to quickly remove the symptoms of your attachment wounds? Or do you want to really understand the causes at the root of your injuries by accessing long-buried memories?

With your goal in mind, take some time to research a few of the different approaches to healing attachment wounds. Which of these approaches do you feel is right for you?

Ultimately, successful therapy relies on a strong relationship between the patient and therapist. Many therapists offer a free initial consultation phone call, so be sure to take advantage of this. Even if, after this, you feel as though you have found the right person to help you work through your issues, you may like to begin with just one or two sessions, to really ensure you have a strong connection with the person you are working with. After all, this is a relationship that has the power to greatly change your life for the better.

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CONCLUSION



As we have come to see throughout the course of this book, the issues caused by our attachment style begin very early in life, in the formative years before we can even properly communicate. Even those of us with the most loving of parents can experience attachment issues to some degree.

If you have not done so already, take some time to really analyse your behavioural and thought patterns, particularly in the field of relationships. Ask yourself the questions in Chapter Three, and examine the love personalities presented in Chapter Four. Can you see yourself in any of these attachment styles and personalities?

It is important to remember too, that even those of us with a primarily secure attachment style can exhibits anxious or avoidant tendencies at times. While the manifestations of these attachment styles may not be as profound as for someone with attachment issues, they can still present obstacles on the road to happy relationships. Even the mildest of manifestations can be solved by addressing the underlying issues and implementing the techniques discussed in Chapter Ten.

Above all, remember that, no matter how many years you have been carrying around your attachment wounds, they are always able to be healed. While the process can be uncomfortable and even painful at times, understand that releasing your attachment issues is among the most valuable things you can do for yourself. By doing so, you will open the door to a greater sense of self-worth, valuable friendships, strong familial ties and a long-lasting and loving romantic relationships. It is always possible to make changes, and doing so can allow you to finally find the happiness, love and security you have been seeking for so long.

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COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

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INTRODUCTION



What is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy?

We have to face quite a few specific kinds of problems and events in life. Any of those might be nice, others might not be so fun. But how we live life and whether we love it or loathe it is a feature of the kind of outlook we have as well as the emotional strength we can muster up. Some individuals are always optimistic and positive, giving them the power and equanimity to deal with all circumstances. There are others on the other end of the scale that are very timid and also negatively predisposed, making them quite scared, and also quite intimidated by each and every thing.

Other people are cynical by nature, people also go through traumatic experiences that change their lives forever. For example, children who experience a murder or terrorist attack could become mentally marred for life and suffer panic and anxiety attacks to the point that they are perennially miserable. These are all examples of behaviorally dysfunctional actions and lifestyles that need to be treated through Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, also known as CBT.

CBT is a therapy through which professional clinicians and psychologists work alongside people to try to help them find the reason they are behaving in a particular way. Thoughts provide a ride to emotions, rendering it essential to properly analyze them so that the root cause of the problem can be identified and resolved. The fundamental strategy is to substitute depressive feelings with constructive and optimistic ones. Only in this way can one once again become healthy and happy.

CBT is not always a straightforward technique. It needs a lot of meticulous and long-drawn psychoanalysis methods as well as psychiatric therapy so

that old memories and deteriorating or wounded emotions will be allowed to disappear into the past. This will help bring happiness to the forefront and help a person make rational and healthy choices.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and the Power of Thought

Evidence on the usefulness of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in the management of multiple mental health conditions, including fear, depression, and addiction is comprehensive. CBT emphasizes the power of thinking and believing. CBT includes several structures which are necessary to understand. I'll focus on three basic ones: core beliefs, underlying assumptions, and automatic thinking.

What is the primary conviction? It's how we come to look at ourselves and our potential. It is our unique lens, through which we see the world. Such convictions are responsible for inducing unconscious reasoning. Unconscious thinking is a feeling that automatically occurs. It is our internal experiences which some circumstances cause. Maintaining control of unconscious thinking is a smart thing. It allows us to limit the derogatory self-talk we do every day. Journaling may be useful to slow, analyze, and evaluate what's going in our heads. Questions to ask yourself while journaling: "Which emotion has been experienced? Which thought pattern has caused this negative emotion? What occurred during that period?"

Identifying these unconscious thought patterns and then looking further will reveal the ideas and fundamental values behind them. Automatic thoughts are the first few layers to elaborate on this metaphor, underlying assumptions form the middle layers and ultimately core beliefs are the core of the onion. In Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, the uncovering of core beliefs is called the "downward arrow technique." Through this process, I find my clients gain a great deal of self-awareness.

"I'm not good enough or I'm not lovable," could be a core belief. So how does an individual come to believe this? The underlying assumption determines the conviction or "schema." Usually, an underlying assumption is in the context of a sentence "if ... then." Usually, the individual does not question them, and they are taken as facts rather than as subjective opinions.

A distressed person will ignore or dismiss the good factors or events of their life, and focus on only the troubling "data" that reinforces the central conviction (i.e. "being inadequate"). And it can take many positive thoughts or affirmations to debunk a deeply rooted negative belief repeated daily.

As you might think, dealing with these pessimistic core beliefs, or schemas (such as "I'm not lovable"), is complicated. Some turn from this negative state of mind to drugs from time to time, for a brief escape. And for some, this ill-adapted method of coping will transform into a full-blown addiction. Core values can affect day-to-day activities and essential life decisions. I believe a vital aspect of the recovery process is learning to identify negative core beliefs and then challenging the assumptions that hold them.

Why Cognitive Behavioral Therapy?

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is based on the idea that human beings are somewhat irrational and make many illogical mistakes whenever they assess the risks and benefits of their thoughts and actions. It can relate to feelings that are out of balance, such as rage and depression. But CBT is also used to address many other nuanced problems, including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), OCD, drug misuse, ADHD, eating disorders, Bipolar Disorder, and other illnesses.

For them to be successful, cognitive behavioral clinicians will have a strong interaction with their customers, such as positive listening skills and a good personality fit. This is because the patient and therapist are working together to discuss the issues at hand and the reasons for the patient's thoughts and actions toward those issues. The aim is to alter ways of thought so that the individual suffers less consistently unpleasant mental conditions.

The Global Coalition for Behavioral Wellbeing is in favor of CBT as it has outstanding research evidence promoting its application in the therapeutic diagnosis of mental illness. CBT has gained broad acceptance among both clinicians and patients alike. Increasing numbers of psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and psychiatric nurses are getting CBT training.

Research show CBT's effectiveness against a wide range of disorders. Those experiments are well controlled, the data is appropriately reviewed, and the findings speak for themselves. For starters, CBT has been shown to have substantial advantages when managing bipolar depression, culminating in fewer treatment days, reduced suicide rates, and decreased levels of para-suicidal or self-injurious behavior.

How Does Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Differ from Other Treatments

The method and general focus of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is a bit different from many other, more traditional treatments. For example, CBT:

- Works on changing your thought patterns and on modifying behaviors in the immediate present
- Specifically addresses your problem thinking and undesirable behaviors.
- Is goal-oriented. Clear goals are set out for each session as well as for the long-term.
- Is educational. You monitor your feelings and thoughts, and then you commit these to paper. The therapist will also teach you essential coping skills, such as problem-solving.
- Allows you to play an active part in your learning and recovery. You will also complete "homework" assignments that are reviewed at the beginning of the next session.
- Employs multiple strategies, including role-playing, behavioral experiments, and guided discovery.
- Is time-limited

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PART 1 – IDENTIFY

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CHAPTER 1: BELIEFS AND MENTAL MODEL



What is a Mental Model?

A mental model is an internal interpretation of an external reality. This personal interpretation of external systems typically forms the foundation on which we base our thoughts, ideas, and decision-making processes. A mental model explains the thought process behind an individual's perception of how things work. The mental model is created and developed by an individual based on their experiences, perceptions, and their understanding of the world around them.

These mental models determine how we think and understand situations as well as influence the way we look at problems, make decisions and identify opportunities around us. The creation of mental models involves the integration of acquired knowledge and past experience. This integration enables inferences to be drawn from our past experiences to help us understand current circumstances.

Experience is an important component in the structure of mental models. When you have experienced a particular situation in a certain way in the past, you will tend to evaluate similar occurrences based on that past experience. For instance, if you were attacked by a dog as a child you might be prone to developing a fear of all dogs. This is because every time you encounter a dog, your brain will interpret the situation as a dangerous situation because your past experience was not pleasant. It is therefore important to recognize that past experiences, whether good or bad, influence our thoughts and behavior.

Mental models enhance our understanding of different experiences and complex systems. These models also allow us to create hypothetical simulations that we can use to predict possible outcomes of certain courses

of action. For instance, when faced with a decision, we usually run through the outcomes of what each particular choice would result in. This mental stimulation not only aids in making decisions but also helps us in preparing for the possible outcomes and probable consequences of those decisions.

By enabling us to create simplified internal representations of complex external situations, mental models increase our understanding by structuring and arranging knowledge in a way that we can understand, recall and use it. Without a solid understanding of what is going on around us and how things work, it becomes difficult to adapt to our environment, cope with situations or find our place in our ecosystem and the larger world.

In the workplace, your ability to perform effectively will largely be determined by your understanding of your own role, how this role interconnects with those of your colleagues and ultimately how your function contributes to the general objectives of your company. Having a clear understanding of your place in a system is essential for personal growth, understanding the opportunities available to you and for creating sound relationships.

The human brain uses mental models as thinking tools or filters to simplify complex concepts and information into understandable and simplified concepts. Since the brain is not capable of handling all the information and details we see in the world around us, it creates models to simplify this knowledge into a thinking process that we can understand. The more models we are able to create in our brain, the better our overall understanding of different concepts will be.

Our judgment is positively impacted by having a broad base of mental models because they put us in a position where we can perceive, interpret and gain an understanding of a situation from multiple perspectives. This objectivity yields better thought processes because it ensures that beliefs, prejudices and emotions do not cloud our judgment. Bad decisions are more often than not borne of the failure to base our choices on fact and logic and relying on emotions to direct our thoughts.

Understanding of different mental models gives us insight not only into our own actions and behavior but also into why others act and behave the way they do. Our interpretations of the world vary from individual to individual based on our own unique experiences, attitudes, beliefs, preferences and,

personality. Any new knowledge we acquire is filtered through the mental models we have created and developed in our minds. Hence your set of mental models will play a major role in your thinking and decision-making process.

Mental models are incomplete and constantly changing. Our understanding of the world is typically based on our experiences and the knowledge and information we are exposed to. As our environments and experiences change so does our view and perception of the world. Our mental models are therefore constantly evolving to keep up with our experiences and learning. We increase our models as we go through life so as to progressively improve our thought processes and deepen our understanding of the world and the systems around us.

When we are children, we have a basic understanding of things, but as we grow older and learn more, this understanding is bound to increase. For instance, a child of six knows that a car will get them from point A to point B, when they are twenty, they will probably have a grasp of how this movement is accomplished. And if they pursue that line of education they may eventually understand how the different parts of the car engine work to create motion. As we learn and have more experiences, our mental models expand and evolve to accommodate the increasing knowledge of different subjects.

Mental models are not factual representations of reality. They are unique interpretations of phenomena that are based on a person's perception. Our perceptions and understanding of the world around us differ from person to person based on our individual experiences, views and beliefs; hence our mental models are not necessarily objective or factual. We each develop our models to explain our own view of how the world works.

A mental model is therefore not an objective view of reality but it is biased based on the individual's understanding. As such, it cannot be taken as a factual or comprehensive representation of reality. While all perspectives will have factual elements, they cannot be said to contain the entire truth. For a comprehensive understanding of reality, we need to utilize multiple and varied mental models that represent different points of view and that will equip us with a multi-dimensional outlook.

Mental models simplify complex knowledge. A mental model is a thinking tool that is used to interpret different concepts and explain the relationship between things and how they work. In economics, the law of supply and demand is used to understand market dynamics. It helps you understand the concepts that affect the balance in the market place. One of the facts of this law is that if supply in a market of a particular product exceeds the demand, you should expect a fall in prices. On the other hand, when the demand for a particular product is higher than its supply, prices will undoubtedly rise. This business model is based on experience with market trends and is used to understand the dynamics in the business world.

Each mental model represents a possible outcome. We use mental models to create simulations of different scenarios and infer possibilities and probable outcomes that we could expect in any given situation. When you filter information through a particular mental model, the mind will arrive at a possible outcome based on the information at hand and past experience.

Mental models are predictive in nature. This is why they give us better clarity in decision making. By enabling us to foresee the possible outcome of a particular choice or action, they equip us to make choices with the full knowledge of what consequences we can expect. Mental models give an indication of what to expect in the future through mental simulations using different scenarios.

What is Belief?

Core beliefs are often formed in childhood and reinforced throughout life. They can also form during traumatic events in adulthood, such as the death of a loved one, fighting in a war, or being the victim of a violent crime. We tend to accept evidence that supports our beliefs and reject evidence that does not, so we may hold our core beliefs strongly even if there is little evidence for them. We often support dysfunctional core beliefs by focusing on one or two areas of our lives that aren’t going well, rather than looking at our lives overall. However, with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, you can challenge and change dysfunctional core beliefs. It’s important to remember that core beliefs are ideas, not facts. How strongly you feel something is not an indicator of how true it is.

In identifying your beliefs, you will have to do some digging within yourself. Some people have a hard time understanding how their thought processes connect to negative emotions, so it may be helpful to start by identifying automatic thoughts and assumptions before uncovering core beliefs. Some people may also find it painful to explore their core beliefs, so it may be better to start by addressing automatic thoughts.

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CHAPTER 2: AUTOMATIC AND INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS



What Are Automatic Thoughts?

Automatic thoughts are a central aspect of the CBT theory. Automatic thoughts are those that come into our minds quickly, without effort. They are short and related to the specific situation at hand. They occur during or right after the situation, as an “instinctive” response. They don’t include reflection or careful logic but usually seem quite reasonable. Some are perfectly logical; others are known as “dysfunctional automatic thoughts.”

If you feel that another thought better connects to the problem, you can focus on that instead. Or, if you feel that the issue underlying that particular automatic thought is not as important as other issues, you can set it aside and focus on other thoughts that had a stronger impact on your mood. When evaluating a series of automatic thoughts, assess how intense the feelings they stimulated were, and choose the thoughts that had the biggest impact.

Often, these types of dysfunctional thoughts result from cognitive distortions, or “thought traps,” which are essentially mistakes we make in the thinking process. Automatic thoughts tend to fall into a few categories of cognitive distortions. Identifying the general patterns can be helpful in changing the thoughts that are a part of that pattern. It may be helpful to write down some of your automatic thoughts and then look for patterns.

What Are Intrusive Thoughts?

Intrusive thoughts are another type of common but upsetting thought. Our brains generate many thoughts and ideas over the course of a day. Some feel completely normal, productive, and helpful, and we view them as

reflective of who we are. Some thoughts may strike us as odd or confusing but are easily dismissed and don't cause much distress. We can also experience thoughts that seem bad, scary, or sickening—things that don't fit with who we are or that make us feel terrible, yet are hard to get rid of. These are known as intrusive thoughts.

Intrusive thoughts are thoughts, ideas, or impulses that are unwanted and upsetting but continue to occur. They are difficult to stop or control, which often makes them more distressing. They may interrupt activities and thought processes and cause feelings of doubt, shame, guilt, confusion, fear, and anxiety. Intrusive thoughts are common symptoms of anxiety disorders, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, but they can occur independently as well.

There are several types of intrusive thoughts, which may be treated in different ways. Obsessional intrusions usually relate to something that a person finds upsetting, disgusting, or repugnant, such as violence, taboo sexual acts, or his or her religious beliefs. These are often addressed within an OCD framework. Worry intrusions are anxious thoughts about future events or threats. Usually, dealing with anxiety through a range of CBT techniques will help reduce the frequency and severity of worry intrusions. Trauma-related intrusions are sudden recollections of past traumatic events. Addressing the feelings around these events with a therapist may help.

Examples of Intrusive Thoughts:

- Unwanted sexual thoughts involving a family member, child, or animal (obsessional intrusion)
- Unwanted sexual thoughts involving a coworker whom you are not attracted to (obsessional intrusion)
- Thoughts of committing a crime or violent act that you know you would never do, such as killing your spouse or harming your baby (obsessional intrusion)
- Fear that you won't be able to stop yourself from saying something inappropriate in public (obsessional intrusion)
- Worries that you no longer believe in your religion, briefly thought something forbidden, or performed a ritual incorrectly (obsessional intrusion)

- Repeated, intensely felt doubts about your ability to perform on an upcoming exam you have studied for (worry intrusion)
- Recurrent, distressing thoughts about contracting a rare disease and dying (worry intrusion)
- Repeated thoughts about a humiliating event that happened in childhood (trauma-related intrusion)
- Unwanted, upsetting recollections of a violent event you experienced as an adult (trauma-related)

These are just some of the many forms that intrusive thoughts can take. Many people are surprised to realize that others have experienced similar types of intrusive thoughts. Knowing this can be reassuring and can help you reach a better understanding of intrusive thoughts as a common phenomenon, not a uniquely personal illness or failing.

Almost everyone has intrusive thoughts, but people respond to them in different ways. The key difference between people who do not struggle with their intrusive thoughts and those who do is not that the former do not have them, though they may experience them less frequently or intensely, but that they are able to dismiss upsetting, unwanted thoughts as meaningless. Those who struggle with obsessive thoughts tend to attach great significance to the thoughts and conclude that they really do believe or feel those things or really will commit those acts. They begin to build a narrative around the thoughts, with implications about their own character, behavior, and future actions.

The most important thing to understand about intrusive thoughts is that just having a certain thought or image does not mean it is true. Having an intrusive thought about an unacceptable violent or sexual action doesn’t mean you actually want to or will commit the act. If you are religious, having a distressing blasphemous thought doesn’t mean you truly believe it. Experiencing recurrent anxious thoughts about a future event does not mean that those fears are well-founded or that the bad outcome is likely to occur.

Steven Phillipson, Ph.D., is a true expert in the field. He reminds his patients that they are not “mentally ill.” Instead, they simply have an anxiety disorder. He also prefers to call intrusive thoughts “creative associations.” This attitude encourages patients to embrace their experience of these common, if sometimes disturbing, thoughts.

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CHAPTER 3: EMOTIONAL RESPONSE



What is it about emotions that can hang us up when we are trying to cruise along in life? A major life-altering event is understandable, but what accounts for the brakes being slammed on life with emotions like depression, overwhelming sadness, jealousy, or rage? Are you doomed to being subjected to your daily ration of emotional energy? You can learn to adapt to and work around emotions once you have a full understanding of what they are, where they come from, and how much control you can exercise.

What Causes an Emotional Response?

Negative emotions are typically tied to some of our deepest held beliefs about self-worth, life-satisfaction, and abandonment. Positive emotions tend to tie in to already held memories of happiness, bliss, acceptance, and affection for others. As social creatures, humans are driven hard by emotions and emotional responses to outside stimuli. Although many people define themselves as “loners” or solitary personalities, they are just as socially dependent on feeling confirmation and acceptance as anyone else. It is a part of human nature.

If you get devastating news, such as a death in the family or a serious medical diagnosis, the brain takes in this information, and the electrical activity hits full-tilt. Feelings of impending abandonment and not being able to see the person you love anymore can be temporarily overwhelming. Fear of death can also be a debilitating sensation, initially. The body responds by crashing in a way that causes overwhelming sadness and grief to take over. Getting news of a promotion at work or a new baby on the way can have the opposite effect. It can leave you feeling like you are walking on the

clouds. It directly correlates to our deepest held beliefs of self-worth and can be a strong response.

How to Temporarily Push Emotions Out of the Picture

Receiving traumatic news of family illness, accident, or death cannot be completely pushed aside and should not be. Moments like these will consume your immediate thoughts and time with good reason. Other, lesser events such as losing your job or a breakup with a partner can be temporarily pushed off when you are trying to make it through a day at work or other activity. A few things to try are:

- Put in earbuds and listen to some uplifting, up-tempo music.
- Send your resume to ten awesome companies offering totally amazing jobs.
- Take yourself out to lunch to a nice, brightly lit café.
- Take a walk and reconnect with nature to regain a calm feeling.
- Avoid talking to others about the issue while emotions are raw.
- Identifying Emotional Triggers

Learning what triggers certain emotions will help you avoid situations that can become unpleasant. No one knows and understands your emotional make up more than you and those closest to you. Unfortunately, you are one of the few that cares about your personal emotional health and well-being. Identify and obey your personal limits on triggering events, and avoiding subjecting yourself to situations that bring a negative emotional response. Pre-planning is often necessary.

Sad and Upsetting Events

Hearing news that is upsetting or creates a lingering sadness has a way of completely disrupting your day. Developing mental toughness should include disciplining yourself to withstand or avoid situations that can lead to triggering feelings of sadness or upset.

Giving and Receiving Anger

Anger is one emotion that needs to be completely brought under tight control. It can lead to violent actions brought to you or done by you to others. Rage can get out of control quickly and often with little reason. People have submitted reasons for murder being something as slight as getting an ugly look or being in a bad mood. Trivial reasons for such dastardly crimes are rare, but it happens. It demonstrates how quickly triggering anger can lead to an action that cannot be taken back. It is a lack of self-control that is the polar-opposite of mental strength and toughness.

Before lodging any complaints about the anger dished out to you daily, ask yourself if you are completely innocent of gifting people with an angry tirade now and again. Anger can manifest in many ways, even as passive-aggressive.

Negative Emotions

Any emotion you experience that interferes with what you are trying to accomplish can be considered negative. You may be besieged with joy that makes it difficult to be still. It is not a wonderful feeling at midnight when you need to be up early for work the next day. Anger, jealousy, insecurity, and any number of emotions that leave you feeling somewhat out of control are negative and need to be dealt with to experience peace. Never let emotions make you feel tied down and controlled.

Sadness and Depression

Overwhelming feelings of sadness and depression must be eliminated to consider yourself mentally tough. No matter how much you prepare yourself, things will happen that will leave hurt, pain, and sadness. The death of a spouse, loss of a pet, a divorce, foreclosure, and many other life events can leave you feeling nothing short of shaken and sad. The danger of not dealing with sadness is that it can lead to depression long-term.

Being Ruled by Emotions

Mental toughness means drawing a line on being ruled and dragged around by your emotions or the emotional demonstrations of others. It is not difficult to completely lose control of your life by allowing emotional states to determine what you get done, where you go, and how limited your attempts to accomplish tasks are. You will never be able to live life to your fullest potential until you have firm emotional control. How controlled are you by emotions? You may consider yourself ruled by emotions if:

- You lose at least a half-day of work one or two days each week due to personal emotional upheaval.
- Emotional arguments are a near-daily occurrence in your home.
- Work stoppage from anger or arguing amongst employees is a frequent problem.
- You have given up on getting along with some people.
- People easily get under your skin.
- You feel tired and depressed daily.
- You feel angry constantly.
- You feel lethargic and tired all the time.
- You worry and fret over the smallest details.
- You feel awkward in a group.
- You take statements too personally.

If any of these are a frequent problem, it might be time to begin working on getting better emotional control in your life.

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PART 2 – PLAN

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CHAPTER 4: HOW TO SET GOALS IN YOUR LIFE



Goals are very important. They keep you motivated and focused. Going about life without goals is shooting aimlessly, and you will not achieve anything meaningful, you will become discouraged and frustrated. To set your goals, you must write them on paper with the expected date of achieving them. They act as a constant reminder and help to keep you in check.

Goals are essential because they give you a target or a purpose. Goals are also important because they enable you to measure your progress. When you set a big goal, you set up other smaller goals that guide you toward achieving the big goal. This lets you check your progress and helps you celebrate small successes.

Another importance of goals is that they help you overcome procrastination. Setting goals makes you accountable. They serve as reminders of the things you need to achieve and by when. This enables you to use your time well and avoid postponing doing things. Goals are also motivational. They set a base for your drive and give you a solid endpoint.

You cannot go about life without direction. If you have no purpose in life, then you have no reason for living. Every successful person sets out with a goal in mind that they want to achieve.

What is Your Vision?

Having a vision is one of the most important things if you want to be successful. It is your most important mental picture. It doesn’t have to be just one image or goal; it can be a set of goals that are long-term. It defines

your desired state in the future; it communicates what you desire to achieve over time. On a personal level, a vision can be termed as your WHY, while at an organizational level, it should define its purpose for existence.

Purpose of a Vision

A vision is what describes what you are doing because people want to know. However, every person or organization should have a vision. There are two main reasons why you should have a vision, these are;

- First, a vision acts to inspire and give you energy. It helps guide you and give purpose to all your efforts. When you come to terms with your WHY, you get connected with your core values. It opens up your strongest motivations, making a connection between your daily work and strongest values, hence making you unstoppable.
- A vision helps give you direction in a world full of choices. It allows you to focus on what needs to be done and what should not be done for your achievements in the future. When you become clear about your vision and goals, it becomes easier to say yes or no with valid reasons and no fear of rejection.
- How to Identify and Develop Your Vision

When you are looking to identify your vision, it is best to do this in a quiet place where you find inspiration and no distractions. When building your vision, your main question is usually WHY. What are your dreams, how do you visualize your future? Once you identify your WHY, then it becomes easy to identify your WHAT and HOW. Focus on your biggest and long-term mental picture now.

When coming up with your vision, consider the following:

- Unique – ensure that your vision is unique and fits into your values and passion. This means imagining yourself maybe three years from now in the role. How do you see yourself, and do you like your role?
- Simple – a vision must be simple, clear, and easy to understand. You are likely to need other people to help you actualize it, like employees;

they need to be able to understand your vision in order to work towards its actualization.

- Focused – a good vision is not broad. It is narrow and precise.
- Bold – a vision needs to be brave and big. It must test your abilities and skills.
- Beneficial – a good vision has a purpose, and it is intended to benefit you as well as others.
- Aligned – your vision should be aligned to your objectives and ways of achieving it. For purposes of authenticity, ensure that there are no contradictions with your objectives.
- Inspiring – write down your vision in a manner that is inspiring. Your vision must be inspiring not only to you but to your team as well.
- Engaging – a vision should be engaging; it must arouse your curiosity and that of your team.
- Overall, to be successful, you must have a vision and work towards that vision as it acts as a road map to your destination.
- Making and Achieving Goals

If you desire to attain anything in life, setting goals is one of the most important things to do. People who do not set goals tend to have no direction and believe that life just happens to them, and that luck is what determines what they have or do not have in life. Setting goals is the difference between having control over your life and letting life have control over you. When you take charge of your life, it means you enjoy it, while knowing where it is headed. You put work towards it until you arrive at your destination.

How to set and achieve your goals:

Let Your Goals Align with Your Purpose

You may sometimes think that you have set goals, and you are not motivated to achieve them, yet the goals look very good and relevant. The problem is not inadequate motivation but that your goals lack alignment with your life purpose. There are two ways to set goals. The traditional and superficial way is where you set goals based on what you think you should

do or accomplish. These goals can be achievable, and they do work, but they are the kind of goals that you will likely drop because they are not in harmony with your higher self or purpose. If you achieve them, you may not have the feeling or experience you expected because the goal was not aligned with your purpose.

When setting goals, focus on your deepest desires, passions or dreams, and your calling. Do not allow anything to dissuade you by telling you that it is unachievable. Set goals that are aligned with your purpose and soul.

Let Your Goals Be Visible

Knowing what you want is not enough. It is important to write down your plan for what you want to achieve and how you plan to achieve it. You should also make time to check your goals often so that you never get distracted from them. When you write them down, keep them somewhere you will see them daily in order to stay focused.

Get a Partner for Accountability

Goals are supposed to be achieved, especially when connected to your purpose in life. When you set goals, share them with someone so that they help you stay on course and avoid distractions.

Identify a Goal That is Worth Your Life

This simply means ensuring that the goals you set are important to you. In the event that you find challenges or obstacles, you must still stay motivated and find the strength to keep moving on. When a goal is not important to you, it is easy to give up on it when you face challenges.

Prepare for Obstacles

You already know that your journey will not be smooth and that you will face opposition and obstacles. You must be mentally prepared for any roadblocks you may come across. If you do not anticipate these roadblocks beforehand and prepare for them when they happen, they can discourage you, and you may give up. As you set your goals, think of all the possible roadblocks and prepare for them.

Stop Procrastination

Procrastination is when a person tries all they can to avoid doing unpleasant tasks. Many people like procrastinating. You have a job that you must complete, but you do not want to because it is not pleasant to do it. There are various reasons why people procrastinate. These may include:

- They find the task to be unpleasant, and they would prefer to be doing something else instead. For instance, not many people want to change their behavior. They would rather stay with what is familiar rather than come up with ways to eliminate or change the habit.
- Sometimes a person has no idea how to carry out a task, and as such, prefers to avoid it altogether. For instance, a person may know that something is not right with the way they react to situations and behave. However, they avoid making changes in their behavior because they don’t know how to do it or to ask for help.
- Most perfectionists have a habit of procrastinating. They do this either because they feel they have nothing to change concerning behavioral change, or because they think they have no time to change perfectly.

Changing behavior is not a pleasant task. However, it must be done, and avoiding procrastination is a sure way to achieving your goal. Once you have identified the behaviors and thoughts you want to change, you must avoid procrastination. There are various strategies to help you avoid procrastination. These include:

- A reward system – encourage yourself to do it first then have a way to reward yourself once you have done it. Try and face the unpleasant

task of dealing with your negative thoughts or analyzing your negative behaviors in the morning when you are fresh.

- Do it often – if you find yourself struggling to analyze things in your past that may be contributing to your current behavior, you can break them into small tasks. Practice evaluating yourself every day for a few minutes to establish what the unpleasant things. are When you do it more often, you start getting used to it and realize it is not so bad after all.
- Note it down – have a diary or a day-to-day to-do list. When you have things written down, it is hard to ignore them. For instance, if in your to-do list, you have indicated meditating for 20 minutes each morning, you will find it difficult to skip to the next task without completing the first one.
- Have an accountability partner – some people struggle with motivating themselves. For example, if you have decided to throw out physical clutter that could be causing you anxiety and stress, you may find it hard to part with some items. Get someone that you will be accountable to who will help you through the journey of getting rid of the clutter.
- Ask yourself the benefits of putting it off against doing it – asking this kind of question will help persuade you to do the unpleasant thing of transforming your thinking patterns.

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CHAPTER 5: FACE YOUR FEARS



Unsurprisingly, fear lives at the heart of every phobia. But it isn't the usual, healthy fear that everyone feels from time to time. Whereas healthy fear prompts us to make a decision and fades as we move forward, anxiety creates a fear that persists long after the trigger is behind us. It sticks to us like a shadow, and as time passes by it worsens until it's well beyond our control and has come to dominate our lives.

What many people find when they begin CBT is that when they stop to analyze what triggers their phobias and what thoughts said phobias produce, the fear is often both irrational and out of proportion. It's a tremendous relief to be sure, but how do we get to a point where we can even see the distortions that clearly?

Let's talk about the distortion first.

Fear, to a degree, is a healthy response to the things and situations we perceive as dangerous. It may influence a decision we make for a brief period of time, but once that decision is made it's gone. The prolonged fear through phobia follows us around because our attention is fixated on the trigger moment; we never give ourselves the chance to put the fear behind us. As a result, we feel as though we need to be constantly on guard. And as we keep thinking about it our brain scrambles to find more and more ways for what we fear to become a reality, limiting how we choose to live our lives.

Even more damaging is how we eventually find other things to become afraid of: “Well, this may not happen, but what if this does?” Because of the cyclical nature of our thinking, we seek these things out even though they make us totally miserable. It's almost like an addiction, and in short order, we have a list of reasons to be afraid that's increasingly more removed from where we started. To get on with living we need to take a step back and put

them in a proper perspective. Generally, you can do this by trying one of the strategies outlined below.

Play the script until the end: This strategy involves examining what the worst-case scenario is in a given situation. It is especially helpful for those dealing with intense fear and anxiety. This exercise is beneficial in helping you determine what your underlying fear outcomes are. The idea behind this technique is to conduct a thought experiment or a ‘rehearsal” in your mind. You set out to imagine the worst possible outcome to a situation, and then let the event play out in your mind. By doing this, you can learn that no matter what happens, things will likely turn out okay.

To start, you will want to articulate what you're afraid of. Is it a consequence of something you think you've done? Is it how you perceive others will feel about you, and if it is, be honest with yourself and put it down on paper. The benefit of having your fear in a tangible form cannot be understated.

Now write how you think this could come to reality. This part proves to be difficult for some, but it's also very revealing as to how you think. How does what you fear become a reality? Explain it in fine detail. Connect as many dots, as many as there may be.

Finally, how realistic is the result? Let's say that, for example, you have a phobia regarding being around large groups of people and you avoid going out with friends. One of your fears could be that they'll learn of something embarrassing you did years ago and will think less of you because of it. How would they learn about it? Obviously, you don't want to tell them, so it must be some other way. Does someone else know? Perhaps an old friend you haven't seen in a long time was present. They could resurface ad decide to tell everyone. It's entirely possible, sure, but how possible is it? This is where the details of the previous step come into play. How many dots did you have to connect to make your fear reality? This is a useful way to gauge how plausible your fears may or may not be. Of course, because of the way your phobia distorts your thinking, you may find it difficult to see things as they really are. This is when an outside perspective—like that of a professional therapist—can be useful.

Situation exposure hierarchies: This exercise involves putting all of the things that you find yourself avoiding because of your current issues on a

list, and then rate each on a scale from 0 to 10 in terms of how much trouble the list item causes you. For example, someone with severe social anxiety might place asking someone out on a date at the top of his list with a rating of 10, but asking for someone to hold the elevator might be at the bottom of the list with a rating of 2.

It is important to be thorough when you make your list so that you don't have any serious jumps between numbers. The end goal of this exercise is to slowly work your way from the bottom of the list to the top so that each new activity slowly adds to your overall level of discomfort. The idea is that by the time you have mastered the activity you will have become used to that level of your specific stressor, so you can more easily move on to the next. As such, it is important not to get ahead of yourself and try and bite off more than you can chew. A slow and steady buildup is going to be far more effective than a dramatic spike all at once. Journaling is sometimes combined with exposure therapy so that you can record and understand how you felt during the exercise, and how you managed the feelings that you had.

An example of exposure therapy would be if you were afraid of bees and wasps and you eventually worked your way up to being able to put yourself in the vicinity of them to illicit the fearful response. Then, as you are in their presence and the fear begins to arise, you recall information about bees and wasps that remind you about how positive they are to the environment and how unlikely it is that you would be stung by one. Continue to remain in their vicinity and allow the fear to run its course.

Interoceptive exposure: Interoceptive exposure is another technique used to treat panic disorder and anxiety. It involves exposure to feared bodily sensations that simulate how they feel during a panic attack. The purpose is to then challenge the unhelpful and automatic thoughts that have been associated with these sensations, and to be able to manage them in a controlled environment. During interoceptive exposure, individuals learn to maintain the sensation without panicking and learn that the symptoms and feelings that they are experiencing are not, in fact, dangerous or threatening.

Therapists use this exposure to physical sensations as a way to simulate a panic attack in order to change the experiences associated with the attacks into more benign experiences. Physical symptoms associated with panic

attacks include excessive sweating, elevated heart rate, dizziness, trembling, and chest pains.

Clients who suffer from panic disorders avoid situations that might cause panic attacks. An example of such avoidance is a person that gets into a car accident. Each time the person drove after that they were afraid of having an accident, which caused them to have anxiety. Due to anxiety, even small experiences while driving cause panic attacks. The person avoids driving altogether to avoid panic attacks. However, avoiding the situation only makes it worse.

In order to lessen the effects of the panic attack, the interoceptive exposure method imitates the physical symptoms of a panic attack. This can be done by holding the head down between the legs and pull up quickly to produce a head rush. Other examples are to breathe very quickly to induce hyperventilation or spin around in a chair to mimic dizziness. Repeated exposure to the physical symptoms makes panic attacks easier to deal with when they do occur.

Interoceptive exposure should only be done with the help of a licensed therapist. Clients unfamiliar with the technique could hurt themselves by attempting to reproduce the panic attack on their own and are unlikely to get any therapeutic value out of it. Before starting interoceptive exposure the client should discuss with the therapist the methods he or she plans to attempt.

To practice dealing with the issues that particular sensations call forth, practice the following:

Breathing

- Rapidly breathe in and out, taking full breaths each time (1 minute)
- Hold your nose and breathe through a straw (2 minutes)
- Hold your breath (30 seconds)
- Physical exercise
- Run in place (2 minutes)
- Walk up and down the stairs (2 minutes)
- Tense all the muscles in your body (1 minute)

Spinning or shaking

- Spin as fast as you can while sitting in an office chair (1 minute)
- Spin while standing as fast as you can (1 minute)
- Shake your head back and forth before looking straight ahead (30 seconds)
- Put your head between your legs and then stand up quickly (1 minute)
- Lie down for a minute and then stand up quickly (1 minute)

Unreality

- Stare at yourself in a mirror (2 minutes)
- Stare at a blank wall (2 minutes)
- Stare at a florescent light and then read something (1 minute)

Nightmare exposure and rescripting: Nightmares are unavoidable. Individuals are likely to have bad dreams if they are dealing with heavy issues in their lives. This is a technique that is used in CBT to help individuals replace the feelings they had after having a nightmare. If the nightmare caused intense fear in the person, the emotions could be redirected into something more positive.

In order to arouse the feelings you experience in relation to your nightmares, you must first begin to recall them in as much detail as possibly. As you do, the emotions accompanying the nightmares should begin to arise once more, typically overcoming you, sometimes in a rather intense manner. With these emotions now stirring up once again you can identify what emotion you would rather experience and develop a new image associated with your desired emotion. After moving back and forth through the process of awakening the emotions relating to the nightmares and then rescripting them with new desired emotions and images, you train your mind to adjust its focus each time the nightmare is aroused. Typically, what will end up happening during your sleep then is that if the nightmare begins to start up, your mind will naturally switch to the preferred emotion

and image that you have rescripted it with. As a result, you should no longer experience disturbing nightmares.

Note that when you are dealing with nightmares, rescripting can take time since nightmares typically happen when you are asleep. It can therefore be challenging to tap into them with your conscious mind. You might need to continually use the rescripting method for several nights over before you find complete freedom from your nightmares. If you do not experience instant relief, you need to continue practicing your rescripting process until the nightmares begin to go away. Trust that as long as you stay committed they will disappear in due time and you will no longer have the disturbing or distressing experience of your nightmares.

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CHAPTER 6: TOOLS TO HELP YOU TRACK YOUR GOAL PROGRESS



Goals can be short-term, long-term or somewhere in between. You can take each of your long-term goals, break them down to smaller parts, and take measures to accomplish each one.

So how can you achieve these goals?

In the journey of goals realization, you will find lots of things that can cause you to detour in the process. The regular ups and downs of everyday living are a few of these things.

This is where goal-setting comes in. A goal setting device is something that will make it a lot easier to keep on track in the pursuit of achieving your goals. Goal setting tools can include motivational reading, and exploring information that can help you reach your goals. There are specialized resources and tools like worksheets, forms, and sure techniques such as breathing exercises to assist you.

Utilizing a goal-setting application will help you address some issues faster and much easier than doing it alone. Ninety percent of individuals that use goal-setting tools attain their goals.

Articles are another wonderful goal-setting tool. The reason behind this is they concentrate on a particular topic, are short, and can be chosen for each specific goal. Words are a simple and effective goal setting tool.

Words can influence you and alter your thinking and behavior. Constantly attempt to choose your words carefully. Use good words, not in just in speaking but also in thought.

Money is a superb goal-setting tool. By using money as a focus for your goal-setting, you are centered on the need for keeping healthy goals. This can lead to a calmer and more contented life.

Using money as a goal-setting application shouldn't be identified wrongly as earning money as the primary goal. There is a classic saying that "no one on their deathbed has stated he wishes he had invested more hours making money." By utilizing money as a tool, rather than a goal, your whole outlook on life will change.

There are lots of software programs out there that are being used as goal-setting tools. Using software will help you set your goals in a more organized, supple, and planned way. It allows you to state what you wish to accomplish, list all the areas in your life you feel are important, and your expectations of each.

Such applications allow you to create an action plan and a to-do list for attaining each goal. The benefits are the products are in the right location, there are no papers to lose, and absolutely no poor penmanship to decode. This particular software allows you to become your own life coach.

Goal setting is very important, and goal-setting tools are important. You need to get the correct tools to enable you to start on the right track. You can use common tools such as affirmations and inspirational quotes, to name a few.

You have the choice to go a little more high-tech by using a software program to monitor your progress so that you can see where changes are required. The option is yours.

Delightful goal setting

Nowadays, there are fantastic internet programs that can make goal setting fun and simple. When goal setting is fun and simple, you are more likely to stick with it long enough to get the success you truly desire. Some of these include:

1. Goal Buddy
2. Mint

3. Basecamp
4. Google Calendar
5. VisonBoard.me
6. Lifetick
7. GoalsOnTrack
8. Goalscape
9. BizOnTrack
10. Shrewd Goals Templates
11.

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PART 3 – ACT

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CHAPTER 7: CBT TECHNIQUES



Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is essential in today's world that is filled with sad and depressed people. These techniques are meant to help you recalibrate your brain to give you more control over your thoughts by reinforcing new patterns. They help one easily recognize those negative thoughts in their heads, leave them behind and live free.

Now, let us discover a few of the most effective Cognitive Behavioral Therapy strategies and techniques. The techniques are plenty and vary depending on whether they are administered by a professional or patients themselves.

Cognitive Restructuring Techniques

Cognitive restructuring techniques help patients identify their thinking patterns that are usually responsible for their negative thoughts, moods and ineffective behavior. There are numerous cognitive restructuring techniques available, with the most common one involving the tracking of dysfunctional thoughts. This is done by recording one's thoughts on a thought record; from there, healthier and more flexible thinking patterns are devised based on the records obtained.

Graded Exposure Assignments

The exposure technique helps people approach the things they fear the most, systematically and harmlessly. Fear is what hinders people from getting into a particular situation, and avoiding what you fear increases your chances of developing anxiety.

Systematic exposure helps people tackle their fears by helping them master their feared situations and tackling them one by one. When one level is tackled, the next level of exposure is more complicated. Eventually, a person will gain enough confidence for them to face that which they fear the most, which often is the root of their negative thoughts and anxiety.

This technique has an effectiveness rate of 90% with some cases of anxiety disorders.

Activity Scheduling

The activity scheduling technique was designed to help people master the behaviors that they should be doing more. The technique works by first identifying the behaviors that are beneficial to a person, then coming up with a schedule that dictates the number of times that behavior should be repeated. The behaviors or practices are simple tasks such as meditation, working on specific projects or simply going for a walk.

This technique has proven to be quite helpful in helping depressed people complete tasks due to procrastination.

Successful Approximation

A successful approximation is yet another technique that helps get people get tasks done. It is used on people who find it difficult to get tasks done either due to the feeling that the task is overwhelming or simply because they are not familiar with the task at hand.

With this technique, a person gets to learn and master a task that is similar to the one they are supposed to accomplish, but less difficult. Accomplishing the simpler tasks prepares them to complete the more complex tasks with ease.

Exposure and Response Prevention

This Cognitive Behavioral Therapy technique is particularly effective for people who suffer from Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder. This is a common disorder that is characterized by compulsions and obsessions. With people suffering from OCD, their compulsions and obsessions are more debilitating and prevalent than in normal people.

For this technique, you practice exposing yourself to a situation that would normally spark compulsive behavior in you. Your task is to refrain from that behavior and then to write down your thoughts. This method, combined with journaling, can help you understand how you feel about the changes you are making while tracking your progress over time.

Interceptive Exposure

The interoceptive exposure technique for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is meant for treating people who suffer anxiety and panic attacks. The body is exposed to sensations that are feared, in order to elicit the feared response. It then activates any unhelpful beliefs that are associated with the response and creates room for new learning about that sensation.

In simpler terms, a person who is exposed to this therapy technique is brought to understand the symptoms of a panic attack. At the same time, even though this can be very uncomfortable for them, they are not dangerous.

Play the Script Up to the End

This is yet another Cognitive Behavioral Therapy technique that is meant to help those who suffer from fear and anxiety. The individual undergoing the therapy is taken through a thought experiment. They are required to imagine the worst-case scenario of a certain outcome. By doing so, they get to understand that even with the worst-case scenario occurring, they are still most likely to come out of the situation alive and well.

This technique, basically, teaches you that that monster you are scared of right now is not a monster after all.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

This therapy technique requires you to relax one group of muscles in your body at a time until your entire body relaxes. The technique can be helpful when you are trying to meditate and when you are practicing mindfulness. It allows you to control what goes through your mind and what does not.

Functional Analysis

Functional analysis is one of the most popular and effective Cognitive Behavioral Therapy techniques. It helps you learn more about yourself, particularly the things that cause you to behave in certain ways and the consequences of those behaviors.

With this technique, it is much easier to know whether particular behaviors that a client exhibits are adaptive and drive the client towards their set goals, or whether those behaviors are self-defeating and destructive.

Fact and Opinion

The fact and opinion technique for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is very helpful when it comes to recognizing thoughts and beliefs that are true and those that are not. The technique is based on the simple reality that thoughts are not facts.

It can be a bit hard for someone to see sense in this or even accept that some of their thought and beliefs are flawed. But through this therapy technique, it becomes much easier for you to gain clarity and know what exactly are facts are what are not.

Brainstorming Solutions

Talking to a therapist or a friend can give you a revelation of the true cause of your negative thoughts and depression. Once you have figured out the cause, jot it down. Write down a sentence that is simple and clear that states

what the main cause of your problem is. Now shift your focus to brainstorming on ideas that can help you to overcome that problem.

The belief that things cannot get better is usually the hallmark of depression. By writing down the things you can do, you get your mind to believe that there is actually something you can do about it and that there is still hope for you.

It is also important to try and actualize the solutions you have listed. For instance, if you think you are lonely, you can sign up on an online dating platform or you can visit a club where you will meet new people and establish new friendships.

Words of Affirmation to Counteract Negative Thoughts

Another Cognitive Behavioral Therapy technique you can adopt when battling your negative emotions is giving yourself words of affirmation that counteract those negative thoughts. Remember these reaffirming words and repeat them often to remind yourself that you can actually overcome those negative thoughts. These words, with time, will create new beliefs in your mind and those negative thoughts will be replaced by positive affirming thoughts.

These self-affirming statements should not be far from the negative thoughts in your mind. The reason simply is that your mind might not accept it. For instance, if the negative thought that you want to get rid of is “I feel so depressed right now,” your self-affirming statement should be something like “Every life comes with its own challenges. Mine is no different” as opposed to “I feel happy right now.” You will no doubt have noticed the difference in the two phrases. The recommended one that is close to the negative thought brings a positive vibe to counter the negative thought, while acknowledging that indeed the negative thoughts are based on realities of life.

Sometimes affirmations can become too routine and might need to be refreshed. You do not have to tell yourself the same things over and over again in the same manner. You can rephrase your words or translate them

into other languages to make them more joyful and exciting to hear and believe.

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CHAPTER 8: COMMON TECHNIQUES



Meditation

We've said it time and time again: meditation is good for your mental and emotional health. An integral facet of relaxation training, which is used to treat anxiety, obsessive thoughts, OCD, phobias, and maladaptive behaviors, meditation in and of itself can be greatly beneficial.

Just in case you needed reminding, meditation helps relieve your stress, facilitates better sleep, reduces muscle tension and body pain, reduces blood pressure, boosts your immune system, deals with your worries and anxieties, clears your mind, increases positive emotions, and promotes greater focus, awareness, and emotional control.

Millions of people from all over the world attest to how practicing meditation daily has changed their lives for the better, so why not do the same? Set aside 10-20 minutes a day to meditate and sit in tranquil silence. Find a comfortable, safe space, be it in your room or on your bed, and set your timer. From the moment it starts ticking to the moment it stops, try to think about nothing but your breathing. Work on identifying your emotions and releasing all the negativity you feel. Find some peace of mind, and when you're done, go on about your day with a better, more rational mindset.

Nature Therapy

If you feel that sitting in silence for a few minutes a day and doing seemingly nothing is really not for you, then nature therapy is a good alternative you can try. Nature therapy (sometimes also known as "ecotherapy") is all about reconnecting with Mother Nature. It is founded

on the belief that all human beings are a part of the circle of life here on Earth and that our souls all yearn to be at peace with our natural environments.

Doesn't it feel good to go outside, breathe in the fresh air and bask in the sunshine? Don't you feel a certain serenity wash over you when you enjoy the beauty of the great outdoors? In the modern age of technology where humans have become more urbanized and screen-driven than ever, nature therapy provides a calming, therapeutic effect because it reminds us of our place in the natural world. Practicing nature therapy can give you a sense of balance and harmony in your life.

So make time in your busy schedule to spend a day at the beach, go camping in the woods, or take a weekend trip to the lake house or golf course. Leave behind all your worries and stresses for the day, and your emotional and mental wellbeing will be all the better for it.

On the other hand, even if you live in a bustling city and work a strenuous job you just can’t leave behind, you can still find the beauty in nature in small ways—like going for a walk in the park or tending to your garden. Anything that gets you outdoors and brings a sense of purpose to your experience is already nature therapy in and of itself.

Stargazing

Similar to nature therapy, stargazing has also been found to be very therapeutic to our mental health, perhaps because it satisfies our innate human need for connection and meaning in life. Looking up at the vastness and beauty of the inky, black night sky and its twinkling stars reminds us that we are not alone in the Universe; we are all living on the same cosmic plane, under the same beautiful sky.

Even the ancient Greeks as early as 750 B.C. gazed up at the stars and looked to the night sky for guidance. When it's just you and the stars, time seems to stand still. You'll find that your thoughts tend to clear and your connection with the world around you strengthens. It can make you feel imaginative, inspired; or calm, hopeful, and at peace with yourself and the world.

With that said, it’s important that you go out on your roof or look out your balcony window every once in a while to marvel at the night sky, because it can do a lot to help you find peace in your life and give you a new perspective. It helps you slow down and contemplate the greater meaning of life. When you’re with others, it also provides the ideal ambiance for having deep, meaningful conversations and making great memories.

Physical Activity

Another way you can improve your life—and perhaps the most obvious of all the ones listed here—is by becoming more physically active. For those of you out there already rolling your eyes and hating the thought, I implore you to listen: you don’t have to go to the gym every day, but regularly engaging in exercise and making sure you work up a sweat every other day or so will do wonders for your physical, mental, and emotional health. This is especially important if you work a desk job or have a sedentary lifestyle.

Some alternatives to working out at the gym include: jogging, biking, swimming, dancing, boxing, hot yoga, wall climbing, horse riding, gymnastics, or playing a sport like basketball, football, soccer, badminton, tennis, volleyball, field hockey, or even fencing. There are so many ways you can get active and take care of your body; choosing the right one for you is a matter of what you enjoy and whether you’d like to develop your stamina, strength, flexibility, or coordination.

We all know that exercise is good for you, because it keeps your muscles working, burns calories, and allows you to release toxins from your body in the form of sweat. Exercise also releases endorphins in our brain, which creates positive feelings and helps us feel less pain. It also relieves feelings of depression, anxiety, and stress, as well as promoting muscle growth and bone strength. It boosts your energy, clears your skin, and minimizes the risk of chronic illness. It's also been shown to help you relax more and sleep better, which brings us to our next point.

Better Sleep

Getting a good night's sleep does a lot to improve a person's overall functioning. Most adults need 7-9 hours of sleep every night, but the quality of sleep that they're getting matters too. Sleep promotes better heart health and better blood flow. It reduces stress, makes you more energized and alert, improves your memory, facilitates weight loss, enhances the collagen in your skin, and allows your body and your organs to repair themselves.

Conversely, not getting the needed amount or quality of sleep on a regular basis puts a person more at risk of developing depression, heart disease, diabetes, and even certain cancers. It weakens your immune system, impairs your cognitive functions (i.e., memory, decision-making, reasoning, problem-solving), promotes wrinkles, and lowers your metabolism. So it’s not hard to see why you need to make sure your body is getting the amount and quality of sleep that it deserves.

You can do this is by improving your sleep hygiene. Try to go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day to regulate your body clock. Resist the urge to sleep in and stick to a strict sleep schedule. It's also good to have a nightly routine of things to do before you go to bed, like reading, brushing your teeth, or listening to music. Put your phone away and don't look at any electronic screens for at least 1 hour before you go to bed, because it makes it more difficult for you to fall asleep. For the same reason, avoid drinking any caffeinated drinks like coffee or soda 3 hours before bed and take naps only between 11 AM to 3 PM for no more than one hour.

Healthy Eating

Finally, another way you can take better care of your mental and emotional wellbeing is by eating healthier and having a well-balanced diet. Observing proper nutrition helps a person lose weight, regulates their metabolism, fights against chronic disease, keeps their heart healthy, strengthens their bones and teeth, improves their memory, and puts them in a more positive and energized mood.

Still, in spite of all these benefits, many of us still find it difficult to eat healthier because of our cravings for pizza, burgers, donuts, soda,

chocolate, cookies, and candy. While these foods may be delicious and addictive, they are also low in nutritional value and negatively impact our health. The first step towards change may be the hardest, but over time, it’ll get easier and easier to do, and your body will thank you immensely for taking care of it.

Some tips to help you start eating healthier are: drink herbal tea instead of soft drinks or juice; have at least one day a week where you don't eat meat; gradually quit eating fast food; eat fresh fruits when you're craving sugar or candy; avoid food that's high in saturated fat (like pizza and burgers) or processed sugar (like milkshakes and ice cream). A nutritious diet is one of the foundations of good health—physically, mentally, and emotionally speaking—so make sure you take good care of yourself by following these tips.

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CHAPTER 9: ADVANCED TECHNIQUES



Graded/Gradual Exposure

This exercise is specially created with the intention of reducing fear and anxiety by slowly and progressively facing them and coming in contact with that object, place, situation or person. Graded/gradual Exposure is actually perceived to be one of the most common and effective methods for overcoming certain psychological problems. Professionals from all over the world have the same favorable results regarding this treatment and say that it has really helped multiple individuals around the globe in coming to terms with the things they fear the most.

So, here’s the story: Individuals tend to avoid the things they don’t want or fear the most. As a result, their fear of that particular object, place, person or situation will only increase as they think about it. However, if they try to expose themselves to that particular fear in a gradual manner, they may be less inclined to fear it. This will slowly reduce their fear until it ultimately disappears.

To better understand it, here’s an example. A person who is extremely afraid of being in closed and confined spaces, termed as claustrophobia, will typically try their best to avoid being put in that certain situation. Through graded/gradual exposure, therapists will try to coax them into facing their fear little by little, initially by putting them in a large yet closed area, and then gradually reducing the enclosed space each session. With this method, they are slowly facing their fear and coming to terms with certain facts and realities. At the very end of the treatment, most claustrophobic people would be able to withstand and curb their fears and are no longer fit to be called claustrophobic.

Graded/gradual exposure is connected to CBT and may actually promote it since it also does what CBT does. It alters the way that individuals think and how they perceive certain things. With graded/gradual exposure, individuals are faced with their fears and shown what reality is actually like and different alternatives from their perspective.

Graded/gradual exposure also changes the way a person reacts, responds and behaves in a certain situation. This is also connected to the way they think. Thoughts are at the root of their behavior. Due to the fact that it changed their thoughts, it also ultimately made an impact on their behavior.

In CBT, an individual who has a fear of heights (acrophobia) will have to alter the way they perceive their fear. When placed in a situation that involves heights, they need to alter their negative thoughts and transform these into positive ones. Once this is done, their mind will relax along with their body and act more naturally instead of screaming in fear.

People with this fear are slowly exposed to different height ranges. As they gradually go higher while they progress, they will learn that their fear will slowly disappear. Once it disappears, their mind would have already been altered with favorable as well as positive ideas and their behavior towards the situation would have also changed from screaming or panting in anxiety to calm composure.

Activity Scheduling

This is a prominent Cognitive Behavioral Therapy technique that is often regarded as effective and efficient for individuals. This is also known to be very helpful for those who experience or deal with different psychological problems, especially depression.

People who are battling mental disorders, such as depression, often find it tough to stay active and at times, lie on their bed throughout the entire day. So, in order to avoid being passive the entire time, activity scheduling is one of the many solutions they can use in order to solve their passive state and make an effort to become much more productive for the entire day.

Activity scheduling includes taking part in different activities and behaviors that they normally wouldn’t do as a result of anxiety, depression, and other psychological problems they might be currently facing. It entails a two-step process that can essentially help the individual be a lot better in the end.

It begins with monitoring personal activities. Individuals take note of their activities throughout the entire week and see the different things they have achieved throughout the course of a week. This can show people that they can actually achieve a lot of things if they put their heart to it. Once the set of activities are listed and made, looking at it will improve the individual's mood when they realize the different things they were actually able to accomplish. Secondly, they have to rate the intensity of the symptoms of depression they are experiencing alongside each activity. Through this, they become able to identify the different activities that can actually be more helpful for them and keep their mind off disturbing or depressive thoughts. If they look more closely at the pattern of activities that help them become happier and see the connection of each activity, they can devise an itinerary of things that can introduce wellness and possibly cure depression.

This technique caters to the way an individual acts in every situation. It monitors their movement and ways of behaving in a certain scenario. Through this, their behavioral aspect can be influenced and aided significantly. Activity scheduling is one of the many activities that can help an individual in their CBT journey.

Activity scheduling can be essential in pointing out the different activities that can promote wellness and happiness for an individual. In this process, they are given specific tools to find out which ones are actually helping them overcome this illness and what makes it worse. Activity scheduling is often used by different therapists to treat depression all over the world. When used effectively and accurately, it can lead to great results.

Behavioral Activation

CBT is known to be extremely helpful for aiding different mental disorders. Behavioral activation is one of the CBT skills that can ultimately help individuals overcome their psychological problems and create a better life for them in the future. It is also noted by many therapists to be extremely useful in treating depression. It is a long process that will ultimately lead to a better and fitter state of mind.

This process starts with getting to know your own feelings and coming to terms with the things you are currently experiencing. Individuals have to

understand how they feel, where these emotions come from and what triggers them. Afterwards, they need to take note of the things they typically do on a daily basis. When this is done, they have to find out what they want to get out of life. They should see their goals and objectives. Then, their energy has to be directed towards wellness and motivation to do the things they want and accomplish their objectives. Ultimately, it all depends on making a good and positive change, even if it is little by little just to show progress in their activities.

Here's an example of how it's used: A man who deals with anxiety and depression often has different moods throughout the day/week. There are days where he feels ecstatic and joyous and some where he feels extremely depressed. Then, when he actually takes note of the different things he has done throughout the day, he notices that there are actually some activities that are considered to be emotional triggers for him. Since he is aware of the things that might potentially trigger him, he tries his best to stay away from those to keep a calm and collected vibe. He changes the way he acts towards these specific situations which changes his mood throughout the entire day. So, in this method he is able to identify the different emotional triggers he includes in his daily routine and is able to find a way to deal with those triggers.

Behavioral activation is a useful and often used tool in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy because it deals with both the cognitive and behavioral aspects. It helps a person to understand his/her situation and come to terms with their daily activities which may be impeding them from leading a good and normal life. It helps them figure out a way to negate their unfavorable thoughts and turn them into positive ones.

Problem Solving

Problem solving is another common and notable technique used in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. In this method, individuals are taught how to solve their issues, cope with the different problems they are faced with and try to regain better control over their lives. Problem-solving uses a unique way of dealing with psychological problems. It directly deals with life's

challenges and tackles them head-on. It causes patients to immediately face their problems with the use of cognitive and behavioral interventions.

This method teaches individuals how to have an active role when extremely difficult decisions. As a result of repeated disappointments or chronic mood problems, some individuals may prefer to take the back seat and become passive during tough times. However, problem-solving is here to teach individuals that they have to get more initiative and do whatever it takes to arrive at the goal they want.

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CHAPTER 10: CBT TECHNIQUES FOR DEALING WITH ANXIETY



Strong emotions arise before thoughts that are related to them are fully formed, not afterward, as it likely appears when you look back on a particularly emotional incident. As such, you will often find that it is easier—and more effective—to change how you feel about a situation than what you think about a situation. As such, if you want to use CBT to help your anxiety, then the following exercises are a great way to work on calming your feelings directly:

Focus on How your Feelings Change

When working with CBT, it can be easy to get so focused on the way your feelings are currently aligned that it can be easy to forget that feelings are fluid, which means they are always open to change, even after you have already put in the effort to work on them for another specific reason. Likewise, just because you spend a month or more working on your feelings of anxiety, it doesn't mean that you aren't still going to get a little anxious every now and again. Rather, it is important to take the new anxiety in your stride and see how severe it ends up being before you get too stressed out about it, possibly causing yourself far more mental strife than you would have had you just taken the small amount of anxiety in your stride in the first place.

You may also find it helpful to verbally acknowledge how you are feeling in the moment and how you expect those feelings to change once the anxiety has passed. For example, you might say, "Currently I feeling a little anxious, which is natural given the situation. When the feeling passes, I anticipate feeling clear-headed and calm once more."

Additionally, you may find it helpful to keep a close eye out for the first signs that the feeling is passing and the anticipated change is about to begin. Not only will focusing on the anxiety being over actually make the end come on sooner, it will also stop you from reacting poorly to the anxiety at the moment. Feelings always shift, and keeping this fact in mind may be enough to push things in the right direction.

Act Normally

While Generalized Anxiety Disorder is considered a mental illness, anxiety itself is a useful survival tool when doled out in moderation. It is only when things get out of hand that it goes from being helpful to harmful, sort of like an over-eager guard dog. The truth of the matter is that your anxiety response only kicks in because your body is responding to the current situation as if there was a threat. Regardless of whether or not the threat is real, a perceived threat is enough to set off the response.

As such, one way to train your anxiety to be selective effectively is to give it the type of feedback it understands so that it knows it is not currently needed. Anxiety takes its cues from what you do along with a basic type of emotional pattern matching, which means that if you act as though everything is currently normal, then the anxiety will back off and calm down. As such, you are going to want to do things such as maintain an open body posture, breathe regularly, salivate, smile, and maintain a calm and measured tone of voice.

If you can successfully adopt just one of these behaviors when you are feeling stressed, then you can successfully alter your feedback enough that your fear response, directly from the sympathetic nervous system, receives a message that says everything is fine. In fact, one of the most common ways of mitigating an oncoming feeling of anxiety is to chew gum. If you don’t have any gum handy, simply miming the act of doing so is going to be enough to make you salivate, convincing your body that nothing interesting is going on.

The reason that this is so effective is that you would never have the luxury of eating a delicious meal during times of serious crisis, which makes your body naturally assume that nothing that taking place is a legitimate threat.

This, in turn, changes the feedback loop the body was expecting and causes the anxiety to retreat into the background. Just knowing that you have this quick trick in your back pocket can give you a boost of confidence that takes you past the point where your anxiety would trigger in the first place.

Remember, anxiety functions are based on the expectation of something catastrophic happening in the near future. All you need to do is prove that this is not the case, and you will be fine.

Discover Underlying Assumptions

As a general rule, if you feel anxious about a specific situation, then this is because you are afraid of some potential consequences that may come about as a result of whatever it is that is taking place. However, if you trace those fears back to their roots, you will often find that they aren’t nearly as bad as you may have assumed they would be when they were just a nebulous feeling of anxiety.

For example, if you are anxious about attending a party, then looking inside to determine the consequence that you are afraid of might reveal an internalized fear of meeting new people. Tracing that fear back, you might discover that it is based around the consequence of other people not liking you, which you are determined to avoid due to issues in your past.

However, if you trace the consequence of people not liking you, then you may find that it makes you upset because it reinforces existing feelings regarding your general likeability. Once you get to the ultimate consequence that is causing you anxiety, you can look at the problem critically and determine what you can do to solve the issue that you are avoiding. In this instance, reminding yourself of people who do like you is a valid way to avoid the issues you are afraid of.

This exercise is also especially effective for those who are dealing with relationship issues, as they can clearly describe all of the fears they have associated with the relationship falling apart. In the process, they will come to understand that things will continue as normal after the relationship falls apart and that they will be able to move on if the relationship is not intact.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Another useful technique in combating anxiety is known as progressive muscle relaxation. This exercise involves tensing and then relaxing parts of your body in order. The reason for this is because it is impossible for the body to be both tense and relaxed at the same time. Thus, if you feel an anxiety attack coming on, a round of concentrated tense and release exercises can cut it off at the source. Progressive muscle relaxation exercises may be done routinely or before an anxiety-provoking event. Progressive muscle relaxation techniques may also be used to help people who are experiencing insomnia.

To get started, find a calm, quiet place that you can dedicate to the process for approximately 15 minutes. Start by taking five, slow, deep breaths to get yourself into the right mindset. Next, you are going to want to apply muscle tension to a specific part of your body. This step is going to be the same regardless of the muscle group you are currently focusing on. Focus on the muscle group before taking another slow, deep breath and then squeezing the muscles as hard as you possibly can for approximately five seconds. The goal here is to feel the tension in your muscles as fully as possible, to the point that you feel a mild discomfort before you have finished.

Once you have finished tensing, rapidly relax the muscles you were focusing on. After five seconds of tensing, let all of the tightness flow out of your muscles, exhaling as you do so. The goal here is to feel the muscles become limp and loose as the tension flows out of them. It is crucial that you deliberately focus on the difference between the two states; in fact, this is the most important part of the entire exercise. Remain in this state of relaxation for approximately 15 seconds before moving on to the next group of muscles.

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CHAPTER 11: CBT TECHNIQUES FOR DEALING WITH ANGER



In response to being ignored, criticized or overwhelmed, it is natural to feel angry, annoyed or irritated. In fact, as long as it is expressed appropriately, anger can lead to constructive change and other healthy coping mechanisms. Unfortunately, when the anger is not expressed properly, such as when outbursts are frequent, long-lasting, or particularly intense, then outbursts can be quite harmful.

It is important to keep in mind that anger, in this instance, isn't limited to showy displays of yelling or shouting, and internalized anger is often just as bad as externalized anger—and is potentially more harmful to the person experiencing it. It can also lead to more serious results such as self-harm or damage to property. Some people can even become trapped in cycles where they become angry, and then they feel guilty about it, then they get angry again when someone brings up the previous incident. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to understand that excessive and uncontrolled anger can easily cause problems in all facets of life. It can lead to strained relationships with co-workers, friends, and family and maybe even issues with the law.

There are many different reactions to anger—both immediate and delayed. As an example, many people are far more likely to go out of their way to avoid someone who is angry all the time as opposed to someone with a cheerful disposition. What's more, those who are angry on a regular basis are more than twice as likely to suffer from chronic headaches, heart problems, stomach issues, and more. Even more consequences of untreated anger can occur in the long-term. Those who don't deal with their anger issues could find themselves prone to mood swings and withdrawing from social situations. They also typically develop problems related to anxiety,

self-esteem, and erratic drug use. Untreated anger has also been linked to instances of increased cancer cell growth.

Luckily, CBT is an effective treatment for excessive anger, as it can help you to understand when you are deflecting anger from the true source of the problem onto those around you. Nevertheless, before you try the exercises outlined below, it is important to keep in mind that anger is a natural emotion, and there are times when being angry is a perfectly valid response. Learning to distinguish between these moments and periods where your anger is uncontrolled, exaggerated, or associated with otherwise dysfunctional behavior is crucial to improving all aspects of life.

Additionally, you will need to remember that the behaviors you exhibit are patterns just like any other, which means they have been developed, reinforced, and repeated countless times throughout your lifetime.

When it comes to dealing with your anger issues while in guided CBT, it is important to keep in mind that there are various approaches to doing so. Some individuals may find success by exploring the experiences that cause them to become angry, while others might need to look at the issues that lead to anger as an automatic response in the first place. Regardless, the following techniques have proven to be helpful for many individuals dealing with a wide variety of anger-related issues.

Increased Personal Awareness

Many people tend to lose focus when they become angry to the point where they don’t have a clear sense of the boundaries of their anger. They don’t understand where it is coming from or what exactly is taking place that makes them angry. Once again, a journal will help to ensure you are moving in the right direction—just make sure you are writing in it every day, or even multiple times per day if you find you have trouble recalling everything clearly at the end of the day.

When chronicling your angry episodes, it is important to ask yourself the following questions:

- When do I find myself getting the angriest?
- Where do I find myself getting angry most frequently?
- What situations am I in most often when I get angry?
- What events tend to trigger my anger?
- What sorts of memories tend to trigger my anger?
- Are there any images that seriously trigger my anger?
- How do I feel physically when I become angry?
- What is my emotional state like when I am angry?
- What thoughts frequently move through my mind when I am angry?
- How did I handle the most recent situation that made me angry?
- Is the way I behaved during the most recent time I was angry par for the course?
- If so, why? If not, what made this time special or unique?
- What is the general response like when I get angry?

By answering these questions, you will become more aware of the results, reasons, and nature of your anger, which will go a long way towards allowing you to develop a more well-defined sense of self-worth, while also improving your self-control—two things that should go a long way towards improving your ability to handle anger in a healthy fashion.

When journaling, it is important to keep track of the times that you did not become angry, despite experiencing triggers, just as you did those times that you did become angry. While the two types of experiences are often going to be quite different, when you do see overlap, you will be able to analyze the two events side by side in order to determine what it is that allowed you to keep your cool in one situation while losing it in the other. While increased awareness of the reasons behind your anger is useful, it is likely only the first step towards improving your anger once and for all.

Anger Disruption

Disruption and avoidance techniques work by removing yourself from the anger-causing situation, either physically or mentally. While this might be

as simple as getting up and leaving the room to prevent yourself from blowing up at the person you are speaking to, things won't always be this simple, or leaving the room might not be a realistic option for one reason or another. At the very least, you are going to want to give yourself time to think things through and delay the need for a response by asking the other party for time to think about whatever is causing the issue or to verify your information before continuing.

You may even decide that it would be wise to continue the conversation via another medium entirely such as email. Not only will this provide you with the time you need to cool down before explaining yourself, but it will also ensure that when you do, you have all your ducks in a row and will be able to elucidate your points clearly and effectively. Regardless of the path you choose, giving yourself the time you need to calm down is crucial to shorting out the pattern of anger that you are falling into when you get into a yelling match with another person face to face. Taking some time and getting some space will make both of these far easier to avoid.

Cognitive Shift

When you get angry, it will often cause you to make already bad decisions that much worse simply because of the way you view them in your mind. This often leads to one or more types of negative, limiting thoughts that make it less likely that you will be willing to come to any type of compromise. As such, the next time you are angry, try stopping for a moment and reframing the situation in a more moderate way. While this won't always lead to a tenable solution, simply considering it should be enough to cause your mind to stop being angry and start being productive.

If you can't get yourself out of that angry mindset, silly humor might be able to get you there. Silly humor isn't about laughing all your problems away; rather, it is a type of cognitive reframing technique that can help cut your anger off at the source. For example, if you find yourself getting angry during rush hour traffic, instead of referring to the other drivers by unflattering, derogatory statements, find a silly image and refer to the other drivers by that description instead. If you can make yourself laugh every time you say it, you likely won't remain angry for long.

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CHAPTER 12: CBT TECHNIQUES FOR DEALING WITH DEPRESSION



Restructuring

Challenging your thoughts is going to be the most powerful tool. Just like with anxiety, look for the factual data and analytics of a situation to put some logic into your thoughts. When we can look at the factual data that can be numerically measured, it can be harder to have depressive thoughts about our situation. It is not about just being grateful for what you have, but instead looking at the positive things in your life rather than only putting an emphasis on the negative.

Always ask yourself realistic questions and test the evidence that you have for a particular prediction. This isn't going to make you feel better right at that moment. However, if you start this combative of automatic thoughts right now, it will get better each and every day. You have to be patient and willing to put that time in.

Both the automatic thoughts and the restructured thoughts can have the same basic meaning at the core, but the restructured ones are more positive and encouraging. There is almost always a positive twist to even the most terrible of situations, and it is up to you to find it.

Write down your most common automatic thoughts. In the second column, find a way to restructure that thinking, or put a positive twist on the scenario. When you let those thoughts pop in, remember that they are automatic responses. Create new automatic responses, but this time positive ones.

Combating Thoughts

Now that you have some Cognitive Behavioral Therapy tools, you have to look at yourself as a warrior fighting against the cognitive distortions. You are holding a shield, and you have to fight off all the distortions your mind is throwing at you. Sometimes, they might still slip pass, but it is up to you to keep them from destroying you. It might seem impossible, but you should always combat your negative thoughts as they come toward you.

Humans are obsessed with labels. Not just ones that come from a label maker, but more general ones, like good/bad, fat/skinny, ugly/pretty, useful/useless, smart/stupid. We like to put things into one category, especially if you are someone with depressive tendencies and polarized thinking.

A good rule of thumb is to never say anything to yourself that you wouldn't say to a small child. Picture someone you love more than anyone, maybe a spouse, a best friend, or your own child. If no one comes to mind, imagine yourself as a little four-year-old, so cute, innocent, and free from the hard experiences you go through as a teen and adult. Would you call them ugly, stupid, or worthless? No, most likely not, so why is it OK to say that to yourself?

Look at the Root

When using CBT, you want to go back to that time a specific event took place and think about why that event or comment affected you so. Sometimes, when a person states something related to our insecurities, it can be a form of validation, good or bad. If you think you are not intelligent and someone makes a small joke about your level of smartness, it can cut pretty deep, even though it wasn't meant to be hurtful at all. This is because it is an unspoken validation from the other person that our deepest and darkest thoughts are right, even though that wasn't the other person's intention.

Remember that small instances are just that. Though they might have become defining moments, they don't have to anymore. Most of the time, if

you ask a person about certain small instances that stick with you, they end up not even remembering that they said that in the first place!

Once you identify the reason something is there, it takes away the meaning. Think of it as a magic trick. Someone that can make a person disappear seems incredible! But then you realize they are able to do this because of smoke and mirror tricks. When you discover the magician's methods, the magic isn't there anymore. When you remember why it is that you might be so insecure and investigate an issue back to the root, you can already alleviate the negative impact that it has had on you.

Journaling

Expressing your feelings is an incredibly effective way to overcome your mental illnesses. Holding things in can be like a plastic bag or even a boat. If you put too much in, it is going to sink or break. The same can be said with your mind. If you are not properly expressing your feelings in a healthy way, then it is going to take a toll on your mental and physical health.

Journaling is completely subjective. Everyone's mind is different, and that means their journal should be as well. What you decide to put in your journal is up to you. The main idea is that it should be an expression of your emotions, recording of your different feelings, and a go-to for helpful reminders or a guide to overcoming anxiety and depressive thoughts. It is something you can go back and look at to see different information that will help you continue in your recovery.

There shouldn't be any rules for journaling, but there are a few guidelines you should have. You should write in it every single day. If you miss a day, then you might miss another, and before you know it, your journal is sitting empty on a shelf. You don't have to spend hours on it a day. Even if you just open it and write "bad day," on a page, that's enough. It is a reminder that on that day, you didn't have enough mental energy to write in the book, and you can go back later and pick out the things that caused you to have such a bad day.

Quantitative Data

Some people aren't creative or have trouble expressing their emotions, and that's completely fine. They might not be able to write full entries. Writing might be awful to you, and the sound of it alone gives you anxiety. That's completely fine. You don't have to sit there every day and write a "Dear Diary" entry. Sometimes, you just have to track your moods and keep things in order like you would if you were balancing a checkbook.

Instead of trying to be creative or expressive, you might just want to take down quantitative data for your journal. Maybe you work better with charts and graphs.

This might include jotting down numbers from one to ten as a way to measure certain feelings. You might simply keep a mood meter, rating your level of depression and anxiety every day.

Look at your journal for answers that aren't always easily identifiable. Even if you are creative, this method of journaling can still help as well. You could aim to implement both, but at the end of the day, it is up to you to figure out what works best with managing your depression.

Writing Letters

Sometimes, we stay quiet in situations that require us to speak up because we don't know how to process our emotions. One way to change this is to write letters. This can be a part of your journal, or it can be completely separate. Maybe you write one to yourself at five years old, and one when you are fifty. Write a letter to yourself yesterday, angry that you weren't able to get as much work done as you hoped. Write one to your ten-year-old self, letting that kid know that it was OK they didn't make the volleyball team or that it wasn't their fault their parents fought all the time.

Write one to yourself in the future. Tell yourself how much you have thought about them and how you are hoping that they are doing well. By doing this, you are expressing emotions that you have kept inside. Other times, you might want to write letters to other people. Maybe you are angry, so you write down everything you hate about them. While it might be hard

to go through those feelings, it can be incredibly therapeutic to get your thoughts out.

Whether you keep these letters or not is up to you. You can tear them up, grind them down, shred them, or throw them into a lake (polluting not encouraged). You could burn them, use them to pick up your dog's poop or bury them in the backyard.

Unraveling

When unraveling, you have to make sure that you are looking at the cause and effect of different cognitive distortions you are having. One end will be the cause, and the other end will be the effect. When you have it all raveled together, it can be hard to process. When things are laid out perfectly, you will be able to see easier the things that upset or frustrated you.

What you have to unravel is going to be different for everyone, but some important steps can help you do this:

- Identify the symptom of anxiety. What is it that has made you decide to use CBT?
- Pick out what cognitive distortion might have led to your symptoms. Do you often deflect? How are you framing the issue? Are there moments of catastrophizing?
- Reflect on the issue and see the ways they've grown roots and spread. How have they affected other parts of your life?
- Look to your past to see what might have caused the issue in the first place. Was there a specific trauma, or did you experience prolonged abuse?
- Come up with a solution for resolving this issue. Which method of CBT is going to be the most useful for you to overcome it? Sometimes, unraveling will be enough in itself, but other times, you have to use multiple methods.

This is just one simple method of unraveling. It starts with the issue and ends with a solution. Though it looks easy, it won't always be that simple to carry out step five, the methods of recovery. Looking at it in these simple

steps, however, can be important in helping ensure that you are looking at your anxiety and depression from a logical sense.

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CHAPTER 13: CBT TECHNIQUES FOR DEALING WITH OCD



It is a given fact that all people experience unwanted intrusive thoughts. These are not limited to people who have been diagnosed with OCD, and intrusive thoughts are not just negative but can also be positive. So, the truth of the matter is, we can never be free from unwanted intrusive thoughts.

So, in overcoming OCD, the focus must be given to our physical and emotional response to these thoughts. We must try to achieve not having anxiety or any type of mental or physical compulsion once faced with these thoughts.

With the proper treatment and support, the challenge of achieving this is minimized. Most people do recover from OCD without it ever coming back. Now let's look at a number of CBT strategies that can aid in alleviating and treating obsessive thoughts:

Habit Reversal Training

Habit Reversal Training or HRT is one of the most commonly used types of behavioral therapy in treating OCD. It reverses the habits formed by individuals that are typically performed in certain situations and helps them overcome the urge to do it. This is also helpful in treating different behaviors caused by a variety of conditions, like Tourette's Syndrome.

HRT is seen to be highly effective in helping people with unwanted behaviors or habits, such as hair pulling, tics, repetitive behaviors, or nail-biting. When treating OCD, it is highly recommended to use this type of behavioral therapy since it helps them get rid of the urge to follow the

compulsion and minimize or possibly stop their repetitive behavior. This training is made up of five different parts that can help individuals overcome their disorder. It starts with:

Awareness Training

If you want to minimize or put an end to your behavior, it is important to recognize and accept it beforehand. How can you put an end to something if you are not aware of it? The same goes with this; you can't stop your behavior if you aren't even aware of its presence. Through awareness training, individuals pay attention to their behavior and work at diminishing it. This step allows you to figure out when you typically perform this particular behavior, and what are some triggers and signs before you actually do it are. Awareness training helps individuals know and understand their behavior more deeply and find out things they never knew before.

Identifying and Strategizing

This step identifies the problem in your behavior and partly continues the work done in the first step. Once you've identified all the triggers and urges you have, it is time to strategize new behavior or a way to combat your urge. This new behavior will replace the old one. It is important to practice this new behavior and become aware of it. Whenever you want to go back to the old behavior you have been so used to, you can try to do this instead. For example, if your typical behavior in response to nerve-racking situations is biting your nails, the new behavior you'll have to do is to purse your lips instead.

Finding Your Own Motivation and Sticking with Your Plan

When doing something difficult, we tend to find a source of motivation to keep us going or to remind us why we're here in the first place. The same goes with Habit Reversal Therapy; there will be some instances where you'll question what you're doing or why you're even doing it in the first

place. This is why you need to write down a list of all the reasons you want to go through HRT and make this a source of your motivation. Find all the people you want to do this for and all the problems you've had because of your unwanted behavior. After finding your motivation, it is important to stick with your HRT and try to comply with it until the very end.

Reducing and Relaxing

These unwanted behaviors tend to show up whenever a person's body is put under a great amount of stress. So, it is important to reduce your stress level and eliminate any triggers that may induce your tics. Relax your body more and give it enough time to rest. In this part, it is important to know different relaxation techniques. Some also coincide with CBT techniques such as deep breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, mindfulness meditation, and the like.

Testing and Training

After all the different processes you've gone through, it's time to test out and practice your new skills and behavior and see how you respond to different situations. You may be placed in front of triggers, and it is important to train yourself to get rid of the urge to go back to your old habits. This is the most crucial step of all because it displays all the work you've done in the past. Once you've practiced this new behavior enough, it will soon become an automatic response for you, successfully replacing the old behavior you once had.

These steps can help individuals overcome their unwanted tics. With a little effort and concentration, they can possibly get through and develop new behavioral patterns.

Imaginal Exposure (IE)

OCD is a complex psychological problem. With a lot of different types and subtypes, it can be difficult to determine which treatment is best for each

individual. Some treatments require a lot more intensive procedures than others. Let's look at Exposure and Response Therapy, for example. This type of therapy can be applicable for people who have OCD about physical things like about getting germs from touching a doorknob. The simple ERT procedure would be to let them touch multiple doorknobs without letting them wash their hands. However, it cannot apply to individuals who have more complex OCD behaviors. For example, individuals who are afraid of losing loved ones cannot perform ERT. So, as a substitute for this, they can undergo Imaginal Exposure or IE. Through IE, individuals experience visualization of different scenarios that expose them to their fears or OCD. Imaginal Exposure will expose them to seemingly real-life situations and train them on how to react to these particular situations.

Imaginal Exposure is for more complex and harder to handle OCD problems. Some opt to go through visualizing different scenarios, while others choose to write imaginal exposure stories. Through visualization, patients are asked to undergo the following process:

- Think of a particular situation that triggers your OCD (like losing the ones you love).
- Once you've identified the situation, start imagining yourself in the scenario (you may be facing it by standing or looking at it).
- Afterward, try to picture that specific scenario over and over again until it does not induce any visible or emotional trigger in you.
- After being exposed to it several times, try your best to come back to that scenario until you can accept that it isn't reality, and it will not always be like that. This will reduce your negative emotions and change your behavior towards different circumstances.

Through visualization, individuals can easily access their minds and visualize their OCD triggers. By confronting their worst fears, they can slowly reduce their level of anxiety and the intensity of their emotions.

There is also another way to use Imaginal Exposure, and that is through writing imaginative stories. These stories entail your greatest fear, and through them, you find a way to confront these emotions. Through writing your fears, you can let out everything you feel and expose yourself to the different OCD triggers within you. This short story will write will consist of

your obsessive thoughts taken to the worst-case scenario. Individuals with OCD may not be too keen to begin or go through this type of therapy. However, it can be very crucial in allowing them to overcome their greatest fears and face their negative thoughts once and for all.

Here are some tips on how to write your own imaginal exposure short story to get the best results and to really impact your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors:

Make Your Story from Your Perspective

As you are trying to overcome your own fear, it is important to write things from a first-person point of view. This is so that we will actually feel the things we “did” in the story and keep it as close to our hearts as possible. This will allow you to see the consequences of your actions and actually feel the story. In the cognitive aspect, the brain will process the information as if it was your own doing, therefore making the therapy effective.

Always Keep it Realistic

It is important not to go beyond the bar. There is a fine line between reality and imagination, so you mustn’t go beyond that line. Keep things around the aspects that you think may happen if ever you did a certain act. Don’t go far from the actual topic and try to keep things as realistic as possible.

Use Authenticity

Be authentic about the thoughts you’re currently thinking about and the emotions you’re currently feeling. Only talk about the things that are bothering you. If it isn’t actually a problem, then don’t bother to write about it.

Focus on the Now and Write in the Present Tense

Write your story in the present tense so that you'll actually feel you're living in it at the exact same moment. Don't go and write about it as if it happened a year ago; write things as if they are fresh and currently happening.

Keep it Concise

When writing, it is important not to beat around the bush. Keep things as short and concise as possible. If it isn't actually important, then don't bother to write about it. Don't waste your time writing about things that don't actually keep you up at night. Rather, focus on things that detail the most important and vital part of your illness. Of course, for those with a flair for the language, it is alright to give free rein to your creative expression. Just stay on point while doing it.

Go to the Limit

Take your fear of the worst possible scenario. Make it out to be the worst thing that could ever happen to you in your entire life. In this way, you become exposed to the worst things and learn how to cope with situations like this.

Imaginal exposure can be of great use for individuals who cannot undergo ERT. It can also be extremely helpful for OCD since it exposes them to different made-up scenarios that also resemble real-life situations. Through IE, individuals can touch on both their cognitive and behavioral aspects, which will, in turn, produce positive thoughts and better behavior.

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CHAPTER 14: CBT TECHNIQUES FOR DEALING WITH INSOMNIA



Changing Your Sleep Behaviors

We will go over a comprehensive tutorial of the behavioral components of CBT as related to insomnia: good sleep hygiene, stimulus control therapy, and sleep restriction therapy. Your baseline self-assessment and sleep logs will help you decide what changes might be necessary to increase your chances of getting deep, solid, restorative sleep. You will be given the rationale for each strategy to help you think about your motivation to make changes. Many of these strategies may be familiar to you. Often, the most effective sleep interventions don't consist of one simple change like a sleeping pill, the right sound machine, or the perfect pillow. The most effective interventions are typically ones that address the whole sleep system: the mind, the body, and the environment, as well as thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Successful interventions typically involve making a series of changes in your sleep behaviors.

Sleep Hygiene

In general, hygiene is about daily practices that keep us healthy and prevent disease. Personal hygiene includes all the basics—bathing, washing our hair, and washing our hands. In the same vein, sleep hygiene is about staying healthy by building daily practices that increase the probability that we will get good quality sleep. However, it is easy to develop habits that are enjoyable and feel restful but do not support long-term restorative sleep. This makes sense—it feels good to curl up in bed and watch a movie when you are fatigued or take an afternoon nap when you are sleep deprived. But these types of behaviors may be perpetuating and exacerbating insomnia. In

the following sections, I'll discuss some alternatives that tend to promote and support healthy sleep.

Set a Regular Sleep Schedule

Going to bed and getting up at about the same time every day, including on the weekends, is a habit that will support your body's internal clock via external cues. This is discussed more in the section on stimulus control therapy (see "The Pavlov Connection: Stimulus Control Therapy"). This is an important part of improving your sleep hygiene.

Reduce or Eliminate Naps

Napping during the day reduces our sleep drive, and you may want to try and give them up altogether until you reach your sleep goals. If you do need to nap, try to keep it to 20 to 30 minutes and avoid early evening naps.

Check Your Sleep Environment

It's important that you have checked the following things in your sleep environment:

- Make sure you have a comfortable bed and bedding.
- The bedroom temperature should be comfortable and cool but not cold. A common suggestion is to aim for 65 degrees Fahrenheit, which is significantly cooler than what most people are used to.
- Aim for a restful bedroom environment: quiet, dark, and free from distractions.
- Monitor Substance Intake

What substances we ingest can have a huge impact on the quality and quantity of our sleep. The effects can last much longer than we realize:

CAFFEINE: works by blocking the effects of adenosine, a chemical that builds up in the body over the course of the day when we are awake.

Adenosine fuels the sleep drive, and once its concentration peaks, you begin to feel very sleepy—unless, of course, caffeine is standing in the way. Caffeine has a half-life of about five to seven hours, which means that even seven hours after your last cup of coffee, you may still have up to 50 percent of that caffeine in your system. Sensitivity to caffeine and its effects varies, but if you think caffeine is a contributing factor to your insomnia, it is best to stop ingesting it as early in the day as possible—ideally before noon or even earlier. Also, remember that caffeine not only exists in coffee, soda, and some teas but also some energy drinks, medicines (including some pain relievers and decongestants), and chocolate. Decaffeinated coffee contains up to 30 percent of the caffeine in a regular cup of coffee.

NICOTINE: can cause fragmented, lighter sleep even hours after smoking. Regular smokers may also wake earlier than they want to due to nicotine withdrawal. If you smoke, quitting is one of the best things you can do for your health.

ALCOHOL: may appear to help you fall asleep, but evidence shows that it reduces the amount of deep sleep we experience and causes sleep to be more fitful throughout the night. Skipping the nightcap is helpful, avoiding alcohol for at least three hours before bed is even better, and for some people, not drinking alcohol at all is the best choice for sleep.

MEDICATIONS: can also impact your ability to obtain restorative sleep for many reasons. Discuss your medications with your physician to see if they may be contributing to insomnia.

Why Does Alcohol Impact Sleep?

Some people believe that the relaxing effects of alcohol help them sleep more soundly. Sleep researcher and neuroscientist Matthew Walker is an expert on why the opposite is true. In *Why We Sleep*, he explains that alcohol is a central nervous system depressant and works by sedating the brain. The prefrontal cortex of the frontal lobe is the first area impacted by alcohol. This is the part of the brain responsible for restraint and controlling our impulses, so when it is sedated by alcohol, we experience the initial feelings of well-being and letting loose. Over the course of an evening of drinking, the impact of alcohol on the brain causes us to feel more tired,

but, as Walker states, alcohol-induced sleep is not natural sleep, as evidenced by altered electrical brainwave activity. Alcohol disrupts the structure of our sleep and reduces the amount of time we can achieve both REM and slow-wave deep sleep. Even moderate-to-light drinking can cause more arousals during the night—awakenings we may not be aware of. Finally, alcohol's relaxing effects can loosen muscles, including those of your airway, which can increase snoring and is especially concerning for those individuals with sleep apnea.

Monitor Light Exposure

Melatonin is a naturally occurring hormone in the brain that promotes sleep. Light, including both sunlight and artificial light, suppresses the release of melatonin, causing us to feel more awake. Bright light early in the morning is a helpful way to wake up and shake off sleep. It is helpful to reduce light exposure one hour before bedtime, including turning off all screens and dimming the lights, so that melatonin can be released.

Get Regular Exercise

There is a reciprocal relationship between physical activity and sleep. Regular daily exercise is linked with deeper, longer, better quality sleep, and getting a good night's sleep is linked to more physical energy and exertion the next day. Exercise alone has been shown to have strong positive effects on mental health (such as reduced depression and anxiety). Building this cyclical relationship can lead to a multitude of mental and physical health benefits. The timing of exercise is also important, however, as physical exertion too close to bedtime can disrupt the body's ability to initiate sleep. Aim to do your workout at least two to three hours before bedtime.

Eat Wisely and Eat Less Sugar

Diets heavy in carbohydrates, especially sugar, are associated with less deep sleep and more frequent awakenings, so monitoring sugar intake and

lowering your intake if it is high is a good idea. You can also time your last meal so that it promotes restorative sleep. It’s better to avoid heavy meals close to bedtime and aim to feel neither too hungry nor too full before bed. If you are in the habit of snacking right before bed, you may want to keep the snack on the smaller side and avoid things like soda, candy, cookies, chocolate, ice cream, or other high-sugar foods.

Create a Calming Bedtime Ritual

Practicing a calming bedtime routine every night helps your body and mind unwind. Your bedtime routine can include reading, meditating, or any activity that feels calming, settling, and pleasant. A warm bath can also be especially helpful. After getting out of the bath, our core body temperature tends to cool quickly, and a decrease in core temperature enables the body to initiate sleep.

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CHAPTER 15: DAILY CBT TECHNIQUES



Low-level Physical Exercise

Low-level physical activity can offer some great benefits, and I recommend that you use this type of exercise as much as you like, as long as your body is okay with it. These types of exercises are least likely to worsen stress. Instead, they should feel very relaxing.

Low-level physical exercise can be a walk, a yoga session, an easy bike ride, a hike, or anything else that isn't very physically challenging. Doing low-level physical exercise every day can be perfect for your stress levels and it doesn't have to be that difficult. All you have to do is walk around for a bit (preferably in nature).

Resistance Training

If you have the energy for it, doing some resistance training once in a while can be very good for your resilience to stress and your overall health.

Resistance training is when your body pushes against a force. The most common types of resistance training are weight lifting and other types of strength training. It sounds stressful for the body to do some heavy weight lifting, you might think. And you would be completely right. However, it is a bit more complicated than that.

Resistance training does put some stress on your body in the short term. This is not necessarily a bad thing if you have a proper routine, though. The key to appropriate training for a resistance routine is enough recovery time. I recommend six to nine days between sessions. When you do resistance training this way, you will make your body momentarily stressed after the exercise. However, when you allow your body to recover for six to nine

days, it will increase your resilience to stress in the long term. So, when you follow this routine, you exchange some short-term stress for long-term stress relief and resistance.

However, if you're already very stressed, you might not want the temporary stress increase from resistance training. That's why I recommend that you only do resistance training if you feel like you have enough energy to do it. If you do, it can be very beneficial for you and make you more resilient to stress over time.

Aerobic Exercise

Aerobic exercise is very popular, and it can be beneficial. However, it can also require a lot of effort and time, which can be quite stressful.

Aerobic exercise, also known as endurance training or cardio, can be something like running, swimming, or cycling. Or it can be almost any sport that requires constant movement. If you have an existing practice of this type of exercise that you like, you can keep doing that, especially if it also includes good social relationships. However, aerobic exercise is typically not the first type of exercise that I would recommend for people with chronic stress issues. That's because endurance training is frequently seen as something you must do every day, or at least three to four times a week, for 30-60 minutes to get good results. This can be a lot of time for you to invest. Plus, it can be very taxing for your body and just put more stress on it. Also, you don't have to do aerobic exercise for several hours every week to see excellent benefits from your exercise routine.

If you have an aerobic exercise that you like that makes you feel better, you can keep doing that. However, I would only do aerobic exercise several times a week for the fun it can provide, not necessarily for the fitness benefits. If you have fun doing it, it can be great. However, if you want the health benefits and better resilience to stress in as short a time as possible, there are better ways.

HIIT

High-intensity interval training (HIIT) gives you a combination of the good effects of aerobic exercise and resistance training in a very short amount of time. It improves your mitochondria; it helps with detoxification and weight loss and dramatically increases growth hormone levels. In other words, it is perhaps the best way to exercise for your health.

In a HIIT workout, you shift between doing high-intensity intervals and resting. For example, you can sprint for 60 seconds and then sit or lie down for 90 seconds. And when I say sprint, I mean sprint. You want to get some real effort into those 60 seconds, so your heart rate rises as much as possible. Because when your heart rate is high, you get the benefits of aerobic exercise while you're relaxing between the intervals.

However, HIIT doesn't have to be running. It can be anything that allows you to do a high-intensity interval and get your heart rate up quickly. The best thing about HIIT is that it takes very little time. You simply do the intervals for as long as you can, or for a maximum of 15 minutes in total. This means that you will, at most, be doing six sprints or other high-intensity activities.

Furthermore, just doing this once a week will give you amazing benefits. You don't have to put more time into it. When you combine HIIT with low-level physical activity throughout the week, your exercise routine will require almost no time, and it will give a whole bunch of benefits. Your resilience to stress should also increase significantly.

Again, it's important to mention that you should always listen to your body. If your fatigue becomes worse after doing HIIT, it might not be the right thing for you at that moment. If that is the case, you can try to do HIIT later when you are less stressed. However, as with resistance training, HIIT should only put stress on your body in the short term, whereas it should increase your resilience to stress in the long term.

Generally, HIIT is very beneficial, and it probably won't hurt you to try it once. You can do one high-intensity interval for 60 seconds and see how you feel the next day or a few days after. If you feel better, you can go for more the following week. If you feel worse, you might want to wait some extra time before you try it again.

When it comes to exercising, the most important thing you can do to minimize stress is to ensure that your body is fully recovered after a workout before you start a new one. If you feel like your body isn't fully recovered after exercising, you should relax or only do some light movement until you're fully recovered.

Nutrition

What one eats directly impacts the way he/she feels. Aim to eat a balanced diet made up of low-fat proteins, fruits, vegetables, and complex carbohydrates. Lessen your consumption of foods that may negatively affect your mood or brain, such as alcohol, caffeine, saturated fats, and foods that have high chemical preservative levels or hormones.

Do not skip your meals. Aim to eat something at least every 3 to 4 hours since going for a long period between your meals might make you feel tired and irritable.

Minimize refined carbs and sugar. You may desire or have a craving for baked goods, sugary snacks, or comfort foods like French fries or pasta, but these foods quickly cause lower energy levels and a crash in the mood.

Concentrate on complex carbohydrates. Increase your intake of foods, such as whole-wheat pasta, baked potatoes, whole-grain bread, and oatmeal as they can enhance serotonin levels without causing a crash. Increase your vitamin intake; eat more leafy greens, citrus fruit, eggs, chicken, and beans. Eat superfoods like spinach, brown rice, and bananas that are rich in nutrients for boosting mood.

Omega-3 fatty acids can also play a vital role in steadying and stabilizing one's mood. Some of the best sources are fatty fish, such as salmon, mackerel, anchovies, sardines, and herring.

When preparing fish, you should bake or grill rather than fry them.

Practice the Power of Positive Thinking

The power of positive thinking is undeniable. When you think positively:

You receive better results. When you love the new evidence of improvement, you strive further to achieve it continuously.

You better notice your flow of behaviors and choices. You are better inclined since you know how you are feeling and thinking.

You create better results, and others in your life respond in kind.

You feel more at ease.

You behave more hopefully, thanks to the elimination of the negative cloud raining over you daily.

You have less time for negativity when embracing optimism.

You allow your mind to be fueled with more positivity, which has amazing effects on your physical, mental, and emotional health.

You actively choose to utilize the power of positive thinking each day.

When Faced With a Challenge, Choose Positive Responses

Problems are inevitable. It is just a part of life. We all face them, but how we interact with issues has an enormous effect on our overall wellbeing. When you negatively react, you end up majorly draining your energy and negatively affecting your health.

Positively facing the challenges at hand does not necessarily mean you are forced to be happy about them. It is about learning to choose the best perspective in all situations. We all have a choice of what type of perspective we want, which, in turn, affects how we feel.

Here are ways to embrace positivity no matter the scenario(s) you are faced with:

Instead of locking in your first negative thought, ask yourself these questions instead:

- What is the situation teaching me?
- What is a positive, more peaceful way I can interpret and approach this situation?

Take a moment to breathe and count to 10 (sounds too simple but works wonders).

Take note of how you are feeling and thinking.

Realize that you can pick your perspective, and nothing can make you think anything you don't choose to. Remember that your mind is a sacred place that is yours alone.

Practice Self-Love

The bulk of all positivity and the greatness that comes with it begins with you. It has little to do with what is happening in your life and everything to do with whatever is happening within yourself. When you feel good about yourself, it is much easier to jump on the path of positivity.

If you don't believe or love yourself, you are bound to face numerous challenges when it comes to generating the positive attitude that is required for success in life. To help create a better relationship with yourself, you need:

- To do something at least once per week that is an act of self-care. Think about any action you take to make yourself feel nurtured and supported. Even think about things you do for others or that you do for those you deeply love and start doing similar things for yourself!
- To practice the art of forgiving yourself instead of beating yourself up about weaknesses, goals that are unmet, regret, mistakes, the past, or guilt.
- To take stock of the things you do love about yourself. Anything from skills, achievements, triumphs, strengths, etc. Learn to enjoy the journey you have been on so far.
- Be Thankful

Gratitude always has the power to instill more happiness in our lives. Scientifically, it gives our brains a big dose of dopamine, which is a 'feel-good' chemical that erases negative emotions and thoughts.

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CHAPTER 16: USEFUL TOOLS



There are many simple tools that can help you understand your thoughts better, as well as what they might be rooted in. It is important that you use and maximize them in order to fully immerse yourself in the treatment. In this chapter, we present you with some of the most common CBT tools and how you can use them better.

Journaling

Think of journaling as a means of gathering data about your thoughts and your different moods. When writing in your journal, always try to expand on the mood or thought. Answer some of these questions:

- What was the source?
- How intense was the thought or the mood?
- How did you respond to it?

This tool can help you better identify your emotional tendencies and thought patterns. Having a record enables you to look back and see everything from an outsider's perspective. A journal helps prevent you from being in your head too much as well—this may lead to negative thinking if you're not careful.

Make Room for Pleasant Activity Scheduling

The idea here is to indulge yourself in an activity that stimulates positive feelings in you. For some, this could be a good book and a good cup of coffee, for others it could be catching up with friends. What's important is

that it must be an activity that's healthy for you—so, no binge eating or smoking. These things might stimulate the pleasure sensors in your brain, but they can actually worsen your overall state of mind.

Sugar can cause energy crashes. Smoking can cause addictions.

A good option to try here is to create a regular exercise routine for yourself. Regular, as in, something you do quite often if you cannot manage to do it every day.

The Benefits of Exercising:

The physical and mental benefits of exercise have long been established. All experts agree that regular exercise can help fight against diseases and improve overall wellness. Exercise is not only good for your physical body, but for your mental health as well.

Numerous studies have shown that exercise can reduce fatigue, enhance overall cognitive function, improve concentration, and increase alertness. Regular exercise can also help you focus better as well as increase your energy levels. More importantly, it can help you manage your stress and anxiety levels.

When stress affects the brain, along with its nerve connections, the body feels the same negative impact. This is why you need to condition both your mind and body when you are stressed or anxious. Since your body gets pumped up with adrenaline during moments of stress and anxiety, you need to put this adrenaline rush towards physical activity, such as aerobic exercises, to make you feel better.

Furthermore, scientists say that regular aerobic exercises can significantly reduce levels of tension, improve sleep, boost self-esteem, and increase and stabilize mood. So, even if you are too busy with work and you do not have time to go to the gym, you can still exercise. You can perform exercises in five minutes and still reap the same benefits as you would when you spend half an hour to one hour at the gym.

Mindfulness Meditation

There’s a wide range of benefits to this, but it is one of the most effective CBT techniques when it comes to dealing with AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS. It enables you to disengage from obsessing and rumination, allowing you to stay grounded. In this manner, your feelings and behavior would not be swayed by any of the negativity that may go on in your mind.

The Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation:

Numerous studies have shown that mindfulness meditation is effective in managing depression, pain, and anxiety. It is about training the brain to focus on the present moment instead of regrets from the past or anxiety about the future.

Whenever you worry, you focus more on what might happen in the future and what you have to do about it. This can make you anxious and stressed. Through mindfulness meditation, you can break free from these worries and bring your attention back to your present.

Mindfulness is about observing your thoughts and acknowledging them before finally letting them go. It refers to your ability to stay aware of your current feelings as well as moment-to-moment external and internal experiences.

When you practice mindfulness meditation, you are able to determine where your thinking causes problems. It also helps you get in touch better with your emotions. In essence, mindfulness is about acknowledging and observing your anxious feelings and thoughts, letting go of your worries, and staying focused on the present moment.

Mindfulness meditation can help you stay focused and calm in the present so that you are able to bring balance back to your nervous system. Mindfulness meditation has long been practiced in different parts of the world to reduce anxiety, stress, and depression among other mental health issues.

Cognitive Reframing

Cognitive reframing or restructuring is one of the core parts of CBT. It is also considered to be a very effective treatment when it comes to common issues that people face, including anxiety disorders, binge eating, and depression.

How to do it? It's basically taking something that's making you feel bad, and turning it into something that's good.

Reframing Anxiety as Excitement

When you reframe your anxiety as excitement, you are able to devote more resources and energy to the situation. According to Alison Wood, an assistant professor at Harvard Business School, the ideal way to deal with anxiety is to get excited. This finding is in contrast to the belief of most people, which is to keep calm.

You see, your emotions occur at two levels: arousal and valence. Arousal refers to the physical sensation that occurs in the psych world while valence refers to the way you interpret this arousal mentally.

Whenever you become anxious, your heart rate soars. When this happens, you experience high arousal, and that is a negative valence. So, whenever you feel anxious, you have to reframe it as a feeling of excitement instead of dwelling upon it with feelings of dread. By reframing it, your heart rate soars, but with it comes positive feelings instead of restlessness.

Recognize that You Are Doing Alright

Every day, you have to recognize that you are doing alright. During random moments of your day, take a pause and congratulate yourself on being fine.

Rick Hanson, a neuropsychologist who writes for *Psychology Today*, says that your instincts for survival make you constantly fearful and unsettled. While these instincts protect you by preventing you from letting your guard down completely, they also make you anxious.

Are you feeling anxious? Tell yourself that everything is alright and that it is okay to be feeling this way. It's only natural—after all, you're doing

something huge and EXCITING. Do not let the feeling dictate negativity in your mind. Use it instead as a fuel by reminding yourself that you're doing just fine.

Write Down Self-Affirmations

This may seem similar to reciting positive affirmations, but there is one distinct difference and that is THE TOPIC OF YOUR AFFIRMATIONS. This exercise centers on you as an individual and on your core values—ones you may have formed during childhood. These are the ones that have the strongest association with feelings of positivity, especially if they are somehow related to your family.

For example: If you find yourself having a bout of anxiety before presenting a new idea to the company, tell yourself "My mother always taught me that there are no big challenges, only people who are not up to the task." Repeat that thought until the negative thought is gone and you're only filled with these encouraging words.

Always make sure that you affirm core values before any challenging situations, especially if you start feeling terrified or plagued by thoughts of failure and rejection. By doing this, you can stay positive in any situation.

So, the next time you go to a job interview or face a difficult situation, pause for a while and remember your core values. Take a deep breath and recall the values that you grew up with.

These core values may be about your family, relationships, creativity, or career success among others. Select one of these values and determine why it is important for you. Get a piece of paper and write down your reasons as to why it is important. Be as vivid as possible.

Psychologists and researchers agree that this can help reduce stress and anxiety. In a study that involved eighty-five undergraduate students, it was found that writing about core values helps reduce stress levels.

The participants were told to give five-minute speeches as members of the audience yelled at them to speak faster. Before they gave their speeches, however, the participants selected the value that they thought to be most

important as well as the value that they thought to be quite irrelevant. Then, they wrote about such values.

Imagery-Based Exposure

This exercise involves you recalling a recent memory that produced an intense feeling of negativity within you. Now, once you have it in mind, analyze the situation.

For example, say you found yourself in a distressing situation at work where you ended up arguing with one of your officemates. They might have said something hurtful that left you reeling and completely out of it.

Yes, the exercise might bring back some of those feelings, but try focusing on the purpose at hand instead of those emotions. Remind yourself that the situation has passed and now you're merely studying it to gain a better understanding of how you reacted.

Next, label the thoughts and emotions that you went through during the conflict. Identify and write them down.

How does this help? Well, by visualizing this situation, it can actually help you take away its power to trigger the same emotions in you. Exposing yourself again to those negative feelings and urges will take away some of its ability to affect you once more.

Thought Recording

For this exercise, you will be testing out the validity of your thoughts. Basically, this involves gathering and then analyzing any evidence for and against a thought you might have. What this enables you to see is a fact-based conclusion on whether said thought is valid or not.

For example, you might think that your boss thinks badly of you and that they find you inadequate for the job. You would need to gather all the evidence that makes you believe this is true, such as "He wasn't smiling as I was making my presentation and he asked many questions as if to embarrass me." Then think of evidence that is against this belief, such as

“He did give me a pat on the back after the presentation” and “He also told me to keep it up. If he thought ill of me, he wouldn’t have encouraged me in that way.”

The goal here is to create a more balanced picture in your mind, as well as get rid of the unreasonable negative thoughts that you have formed prior.

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CHAPTER 17: PREVENT RELAPSES



Firstly, we have to know the meaning of lapse. A lapse is a brief return to feeling down or to your old habits. It is a common and temporary situation. As opposed to a lapse, a relapse is a complete deterioration or complete return to your initial state of health after a temporary improvement.

For example, you had a phobia of spiders, and now you know that it is best not to scream when seeing one. Somewhat, you calm yourself down, breathe, tell yourself some coping thoughts, and gradually ignore the spider. So, if you see a spider in a room one day and you scream, that is a lapse. If you then go back to screaming and running whenever you see a spider, then we can call that a relapse. Lapses can progress to relapses, but this should not necessarily happen. You can stop a lapse from escalating into a relapse.

When Does a Lapse Become a Relapse?

The general belief that what you say to yourself after a failure can make or break you is very much applicable here. What you say to yourself and think after a lapse can lead you back to the right track or throw you into relapse. Seeing a lapse as a failure can keep you sick and lead to a relapse. A better perspective is that you were able to have emotional wellness before; you can have it again; process whatever happened before and learn from your mistake.

Going back to our spider-phobia example: if, after avoiding the spider all day, you said to yourself, “It looks like I'm bringing back old habits; I need to do better tomorrow and get myself together!” you would discover that your lapse would probably decline or stop completely, and now you can face your anxieties and fears head-on. If you avoided spiders all day, and at the end of the day said to yourself, “All that I did was a waste, now I'm here

again. I'm such a jerk! Why am I even trying when there is no cure?" this is not really helpful, and it won't help your recovery.

Can I Prevent Lapses and Relapses?

Yes, you can prevent lapses and relapses, and here are seven clues you can use:

Do Not Give Up on Practicing

The best way to prevent a lapse is by regularly practicing your CBT skills. If you practice regularly, you will be in good shape to handle whatever situations you might face.

Understand Yourself (Red Flags)

Relapse doesn't happen suddenly. It occurs over a period of time. Preventing relapse by understanding yourself is not complicated. Understand yourself by identifying your triggers, asking for help, and sharing your feelings.

New Challenges

We are all works in progress, and you are no exception. This means there is always a chance to get better, and you can work on yourself and live a more fulfilling life. It will be less easy to backslide into your old ways if you deliberately work on new ways of overcoming your anxiety. An excellent way to prevent lapses is by challenging yourself regularly and taking up new scary situations. Make a list of cases that sound scary to you and initiate anxiety when you think of them, and work on them.

Learn from Your Past Experiences

Lapses are not synonymous with failure, rather they are opportunities to learn and get better. Figure out the situation that always leads to you having a lapse and make a plan that will help you deal with these situations better in the future.

As I said earlier, what you say to yourself after a lapse can impact your behavior. Have a few positive things that you say to yourself. CBT has helped you, and you cannot throw away everything you have learned. Going back to the beginning means having anxiety and not knowing how to handle it. Going back to practicing your CBT skills will help you master your anxiety again in a short time.

Be Kind to Yourself

Remember that lapses are not the end of the world; take it easy on yourself and learn. No one is above making mistakes. We all try to speak nicely to people, so do the same to yourself; don't say harsh things to yourself. Lapses can be a blessing in disguise at times because you get a chance to learn that you can go back to fashion out a new formula of dealing with your situation.

Enjoy Yourself

Make sure you always take the time to rest and relax from all the hard work you are doing. Appreciate yourself; buy yourself a nice meal, get something new, or hang out with your friends. You can also reward yourself by pampering yourself and taking some time to relax.

Tips for Preventing a Relapse

People suffering from episodes of depression can have crushing, intense feelings. The following strategies can help prevent depression relapse:

- Have supporting relationships.

- Avoid isolation. It is imperative to surround yourself with understanding, kind, and supportive people.
- Avoid and modify depressive thinking patterns.
- CBT can help you change your thinking style.
- Follow your prescribed medication.
- Work together with your psychiatrist and follow any treatment pattern they give you.
- Be ready for a relapse. It is advisable to plan for relapse and act upon signs as quickly as they appear.
- Correcting and Coping With a Relapse

Having a return to unhelpful anxiety reactions and old thought patterns might mean that the initial treatment is not working effectively. We recommend that you ask for a doctor's advice and preferably change your treatment strategy. Another treatment option is the use of medications like antidepressants or mood stabilizers with the doctor's prescription. If you've been on medication before, and it seems to be failing, you can talk to your doctor about a change in dosage.

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CHAPTER 18: OTHER TYPES OF COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY



The Multimodal Model (MMT)

In multimodal coaching, the emphasis is placed on the distinct dimensions of the human personality:

- Behavior - These are the traits that an individual may present
- Affect - Positive or negative influence on our emotions
- Sensation - Automatic sensations in our bodies such as sweating, heart racing, tension, etc.
- Imagery - Mental pictures
- Cognition - Our thought processes
- Interpersonal relationships
- Drugs – Biological intervention

These aspects can be easily remembered by using the acronym BASIC ID. While all people experience these same dimensions in one form or another, it also has room to address the uniqueness of each individual. You can think of it in the same way music is composed. Music is always composed of the same notes of the scale, yet no two musical pieces are exactly alike. The same is true for the billions of people who have these seven dimensions in their personality; you may find some that are similar, but none of them is exactly the same as another.

The goal of the MMD is to help the individual make the changes necessary to move them from their current personality to become a more progressive and better individual. It is not likely that any of us will ever reach our full potential. However, by applying the MMD model, it can help us pinpoint

the areas in our personality that may need adjusting and help us make the necessary changes.

In this type of therapy, the patient is asked a series of questions relating to these modalities to help determine exactly what kind of help they need.

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR)

This is a form of therapy specifically developed to help people who are suffering from traumatic events. Traumatic memories or images may pop up in their minds without warning, triggering all sorts of negative emotions and actions. EMDR makes it easy to access the part of the brain that processes these images or memories and helps them to resolve the issues that are triggering them.

Through EMDR, in much the same way as the body can heal from physical trauma, people learn that the mind can actually heal itself from psychological trauma. By learning how the body heals from physical trauma, such as a cut or a break, you can begin to understand how the mind automatically works to repair itself. If the location of a previous injury is repeatedly injured, the pain will recur. However, once the object that caused the injury is removed, and the threat has passed, the body will immediately begin to heal.

With EMDR therapy, we see that psychological trauma can be healed in the same way. The brain actually wants to be mentally healthy, but if the system continues to be blocked by repeated recurrences of the traumatic event, it can leave a lasting scar which can cause a great deal of suffering. However, once the imbalance is removed, the mind can begin to heal itself.

During therapy sessions, the patient must address emotionally disturbing material and some form of external stimulus at the same time.

Once therapy has been completed, the patient can find relief from their own negative beliefs and can move on to more positive things in their life. This healing is done through a detailed series of protocols and procedures designed to activate the brain’s natural healing process.

How Does it Work?

There are eight phases of EMDR treatment. Eye movement and other types of exercises that promote bilateral stimulation encompass a significant part of the session. The clinician will first pinpoint the memory that is triggering the negative behavior by asking the patient to recall various aspects of the traumatic event. At the same time, the clinician will have the patient track his hand movements as it crosses the patient's field of vision.

This will cause the client's mind to process the memory and the feelings that are associated with it, thus triggering a shift in their emotions. For example, a rape victim may associate a feeling of disgust or horror in recalling the event, but after the shift takes place, could demonstrate positive feelings of survival and strength.

All of this is done without the need for a lot of talking. Therefore, the results of this type of therapy do not stem from the conclusion that the clinician has gleaned from the talk but instead from the patient's own internal intellectual and emotional processes. The result is that a patient will leave the session feeling empowered by the same traumatic event that originally had broken them.

In this type of therapy, the damage created by the traumatic event didn't just heal the patient; it literally transformed them. The patient's thoughts, feelings, and behavior are part of a delicate balance of emotional and mental health.

Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy Method (REBT)

The theory behind this type of therapy is that humans do not act rationally in many situations. Logic is not always a part of our make-up. Computers and machines all perform their functions rationally. They take in data, analyze its logic, and provide an acceptable output. Humans, on the other hand, receive millions of tiny little inputs every day, process them very differently from machines, and instantly produce a wide variety of outputs; some of them may fit in a lot of things, but many others do not.

REBT was designed to train us to think more rationally to change our dysfunctional behaviors. Its goal is to break down our natural instincts to think irrationally, stop us from making unreasonable assumptions, and make realistic assumptions instead. This can change our inappropriate and destructive behaviors to much more positive ones. Since most of our negative thoughts and assumptions come from the irrational side of our beliefs, we react to them in inappropriate ways. It was thanks to these theories on negative thoughts that REBT therapy was developed.

Dialectical Behavioral Theory (DBT)

Sometimes referred to as ‘talk therapy,’ DBT stresses the psycho-social components of treatment. The basic theory behind DBT is that there are people who will react to situations in a much more extreme manner than others do. These are usually the result of emotional reactions to events in their romantic, family, or social relationships.

The general idea is that there are some people whose arousal levels can increase much more quickly than that of most people. Their emotional reactions are often at a higher level, and it takes much longer for them to return to normal after an episode.

These people commonly experience extreme emotional swings, they only see the world in black and white, tend to find themselves in an endless line of crises, and they spend most of their life jumping from one issue to another. In most cases, they have no means of coping with these sudden emotional outbursts and, therefore, can get no relief.

Structured Individual Psychotherapy Sessions

In a weekly one-on-one session with the therapist, the emphasis is on addressing problem-solving behavior and issues that may have occurred in the previous week. With these types of patients, there could be issues that spring from suicidal tendencies or tendencies that lead to injuring themselves, and these will take priority. After that, they will address specific behaviors that could interrupt the therapy sessions.

The therapist focuses on teaching and reinforcing adaptive behavior with an emphasis on teaching them how to better manage their emotional trauma when it occurs rather than removing the negative experience entirely. The ultimate goal is to get patients to improve their social skills, so they have better relationships and can interact more successfully with others.

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CONCLUSION



CBT is a well-known psychotherapy treatment that is notable for its positive results and feedback. It has helped thousands of individuals overcome different things and helps them regain control of their lives. It caters to different aspects of how a person responds to a certain situation or problem.

CBT is quite a complex and intricate method to understand. It is composed of several different aspects that should be understood before initiating the process. The three main parts of CBT are: thoughts, emotions and behaviors. These are all interconnected and can significantly impact one another.

Starting off with the chain, thoughts are one of the most crucial and important aspects where negative thoughts are present; they may lead to negative emotions that can also trigger negative behavior. With that being said, everything lies within what the individual's train of thought is and how they deal with it.

Emotions are also crucial since this greatly indicates what and how a person might feel. Behavior deals with how a person interprets their thoughts and emotions and how they want to handle as well as express themselves in any particular situation. In this chain, the behavior is mainly dependent on a person's thoughts and emotions. It deals with the cognitive aspect of a person as well as their behavior.

In terms of their train of thought, individuals will learn how to accept the current situation they're in and, instead of choosing to think about the negative thoughts and emotions, they learn how to focus more on the positive aspects in life. They try to see the silver lining in each situation and try to shed light on favorable emotions.

As for the behavioral aspect of CBT, it alters the way that different individuals react to various scenarios. When faced with a problem or situation, CBT allows them to take control of how they might behave and respond to it and lets them be a better person.

This book began with an explanation of why CBT is important, especially if you consider yourself a pessimistic thinker or have been struggling with negative feelings and self-destructive behaviors. I introduced CBT to you as an effective solution to your troubles and elaborated on its guiding principles, mainly: our thoughts control our emotions and behaviors.

I also discussed some useful tools of CBT, expounding the importance of journaling, mindfulness meditation, behavioral activation, and affirmations, as well as a guide on how to do them. There are also different ways CBT handles issues and helps with specific problems. The book was largely devoted to dealing with OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder), anxiety, depression, insomnia and panic disorders you also learned all about how to use CBT in treating them. There were several techniques discussed.

Once all the major areas of psychological distress and dysfunction CBT could resolve were already addressed, I also outlined a comprehensive 21-day, step-by-step guide on how to use different CBT techniques for dealing with more general problems. Some additional tips on how to continue improving your life even after your treatment process with CBT has ended were also discussed.

Now with the knowledge at hand, you have no excuse but to seize the opportunities life has presented to you to change and continue on that journey to self-development and wellness, not just for yourself, but for the community at large. This is only a guide that points out various ways and does not confine you only to the information it relays. Go all out and do your research as well as consult and try out different new ideas.

With discipline and sheer determination, this book is just one of the many arrows in your quiver. Aiming for success using this arrow does not assure you of direct and quick success, but how you use it and the strategies you execute will determine your level of success.

As we wrap up, take a moment to consider how magnificent it is that you are treating yourself. The amount of personal power that it takes for you to

recognize that you need support, and to have the willingness to step up and support yourself, and the amount of trust that you have placed in yourself and your ability are all admirable and prove that you are a strong, capable, and worthy individual. You can heal from your emotions, and if you remain dedicated, you will.

Life After Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Now that you've learned all about CBT and successfully applied it to deal with your own personal difficulties, it's time to finally move on with your life. The hardest part is over, and what waits ahead for you is a brighter future.

Ending your therapy can be difficult, because often people just can't believe that it's over. While some feel a sense of fulfilment or emotional closure when they're done, others don't, which can make it harder to say goodbye. However, bear in mind that just because this journey is over doesn't mean you should forever close your door on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Problems are a natural part of life, and you can expect to apply everything you've learned here later in your future.

What's more, even if you don't have any problems to deal with at the moment, it's still good to practice some of these CBT techniques to take care of your mental health. So keep journaling, keep meditating. Always think before you act and be critical of your thoughts and emotions. Unlike a lot of life's endings, ending this journey that you've had with CBT shouldn't be a sad one, so be happy and keep all your learning with you as you move forward into the future.

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DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY

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INTRODUCTION



DBT works as a continuous relationship between clients and therapists. In this type of therapy, patients are encouraged to sort out their life problems in collaboration with their therapists. This demands that people role-play new methods of interacting with others, finish homework assignments, and rehearse skills like calming themselves when upset.

These skills form a crucial part of DBT and are taught to patients in weekly lectures and homework groups. In this way, individual therapists help their clients master the skills of DBT and apply them to their lives.

Four Stages of DBT

Treatment with DBT is commonly broken down into four levels. Clients are assigned to these levels based on the intensity of their behaviors. Therapists are instructed to follow the framework defined in these levels to help their clients. No specific timeframe has been allotted to these stages. The therapist and clients are allowed to take as much time as required, depending upon the client's target.

Level One

In level one, the patient is usually miserable and has lost control over themselves: they may be attempting to harm themselves, using drugs, or involving themselves in other self-destructive activities. When such clients start DBT, they may liken their experience to "being in hell."

The main goal of this stage is to help move the client from a state of no control to one in which they learn how to get a better hold of themselves.

Level Two

In level two, clients often feel like their lives are filled with desperation. They have control over their harmful behaviors, but they are still suffering, mostly due to invalidation or past trauma. This often continues to the extent that it disturbs their emotional experience.

The main goal of level two is to assist such people to get out of their state of desperation and to reinstate the emotional experience. The treatment for people suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) falls into this level.

Level Three

In this level, the aim is to motivate the patients to live, find happiness and peace, and build self-respect. The therapist enables the client to live a normal life with moments of both happiness and sadness.

Level Four

For some clients, an additional fourth level is required to familiarize them with the concept of spiritual existence. This stage has been created for clients whose life of happiness and sadness does not help them find peace or feel connected to the world.

The main goal of this stage is to assist the client in moving on from a feeling of incompleteness to a life which grants them the ability to enjoy the feeling of freedom and joy.

What Makes DBT Different?

The world is convinced that DBT can do wonders, but why is it that it continues to work even when gold-standard treatments like CBT have failed?

In simple words, DBT tends to fill in the gaps left behind by most other therapies, including CBT. For example, CBT emphasizes changing behaviors and thoughts to the extent that the clients can be appalled. Most therapies targeting problems like stress, anxiety, PTSD, etc. do not encourage or support their clients to accept where they are right now. They invalidate people by using cognitive distortions as justification that their feelings are wrong. That's where DBT differs.

DBT Promotes Acceptance-Based Behaviors

Dialectical Behavior Therapy is a form of CBT, but what makes it more successful and unique is its emphasis on dialectical thinking and mindfulness. Instead of treating the symptoms as problems to be solved, this therapy puts equal focus on the acceptance of experiences by incorporating acceptance-based behaviors.

Dialectical thinking is a philosophical stance in which two truths or ideas, which seemingly oppose each other, exist at the same time. For example, a person coming for help may need to accept where they are right now as well as requiring motivation to change.

In simpler words, while DBT helps people promote feelings of acceptance, it makes them acknowledge that they have the capacity to create more positivity and do much better. This is something that can exclusively be achieved through DBT.

DBT Works with Emotions

DBT is a form of in-depth therapy that involves the process of learning cognitive and emotional skills and applying these skills to your life. It helps tackle distressing and difficult emotions and helps you improve your capacity for emotional regulation. By improving your emotional regulation, you are able to control and express your emotions in a much better way.

DBT Enhances Capabilities with Skills Training

What makes DBT different to other approaches is that it focuses on improving the capabilities of clients by teaching them different behavioral skills. Skills training is taught in a classroom setup. A group leader is assigned to every class, and their primary responsibility is to teach different skills through classroom activities, lectures, and take-home assignments.

This homework helps the client apply the skills they learn in class to their daily experiences. The groups meet every week for about 2.5 hours to discuss the happenings in their daily lives. To grasp the full curriculum, an average person requires 24 weeks. Sometimes, the program may be repeated to form a 1-year program.

Skills Training in DBT revolves around four different modules, each of which helps the client become stable in their lives. These modules include:

Mindfulness: This is the skill which helps you become aware and present in the current moment.

Distress Tolerance: This refers to the skill which helps you tolerate pain in tough conditions, instead of changing the situation.

Interpersonal Effectiveness: This refers to the skill of asking for whatever you need and learning to say no without compromising your self-respect and in your relationships.

Emotional Regulation: This refers to the skill of changing the emotions you wish to change.

But how does acquiring these skills help people?

Problematic behaviors occur as a way to manage a situation or resolve a difficult problem. While such behaviors provide a temporary solution or relief in the short term, they are rarely effective in the long run. DBT acknowledges this and assumes that patients are doing everything in their capacity, but at the same time, they need to acquire new behavioral patterns in relevant contexts.

DBT helps such clients develop behavioral skills in the following four areas: emotional regulation, distress tolerance, mindfulness, and interpersonal effectiveness. These skills help clients acquire useful ways to

navigate situations occurring in everyday life, and help them tackle challenges.

DBT Enhances Motivation Through Individual Therapy

DBT is an individual form of therapy that is focused on improving the client's motivation and helping them apply learned skills to tackle specific events in their lives. It is a unique approach that helps them accept their flaws, yet motivates them to get up and do better instead of treating them like victims who need sympathy.

DBT Ensures Generalization

DBT includes telephone coaching and other types of coaching to provide clients with in-the-moment support. The goal is to coach them on how to use DBT skills to cope with hard situations as they arise.

Therapists are available all the time to guide clients through difficult situations, which is something that seldom occurs in other therapy sessions.

DBT Structures the Environment via Case Management

DBT incorporates case management strategies that help the client manage their own life, including their social and physical environments. Therapists apply the same validation, problem-solving, and dialectical strategies to enable the client to analyze their problems without any external help. This empowers them to manage their problems on their own with minimal interference from a therapist unless absolutely necessary.

Thanks for downloading this book. It's my firm belief that it will provide you with all the answers to your questions.

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CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY?



Dialectical Behavior Therapy, or DBT, is a form of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy that focuses on solving behavioral problems by incorporating dialectical processes and acceptance-based strategies. It is best suited to the needs of patients suffering from intense emotional distress that prevents them from experiencing a good quality of life.

DBT was developed by American psychology researcher and author, Marsha Linehan. She created the therapy as a result of her struggles with schizophrenia and suicidal thoughts at a young age. She was institutionalized for her mental illness until the age of 18.

Convinced that CBT left a gap that needed to be filled, Linehan developed DBT at the University of Washington years later. DBT consists of four key skill areas and main components: interpersonal skills training, distress tolerance, emotional regulation, and mindfulness training.

DBT treatment can be delivered in many ways, typically consisting of individual therapy sessions and/or DBT skills groups. For example, while some patients may complete individual therapy sessions without attending any skills group, others might opt for group sessions without individual therapy.

An individual therapy session consists of a one-on-one session with a DBT therapist. This ensures that the patient’s therapeutic needs are attended to. Over the course of the treatment, the therapist will also help the patient apply DBT skills on a daily basis, appropriately address daily struggles that occur, and stay motivated.

DBT skills groups, on the other hand, encourage members to learn and practice skills with each other while they are led by a DBT therapist.

Members provide mutual support and listen as others share their experiences.

Therapists in a group session teach skills and lead members in group exercises. Each member is assigned homework, which often involves practicing mindfulness exercises.

Group sessions are typically completed within six months. Weekly sessions are conducted with each one lasting around two hours. The exact length of each session depends on the needs of each member.

How DBT Works

To build a life worth living, which is the main goal of DBT, client and therapist first sit down and make plans. They then set their goals and expectations.

There are five components in a standard DBT treatment program: a) a skills group, b) individual therapy, c) skills coaching, d) case management, and e) a consultation team. This section will provide an overview of the standard program.

Led by a therapist group leader, group sessions for teaching and learning behavioral skills happen every week and last about 2.5 hours. They are run like a class, and homework assignments are given so that patients can practice their newfound skills.

Twenty-four weeks are required for the entire skills curriculum, and this can be repeated to create a 1-year program. Depending on the situation and the needs of the patients, a shorter subset of this curriculum can also be taught.

The Four Skills Modules in DBT

The purpose of this skills group training is to improve clients' capabilities so they can effectively deal with the problems and challenges that arise in their daily lives. They learn from these four skills modules:

1. Mindfulness (being aware of ourselves and the situation we're in),

2. Distress tolerance (learning how to tolerate our pain in tough situations),
3. Interpersonal effectiveness (learning both assertiveness and respect of other people), and
4. Emotion regulation (learning how to change our negative emotions).

Of these four skills modules, mindfulness and distress tolerance belong to the acceptance strategy of DBT; interpersonal effectiveness and emotion regulation belong to the change strategy.

Individual Therapy

The purpose of an individual psychotherapy session is to improve the motivation of each patient. Personal issues and struggles are talked about, with the therapist encouraging the patient in the light of DBT's focus on acceptance and change. Skills learned in group sessions are also reinforced. Furthermore, a real relationship of mutual help between therapist and patient is formed; the therapist becomes a true partner in the process, not just a teacher or observer.

Like with the skills group training, an individual therapy session happens every week and runs concurrently with it.

Skills Coaching

DBT patients can call their therapists at any time of the day, to ask for advice whenever problems arise. The goal of skills coaching is to train patients to practice and apply the skills they are learning in their lives.

Case Management

This is about helping patients manage their own lives. The therapist advises on the things to be done but intervenes only when necessary.

The Consultation Team

The therapists themselves are part of a consultation team, in which they are given support for the work they are doing. This way, they will stay motivated and competent. This kind of emotional support is especially needed for difficult cases.

Clients who choose to undergo Dialectical Behavior Therapy often have several behavioral problems to be treated, not just one. The therapist will then have to prioritize problems according to the following hierarchy: (1) threat to life, (2) interference to therapy, (3) interference to quality of life, and (4) the need to learn new skills. For example, suicidal thoughts of a patient will be dealt with first, before alcohol abuse.

Lastly, there are 3 to 4 stages of treatment for DBT. Stage 1 corresponds to the initial life of the patient being out of control. Stage 2 corresponds to continued silent suffering after some control has already been achieved. Stage 3 corresponds to the challenge of living life: setting goals, gaining self-respect, finding happiness. And Stage 4, which is needed only by some, corresponds to finding a deeper fulfillment and completeness through spirituality of some kind.

Is Dialectical Behavior Therapy really effective?

So, does it really work? The answer is a resounding yes. DBT is a treatment based on evidence, and research has shown that it is indeed effective against the mental health illnesses it is used on, which are many. It is also found to be effective on people of diverse backgrounds (in terms of age, gender, sexual orientation, and race), and it's already been implemented in more than 25 countries.

DBT has also received recognition from official authorities, like the American Psychological Association.

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CHAPTER 2: DBT APPLICATIONS



DBT is most effective for people who experience emotions very intensely. They tend to be easily overwhelmed by life and relational stressors to the point that they feel that their emotional responses are out of control. Consequently, they often act in an impulsive manner in an attempt to temporarily relieve some of their distress. However, their reactions over the long term tend to create additional problems.

DBT was initially used to help individuals who were diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). This was and continues to be a very effective form of therapy to use with these individuals. However, in more recent years, DBT has also been very successfully used with other individuals who demonstrate severe mood swings and are unable to apply coping strategies to successfully deal with these intense and sudden emotional urges. Many of these people struggle with severe depression, PTSD, eating disorders, severe compulsory disorders, Bipolar Disorder, ADHD, anger management, and/or substance abuse. Many people who seek out DBT also engage in self-harm, as this therapy has been shown to be very effective in helping individuals with this level of emotional trouble.

In order to really understand more about the person who generally does well in DBT, let’s take a look at the specific characteristics that many of these people share. People who do well with DBT usually have a high level of emotional vulnerability. What this means is that they are prone to experiencing emotions in a very reactive and intense way. Sometimes, they are just hardwired to feel emotions more intensely than the average person. In fact, DBT theory asserts that the automatic nervous system of an emotionally vulnerable person is predisposed to be reactive to relatively low levels of stress. Their nervous system also takes much longer to return to baseline levels when the stressor is removed. Additionally, some people have mood disorders such as major depression or generalized anxiety that is

not being effectively controlled by medication, and that influence how intensely they experience their emotions. Consequently, emotionally vulnerable people tend to have quick, intense, emotional reactions that are difficult to control. This keeps them on a roller coaster ride throughout their lives.

However, clinicians have found that most emotionally vulnerable people who seek DBT treatment are not JUST hardwired to have more intense emotions or have mood disorders. Typically, they have also been exposed to invalidating environments for extensive periods of time. Such environments generally stem from early childhood, but could have occurred at any point. These environments did not provide them with the support, attention, respect, or understanding that they needed to properly work through their emotions. Invalidating environments can range from ones involving severe emotional or physical abuse to mismatched parent and child personalities. Consider the shy child who is born or adopted into a family full of extroverts, and who is constantly teased about his or her introverted personality. Or perhaps it's the child with ADHD who has a mother and stepfather who are inflexible and constantly yelling at them. These are both examples of environments that are invalidating. When the person who already has a predisposition to experience more extreme emotions is placed in an environment that does not support or validate their feelings, they can become even more emotionally vulnerable. They may then begin to demonstrate even greater emotional reactivity because they inadvertently learned that the only time they were taken seriously was when they demonstrated extremely emotional behavior.

Let's take the introverted child as an example, and let's say it's a boy. Say he was constantly told by his father that he had to "man up" and become more aggressive in his approach to life. He felt ridiculed and began to think that there was something wrong with him. So, one day when his father was addressing him, the boy began to cry uncontrollably. His father immediately lightened up, and his mother came rushing to his aid, showering him with tons of attention. Then it happened again. And then again. An interesting thing began to happen. The young boy's unconscious mind began to see a pattern that looked like this: 'My dad harasses me, I cry uncontrollably, the hassling stops, I get lots of attention.' He began to do it more and more because it worked and each successful demonstration inadvertently

reinforced the behavior. His emotional outbursts became validated, and then it ultimately becomes an ingrained coping skill.

The process described above unconsciously reinforced the child's emotional vulnerability, and you guessed it – made it worse. This is typically the pattern you see with people with Borderline Personality Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, eating disorders, and other disorders that DBT treats. The next section will give an overview of several of the disorders that are successfully treated with DBT.

Borderline Personality Disorder

People with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) experience emotions more intensely and for longer periods of time than other people. They are prone to frequent and chronic outbursts to the point that many mental health professionals have described this population as one that is experiencing an unrelenting crisis. They are nearly always in crisis mode as they have generally not learned the coping skills they need to better regulate their intense emotions.

Individuals with BPD are emotionally vulnerable, and it takes them much longer to return to baseline following an event. In addition, one of the patterns that therapists have described regarding people with BPD is their tendency to take on the same belief system as the invalidating environment that they are subjected to. This results in their own "self-invalidation," where they reject their own emotions and ability to solve problems. They also tend to develop unrealistic expectations for themselves and experience intense shame and anger when they fail to meet their goals or when difficulties arise.

Another defining characteristic of individuals with BPD is their tendency to make rigid and unrealistic demands of themselves and others. When things don't go as they planned or desire, they often resort to "blaming." Blaming is a thinking error that many people with BPD have. They blame everyone and everything for their problems and have trouble acknowledging the personal behavioral changes that need to be made in order to see different outcomes in their lifestyle.

Individuals with BPD have a poor sense of self and tend to struggle with interpersonal relationships. They tend to seek out individuals who will take control and solve their problems for them so that they can shrink back and not have to do so. However, they tend to wear the mask of competence so that others think that they are capable of solving their own problems and dealing with their intense emotions. Although they may have mastered certain areas of their life, they have not been successful at generalizing their competence in other areas.

Due to the lifestyle that most people with BDP have created, in combination with their difficulties in returning to baseline following an emotional event, they end up experiencing significant traumatic experiences on an ongoing basis. They also tend to avoid experiencing negative emotions altogether because they do not know how to regulate even healthy negative emotions. As a result, they do not know what to do when an emotional situation arises that they are unable to tolerate, which throws them into an intense and prolonged emotional state.

People with Borderline Personality Disorder sometimes engage in cutting or other self-harm and suicidal behavior to deal with the intense emotional pain. Emotional vulnerability is often seen in individuals who are suicidal or engage in chronic self-injury. The individual is highly emotionally reactive, and when exposed to very severe trauma such as physical or emotional abuse, they begin to think about suicide. Eventually, in an attempt to be relieved of the ongoing pain, they try to kill themselves and are taken to hospital. Here, they are given loads of attention, and for the first time, they begin to feel like they are being validated and taken seriously.

Consider the boy who engages in some type of self-injury, such as cutting or burning himself because he finds that it provides temporary relief. When someone else finds out that this is happening, people are suddenly taking him seriously. Similar to the experience of the first example, he is finally feeling validated.

What do you think happens in these two situations? Over time, the boys both continue to engage in these behaviors, because it is the only time they feel validated and supported. It becomes an ingrained coping skill.

Eating Disorders

An eating disorder is an illness whereby a person has eating habits that are considered irregular. However, the illness goes beyond simple disruption of food intake, as the person experiencing the eating disorder generally feels severe distress regarding their body weight and/or shape. In an attempt to regulate their appearance and feel better about themselves, people with eating disorders may begin to eat significantly less and become obsessed with exercise. This emotional and behavioral disturbance can occur in both sexes and generally has an extreme impact on the physical and emotional well-being of the person.

Although eating disorders can occur at any developmental stage, they typically emerge during adolescence or early adulthood and often coexist with other psychological and behavioral conditions such as substance abuse, mood disorders, and anxiety disorders. The three most common types of eating disorders are discussed below.

Anorexia Nervosa

An individual who experiences anorexia nervosa usually demonstrates a strong obsession with their weight. Due to their poor and unrealistic perceptions of body image, they are fearful of gaining weight and often refuse to maintain a weight that is healthy. Many people who struggle with this disorder limit the amount of food they eat to the point that their caloric intake cannot sustain their health. Even when they are visibly underweight and their appearance begins to generate concern in others, they continue to view themselves as overweight. Anorexia can lead to major health issues such as infertility, heart problems, organ failure, brain damage, and bone loss. People with this disease have a high risk of death.

Bulimia Nervosa

Individuals who struggle with bulimia generally fear being overweight and are very unhappy with the appearance of their body. This disorder is characterized by the cycle of binge eating followed by overcompensation for the binge eating. For example, a person may sit and eat excessive amounts of food in one sitting and then follow the eating with forced

vomiting, excessive exercise, extreme use of laxatives and diuretics, or any combination of these compensatory behaviors. The cycle is done in secret as they generally harbor a lot of shame, guilt, and lack of self-control. Bulimia can also lead to health problems such as gastrointestinal problems, dehydration, and heart issues that result from an imbalance of electrolytes caused by the eating-purging cycle.

Binge Eating Disorder

Individuals who struggle with binge eating often lose control of their eating but do not engage in the purging process as with bulimia. Consequently, many people who experience binge eating may also have the corresponding disorder of obesity, which increases health-related problems such as heart disease. As with individuals with other eating disorders, individuals who battle this disorder often have feelings of intense shame, guilt, embarrassment, and feelings of loss of control.

It is believed that the development of eating disorders is multifaceted, as the disorders are generally quite complex. Some of the things that contribute to the emergence of an eating disorder include biological, psychological, and of course, environmental factors. These factors include:

Biological factors such as irregular hormone functions and a genetic predisposition

Nutritional deficiencies

Psychological factors such as a negative body image and poor self-esteem

Environmental factors such as a dysfunctional family unit

Professions and careers that promote excessive thinness – like modeling

Sports that promote thinness for performance such as gymnastics, wrestling, long-distance running, and others

Sexual abuse in childhood

Family, peer, and media pressure to be thin

Transitions and life changes

Here are some of the signs and symptoms that someone may exhibit when struggling with an eating disorder:

Chronic and excessive dieting even when underweight

Obsession with caloric intake and the fat content of food

Demonstrating eating patterns that are ritualistic. These rituals might include behaviors like eating alone, breaking food into small pieces, and hiding food for later consumption

A fixation on food. Some individuals with eating disorders may prepare delicious complex meals for other people but refuse to eat the meal.

People with eating disorders may also suffer from depression or lethargy

Although DBT has been shown to be very successful in treating individuals with eating disorders, they may need additional support in the early stages of treatment. Additional support may include being monitored by a physician to address any health issues that may have developed as well as working with a nutritionist until weight is stabilized. Often, the nutritionist will develop an individualized meal plan to help individuals return to a healthy weight.

Bipolar Disorder

This is also often referred to as Manic Depressive Disorder because of the individual’s tendency to vacillate between manic episodes and more depressive states. This disorder is characterized by unusual and extreme changes in activity levels, energy levels, mood, and the ability to perform daily tasks. The symptoms are not the same as normal mood fluctuations, as they are severe and generally quite extreme to the point that individuals may damage relationships, jeopardize performance at work and school, and even contemplate suicide.

Like most psychological disorders, there is generally no single cause for Bipolar Disorder. It is often an illness that develops from a combination of biological and environmental factors. Many factors act together to produce the illness or increase the risk of the illness manifesting.

Genetics seems to play a role in the emergence of Bipolar Disorder as research has identified some genes that are more likely to influence the development of the disorder. Other research has shown that children from particular families or those who have a sibling with the disorder are more likely to develop the disorder themselves.

However, research has also shown that environmental factors play a strong role in its emergence. In identical twin studies where siblings share the same exact genetic makeup, when one twin develops the disorder, the other twin does not always. This indicates that something other than genetics is at work, which points to environmental triggers.

Individuals with this condition experience strong emotional states known as “mood episodes.” Each episode can last for days or months. Each episode reflects an extreme change in presentation from the person’s normal behavior. An exceedingly joyful, ecstatic state that is full of increased activity is typically the “manic” episode. The sad, dysphoric, hopeless, and sometimes irritable and explosive state is the “depressive” episode. A “mixed state” is when behavior characteristics of both a manic and depressive episode are present at the same time.

Here are some symptoms that are characteristic of Bipolar Disorder:

The manic episode includes symptoms such as:

Feeling “high” for a long period, demonstrated by an excessively happy mood

Fast-talking and hopping from one idea to another. This is reflective of running thoughts.

Being easily distracted

Excessive activity level and taking on many new projects

Restlessness

Limited sleep

Unrealistic thoughts about what one can do

Impulsiveness and preoccupation with pleasurable and risky activities

The characteristics of a depressive episode include:

Long periods of extreme irritability

Long periods of sadness or hopelessness

Losing interest in events that a person once loved

Tiredness and feeling sluggish

Difficulties remembering, concentrating, and decision making

Change in eating, sleeping, and other habits

Suicidal ideation, gestures, and/or suicidal attempts may also be present

Bipolar Disorder can occur even when a person's mood swings are low. For example, hypomania, which is not severe, is experienced by some individuals with Bipolar Disorder. The individual may feel good during a hypomanic episode and is even highly productive. However, though they are functioning well, their friends and family note the significant difference in mood. The mood change is so remarkable that family and friends may wonder if symptoms of Bipolar Disorder are present. Hypomania may easily become full mania or symptoms of Bipolar Disorder may occur if a person does not get proper treatment.

As previously mentioned, Bipolar Disorder can be present in a mixed state. This is when a person experiences both depression and mania simultaneously. In a mixed state, one may feel very disturbed, experience sleep disruption, lose their appetite, and may even think of committing suicide. Individuals in this state may have a feeling of being hopeless or sad while still feeling extremely energized.

When experiencing a severe episode of depression or mania, an individual can experience psychotic symptoms such as delusions or hallucinations, as well. The psychotic signs tend to show and strengthen the extreme mood of an individual. For instance, if a person has psychotic signs in a manic episode, he may believe that he is the president of a country, has vast wealth, or has some kind of special power. Psychotic signs in a depressive episode might include believing that she is homeless, ruined, penniless, or a criminal on the run. Unfortunately, sometimes individuals with this condition are misdiagnosed with schizophrenia or another reality testing disorder because of their mood-induced hallucinations.

Individuals with Bipolar Disorder also often have the co-occurring disorder of polysubstance abuse or dependence. Anxiety disorders, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and phobias, also co-occur quite often. Bipolar Disorder also sometimes co-occurs with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). People with Bipolar Disorder also have a higher likelihood of diabetes, headaches, thyroid disease, heart disease, migraine obesity, and other physical sicknesses.

Bipolar Disorder usually begins to develop in the late teenage years or during early adulthood. However, some people have their first symptoms during childhood, while others may develop symptoms later on in life. At least half of all cases start before the age of 25.

Types of Bipolar Disorder are as follows:

- Bipolar I Disorder
- Bipolar II Disorder
- Bipolar Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (BP-NOS)
- Cyclothymic Disorder or Cyclothymia

If not diagnosed and treated, the bipolar condition can become worse. It becomes severe as episodes become frequent. This delay can result in the person demonstrating behavior that significantly impacts relationships, personal goals, finances, housing, work, school, and many other areas. DBT has been known to help individuals with this condition lead healthier and more productive lives. Many times, DBT has helped individuals decrease the episodes' severity and frequency.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

The body has a built-in and naturally occurring mechanism that makes individuals seek to escape danger. This mechanism is known as the fight-or-flight response. When your brain receives the signal that there is imminent danger, your body goes into an automatic response mode. You naturally begin to feel afraid and your body gears up to either flee the situation to get to safety or to fight to ensure your self-preservation and survival. Your fear of dangerous situations triggers many split-second and unconscious changes

in the body that prepares you to either flee or fight in a particular situation. This is a natural process that is biologically incorporated to help people protect themselves from harm. However, in certain individuals, repeated exposure to trauma, or exposure to one extremely high-level traumatic experience causes this normal “fight-or-flight” response to go haywire. When this process is damaged, and individuals become stressed or frightened even when they are no longer in danger, this is called Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

PTSD generally occurs after someone experiences a terrifying and/or life-threatening ordeal. The ordeal usually involves some type of actual physical harm or threat of physical harm. The harm or threat to harm may have involved the person themselves, a loved one, or the person may have witnessed a harmful event that happened to someone else or a group of other people. Some examples of situations that can cause PTSD are:

War

Rape or sexual abuse

Terrorism

Robbery

Train wrecks

Car accidents

Plane crashes

Natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, and tornadoes

Childhood physical abuse

Domestic violence

Hostage situations

Torture

Bombings

Any other very traumatic event

PTSD is caused by a combination of genetic and environmental features. The way that a specific individual is biologically wired to deal with fear

sensations and memories has a lot to do with the development of PTSD. People who are more emotionally vulnerable to fear due to their brain chemistry are more likely to develop PTSD.

Environmental factors also play a significant role in the emergence of PTSD. Environmental factors such as trauma that occurred in childhood, head injuries, or a personal history of mental illness may also increase a person's risk of developing the disorder. Also, personality and cognitive factors such as thinking errors, ability to tolerate distress, pessimism, and other cognitive-related factors increase risk. Similarly, social factors such as the availability of a support system help people adjust to trauma and may help them avoid the experience of PTSD.

PTSD Symptoms

PTSD symptoms are categorized into three groups:

1. Re-experiencing symptoms

Flashbacks.

Nightmares about the event.

Frightening thoughts that are intrusive and persistent. They pop up out of seemingly nowhere, and they are hard to get rid of.

Obviously, re-experiencing symptoms can be very disruptive to day to day functioning. They may cause problems in a person’s everyday routine and interpersonal relationships.

2. Avoidance symptoms

These symptoms are demonstrated when a person avoids anything that reminds them of the traumatic incident. They stay away because going near them triggers an out of control emotional response.

Feeling emotionally numb is also an avoidant type of symptom. Rather than risk feeling an intense negative emotion, they feel emotionally numb. They avoid any emotional experience at all in an attempt to avoid negative feelings.

Victims feeling strong worry, depression, or guilt without really knowing why is another example of an avoidant symptom. Rather than deal with the response to the incident directly, people with PTSD may have more generalized negative feelings.

Victims may experience a loss of interest in activities they previously loved. Avoidance of all pleasurable activity is characteristic of PTSD.

Difficulties in remembering the dangerous incident are also common. Rather than deal with what happened, sometimes it's easier to just stuff the whole experience into the subconscious. This is an example of avoidance.

Change in routine is also avoidant in nature. Sometimes, people with PTSD will purposefully change their routines so they don't have to worry about dealing with a trigger. An example of this would be if a person avoids driving a car after a life-threatening car accident. This was very common after 9-11 when many people refused to get on airplanes after the terrorist attack.

3. Hyperarousal symptoms

People recovering from PTSD are often easily startled, and they may feel tense more frequently than before the traumatic event.

Their automatic nervous system is more active, so they experience troubles in sleeping and managing their anger. Angry outbursts may occur frequently.

It should be noted that hyperarousal symptoms are usually constant and are present even without a specific trigger.

It's completely natural for someone to experience one or even several of these symptoms after being involved in an event that is traumatic.

Keep in mind that children and teenagers may present differently when they are experiencing PTSD. In young kids, you may see:

Reverting back to bedwetting after they have been potty trained

Not talking after reaching a verbal developmental stage

Reenactment of the traumatizing event when playing

In older children or adolescents, you may see symptoms that are more consistent with adult symptoms. However, you may also see an increase in disrespectful and explosive behavior. They can also become preoccupied with getting revenge or feel guilty for not doing more to prevent the event or the injuries that occurred in response to the event.

PTSD can happen at any age. Females have a higher risk of developing PTSD, and there seems to be a significant genetic link. Not all people who live through a risky event develop this condition.

There are several factors that determine if an individual will develop PTSD. Factors that increase the probability an individual getting PTSD are called risk factors. Factors that lower a person’s chances of getting PTSD are called resilience factors. Some of these risk and resilience factors are present before the trauma, while others develop during or after a traumatic event.

Resilience factors for PTSD include:

Access to an adequate support system following a trauma

Having an effective coping strategy

Feeling good about individual actions when there’s trouble

Therapy or counseling that addresses adjustment post-trauma

Risk factors for PTSD include:

Experiencing a trauma

Personal history of mental illness

Physical injury

Witnessing people getting killed or hurt

Inadequate or lack of social support after an incident

Loss of a home, job or a loved one

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

This is a psychological disorder that has the potential to be quite disabling if left untreated. It traps people into a relentless and never-ending series of behaviors and thoughts that are repetitive. They become overwhelmed with thoughts, fears, and images that they cannot control. So, they instead obsess about them continuously. These endless and negative thoughts produce anxiety that causes these individuals to feel an urgent and immediate need to engage in certain rituals, routines, or safety-seeking behavior. These compulsive behaviors are the person's way of trying to eliminate the anxiety that comes with obsessive and ruminating thoughts.

Although the ritualistic behavior generally does temporarily alleviate the anxiety, it becomes a chronic problem because the person must carry out the ritual again when the obsessive thoughts come back. This OCD cycle can really begin to impact the person's relationships and even personal health. It is not uncommon for a person with OCD to take up hours of their time that they would normally be using to engage in normal activities to complete the ritualistic tasks. People with OCD are often aware of their behavior, and they know that their rituals are unrealistic and problematic, but they cannot stop them.

Common obsessions include:

Fear of dirt

Fear of causing harm to others

Fear of making a mistake

Fear of being embarrassed

Fear of behaving in a socially unacceptable manner

Fear of thinking thoughts that are sinful or evil

Excessive doubt and the need for constant reassurance

Common compulsions include:

Repeating specific prayers, phrases, or words

Washing hands, showering or bathing repeatedly

Eating in a certain order

Having to do errands a certain number of times

Declining to touch doorknobs or shake hands

Hoarding

While it is not entirely known what causes OCD, research has indicated that a mixture of environmental and biological factors is involved, consistent with most other mental and behavioral health disorders.

Biological Factors

It is thought by researchers that OCD comes from problems in the pathways that link the parts of the brain that deal with planning and judgment with the part responsible for filtering body movement messages. Moreover, some evidence shows that OCD is passed to children from their parents.

Environmental Factors

Environmental stressors can cause OCD in some individuals. Other factors may make the symptoms worse. Some of these are:

Abuse

Moving house

Sickness

Work changes

Death of someone close

School problems

Relationship concerns

A recent statistic indicated that 1 million children and adolescents, and 3.3 million adults, are affected by OCD in the United States. This disorder responds well to therapies such as CBT and DBT.

Severe Major Depression

Almost everyone has experienced some level of sadness in their life. Sadness is a normal emotional response to bad situations. However, when sadness becomes so pronounced that it interferes with daily performance and activities, help may be needed.

Major depression or clinical depression is characterized by a depressed mood that is prevalent throughout the day and can be particularly prevalent in the morning. The disorder is characterized by a lack of interest in relationships and normal chores and symptoms are present every day for at least 2 weeks.

Here are the typical symptoms of major depression:

Fatigue

Indecisiveness

Feeling guilty

Reduced concentration

Insomnia or hypersomnia

Sluggishness or restlessness

Recurring thoughts of death or suicide

Weight gain or loss

Major depression affects almost 10% of the US population over the age of 18. Some statistics indicate that between 20% and 25% of all US adults suffer an episode of major depression at some point during their lifetime. Major depression also affects elderly adults, teenagers, and children, but unfortunately, the disorder often goes undiagnosed and untreated in these populations.

Almost twice as many women as men have been diagnosed with major or clinical depression, which means that more women than men will likely be in treatment. Hormonal changes, pregnancy, miscarriage, and menopause may also increase the risk. Other factors that boost the risk of clinical depression in women who are biologically vulnerable include environmental stressors such as increased stress at home or work, balancing family life with career, and caring for an aging parent. Being a single parent has also been shown to increase the risk of depression.

It is believed that one of the reasons that women outnumber men diagnosed with major depression is because men are less likely to report symptoms. In fact, major depression in men is extremely underreported. Unfortunately, men who suffer from clinical depression are less likely to seek help or even talk about their experience.

Signs of depression in men may be a little different than in women. Here's what you can expect to see:

Increased irritability and anger

Substance abuse

Violent behavior directed both inwardly and outwardly (due to repressed feelings)

Reckless behavior

Deterioration of health

Increase risk of suicide and homicide

Here are triggers that are common:

Grief from losing a loved one through separation, divorce, or death

Major life changes such as moving, graduating, job change, promotion, retirement, and having children

Being isolated socially

Relationship conflict with a partner or supervisor

Divorce

Emotional, sexual, or physical abuse

Individuals who experience the various disorders described in this section experience extreme difficulty regulating their emotions. In addition, there is generally a social component that contributes to the manifestation of the disorder. DBT takes the psychosocial components that traditional CBT therapies take into consideration with the intention of helping individuals learn how to manage their out-of-control emotions and behaviors. As you will see in the following chapters, two of the models of DBT emphasize acceptance while two of them emphasize change so that the individual feels both validated and motivated to make the necessary behavioral changes.

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CHAPTER 3: WHY MINDFULNESS IS A SUPERPOWER



Mindfulness is having a wise mind and being present in the moment. There are many facets to being mindful. It consists of observing, describing, and participating in the present moment. What does it mean to do these things? It means not to let your mind wander. Bring it back to the present moment.

Even if you don't have BPD, or any diagnosed mental illness, learning mindfulness and learning how to live in the present without worrying about the future or the past is a useful skill for anyone.

Mindfulness is a basic psychotherapy technique used to treat anxiety, anger, depression, and other psychological problems. While it has its roots in the mysticism of eastern cultures, western science has studied the subject a great deal. Psychotherapists even recommend mindfulness meditation for individuals who are suffering from certain mental health problems. Developing mindfulness is a crucial part of CBT, as well as DBT and ACT

(Acceptance and Commitment Therapy). In fact, it is one of the four skills modules in DBT.

Basically, mindfulness is the state of mind that can be achieved by focusing our awareness on what is happening in the present. It also involves the calm acceptance of our feelings, sensations, and thoughts.

The challenge of focusing on the present may seem trivial for some, but this is actually easier said than done. Our mind may wander away, we lose touch with the present moment, and we may even be absorbed into obsessive thoughts about the things that have happened in the past or worry about the future. But regardless of how far our mind drifts from the present, we can use mindfulness to immediately get us back to what we are presently doing or feeling.

Even though it is natural for us to be mindful anytime we want, we can further cultivate mindfulness through effective ACT techniques that you will learn later on.

Mindfulness is usually linked with meditation. While meditation is an effective way to achieve mindfulness, there's more to it. Mindfulness is a form of being present, which you can use any time. It is a form of consciousness that you can achieve if you intentionally focus on the present moment without any judgment.

Elements of mindfulness

Attention and attitude are the two primary elements of mindfulness.

Attention

Many of us suffer from what is known as "monkey mind," whereby the mind behaves like a monkey swinging from one branch to another. Our mind may swing away and back again, and we usually don't have any idea how we ended up thinking about something.

The monkey mind usually dwells in the past, ruminating on what has happened or what you think would have happened if you had acted

differently. It also swings away to the future, being anxious about what could happen. Nourishing the monkey mind will steal away the experience of the present moment.

Remember, mindfulness is focusing your attention on what is happening now.

Attitude

Suspending judgment and kindness are the basic tenets of mindfulness. Hence, a genuinely mindful person knows how to accept reality and doesn't engage in arguing with it. This may seem an easy task, but once you begin practicing mindfulness, you will become aware of how frequently we judge ourselves and our thoughts.

Here are some examples of sentences used in the judgment of ourselves and others:

I'm not good at this task.

My shirt looks lame.

I don't like my home.

I really don't like my neighbor.

What a grumpy waitress.

Mindfulness is also the art of calming our inner judge. It allows us to erase our internal expectations and become more embracing of how things are in the present moment. But take note that this doesn't mean you don't need to make necessary changes.

Remember, you are only suspending your judgment so you can have more time to think about the situation and do something about it. The main difference is that you can make changes from an ideal state of mind for change and not during times that you are influenced by tension or stress.

Moreover, mindfulness will allow you to be more compassionate with yourself, more embracing of your experience, and more caring of the people around you. It will also allow you to be more patient and non-judgmental if

you have some lapses. As you practice mindfulness, you can reshape your brain to become kinder and more compassionate.

How Mindfulness Can Reshape Your Brain

In the past, people believed that the human brain could only develop to a certain level, usually from early childhood to adolescence. But various studies have revealed that our brain has the capacity to reorganize itself through forming neural connections. This is known as neuroplasticity, and it has no virtually no limits.

Neuroscientists shattered the old belief that the human brain is an unchanging, static organ. They discovered that despite age, disease, or injury, the human brain can compensate for any damage by restructuring itself. To put it simply, our brain is capable of repairing itself.

Studies also support the idea that mindfulness can significantly help in the brain's development. It specifically helps in the process of neuroplasticity. It is really amazing to know that we can change our emotions, feelings, and thought processes through neuroplasticity and mindfulness.

There are three major studies that show how mindfulness can rewire the human brain through neuroplasticity.

Mindfulness Can Improve Memory, Learning, and Other Cognitive Functions

Even though mindfulness meditation is linked with a sense of physical relaxation and calmness, practitioners claim the practice can also help in learning and memory.

Sara Lazar, a professor at Harvard University Medical School, pioneered an 8-week meditation program that primarily uses mindfulness. With her team of researchers from Massachusetts General Hospital, she conducted the program to explore the connection between mindfulness and the improvement of cognitive functions.

The program was composed of weekly meditation sessions as well as audio recordings for the 16 volunteers who practiced meditation alone. On average, the participants practiced meditation for around 27 minutes. The underlying concept of mindfulness meditation for research was on achieving a state of mind in which the participants suspend their judgment and just focus on feeling sensations.

Later, the team used Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to capture images of the brain structure of the participants. A group of individuals who were not meditating (the control group) were also asked for an MRI scan.

The researchers were amazed by the result. Primarily, the study participants revealed that they experienced significant cognitive advantages that were proven in their responses in the mindfulness survey. On top of that, researchers also noted measurable physical differences in the density of the gray matter as supported by MRI scan.

The gray-matter density in the amygdala, the area of the brain responsible for stress and anxiety, was decreased.

There were significant changes in the brain areas responsible for self-awareness, introspection, and compassion.

The gray-matter density in the hippocampus, the part of the brain responsible for memory and learning, was increased.

This Harvard study reveals that neuroplasticity, through practicing meditation, can play an active role in the development of our brain. It is exciting to know that we can do something every day to improve our quality of life and general well-being.

Mindfulness Can Help Combat Depression

Millions of people around the world suffer from depression. For example, in the US, there are about 19 million people who are seeking medication to combat depression. This is around 10% of the whole US population.

Dr. Zindel Segal, a Psychiatry Professor at the University of Toronto, used a research grant from the MacArthur Foundation to explore the advantages of mindfulness towards alleviating depression. The research, that was mainly

focused on the administration of mindfulness-based stress reduction sessions, was considered a success, and he conducted follow-up research to study the effectiveness of mindfulness meditation in patients afflicted by depression. This has resulted in the establishment of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy or MBCT.

The study involved patients suffering from depression, with 8 out of 10 having experienced at least three episodes of depression. Following the stress reduction sessions, around 30% of participants who experienced at least three episodes of depression did not relapse for more than a year, in comparison to those who followed prescribed other therapies such as antidepressants.

Segal's study has become a precursor to studies sponsored by Oxford and Cambridge Universities in the United Kingdom, with both studies generating similar outcomes. The research has proved significantly valuable in using mindfulness meditation as an effective and healthier alternative to medication in the UK, and has convinced mental health practitioners to prescribe mindfulness meditation to their patients.

Mindfulness meditation and research studies on MBCT are gradually gaining a foothold within medical and scientific circles in the US and other parts of the globe.

Mindfulness Can Help in Stress Relief

A study conducted at Carnegie Mellon University has revealed that the practice of mindfulness, even for 25 minutes a day, can alleviate stress. The study, led by Prof. David Creswell, involved 66 participants aged between 18 and 30 years.

One group of study subjects was asked to undergo a short meditation session composed of 25 minutes of mindfulness for three days. This group was asked to do some exercises designed to get them to concentrate on their breathing while turning their focus to the present moment. The second group used the same time to assess poetry readings to improve their problem-solving skills.

During the evaluation phase, all the participants were asked to complete math and speech tasks in front of evaluators who were asked to look stern. All participants reported their stress levels increased and were asked for saliva samples to measure the levels of the stress hormone cortisol.

The group who was asked to practice mindfulness meditation for at least 25 minutes for three days reported less stress during the task, showing that practicing mindfulness even in the short term can increase the body's ability to handle stress.

It is interesting to note that the same group showed higher levels of the stress hormone, which was not expected by the researchers.

The research concluded that when participants learn mindfulness meditation, they have to actively work on the process – particularly in a stressful situation. The cognitive task may feel less stressful for the individual, despite an elevated cortisol level.

The team is now focusing on automating the mindfulness sessions to make it less stressful while reducing cortisol levels. But it is clear that even in the initial phases, short-term meditation can do a great deal in relieving stress.

Other Benefits of Mindfulness

Aside from the benefits described above, mindfulness meditation provides great benefits for our emotional, mental, and physical health.

Emotional Benefits

Mindfulness allows us to be more compassionate. Those who practice mindfulness meditation show changes in specific areas of the brain that are associated with empathy.

Mindfulness meditation decreases our reactivity to our emotions. A study conducted in the Massachusetts General Hospital revealed that mindfulness reduces the size of the amygdala, which is responsible for fear, anxiety, and aggression.

Mindfulness meditation can help us avoid negative thoughts, which our brain usually resorts to once left on its own.

In 2007, a study was conducted among students who were taught meditation strategies. It revealed that mindfulness helped the students increase their focus and decrease self-doubt, anxiety, and depression. There was also a notable decrease in suspensions and absenteeism in schools where mindfulness sessions were encouraged.

Mindfulness is also now used to ease symptoms of anxiety and depression. Many psychotherapists now prescribe mindfulness meditation for patients who are suffering from depressive episodes.

Mental Health Benefits

A study published in the *Journal of Psychological Science* revealed that students who practiced meditation before taking an exam got better results compared to students who did not. The study discovered a link between mindfulness and better cognitive function.

Mindfulness increases the activity in the anterior cingulate, which is the part of the brain responsible for memory, learning, and emotional regulation. It also increases activity in the prefrontal cortex that is responsible for judgment and planning.

Mindfulness is linked to improved concentration and longer attention span.

Mindfulness meditation also increases the brain’s neural connections and has been proven to fortify myelin, which is the protective tissue that surrounds the neurons responsible for transmitting signals in the brain.

Physical Benefits

Deep breathing can deactivate our sympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for our fight or flight response. It also activates the parasympathetic nervous system that is responsible for our rest and digest mode.

Mindfulness decreases the level of cortisol in the body. This stress hormone increases levels of stress and encourages hypertension.

In one study, participants who practiced mindfulness meditation reduced their risk of heart attack by more than five years and also reduced their blood pressure.

Mindfulness allows our mind to become aware of what we eat and has been used for weight loss programs.

Mindfulness is also responsible for increasing telomerase, which is believed to help in the decrease of cell damage.

Mindfulness meditation has been shown to increase the production of antibodies that combat the flu virus. This shows that meditation can help boost our immune system.

What Mindfulness Truly Means

Mindfulness means being aware of the things happening right this very moment in both our immediate surroundings and in ourselves — our thoughts, our emotions, our physical sensations, and our behaviors. The purpose of this awareness is to prevent us from being controlled by these events. This awareness must be nonjudgmental and passing, that is, we focus only on the facts and accept them, avoiding our own evaluations or opinions, and then we let them go.

Suppose your boss has severely criticized you about the work you've done. You know that you do not deserve it – both the criticism and the way it was delivered, and so you become very angry.

However, instead of letting your emotions dictate your response, you take a step back and mindfully think about the situation. You say to yourself something like this, 'My boss is under a lot of pressure right now, cranky and easily angered. His criticism of me was unfair. I did not deserve it, and so I got furious.' And then you move on.

There are different psychotherapy skills associated with mindfulness, and the above example is only one application of them. Those who are learning these skills complete exercises, like meditation and mindful walking. But

from this example alone, we can now easily understand and appreciate the benefits of mindfulness.

Three States of Mind

There is what is called the Wise Mind, which is one of the three states of our mind. This is the balance between our Reasonable Mind (when we act and behave based solely on facts and reason) and our Emotion Mind (when our thoughts and actions are dictated by our feelings). When we are using our Wise Mind — the wisdom in each one of us — we recognize and acknowledge our feelings, but we respond to them rationally.

The Wise Mind, or the practice of using our wisdom, is actually the first of the mindfulness skills. As illustrated in the example above, mindfulness helps us manage and control ourselves, especially in sudden and emotionally-intense situations, where we are more likely to react with our Emotion Mind. This benefit alone has many positive consequences in the long run — better relationships, more self-esteem and self-respect, better responses to unexpected crises, and lesser symptoms of anxiety and depression.

More importantly, when we are mindful, we also get to experience life more fully.

Mindfulness skills also train our minds, so we get the added benefits of improved memory, sharper focus, and faster mental processing. Our anxiety is also reduced, and we gain more control over our thoughts.

The Core Mindfulness Skills

And so, what exactly are these mindfulness skills? They are divided into three groups: Wise Mind, the “what” skills, and the “how” skills.

Wise Mind

As explained above, this is the middle state between our Reasonable Mind and Emotion Mind, where we recognize both our reason and emotions, and act accordingly.

The “What” Skills

These skills are in answer to the question, “What are the things you must do to practice mindfulness?” The answers are (1) observe, (2) describe, and (3) participate.

Observe

To observe is nothing more than to experience and be aware of our surroundings, our thoughts, our feelings, and the sensations we’re receiving. This is stepping back and looking at ourselves, especially for reorientation when we are too preoccupied with our problems.

Describe

To describe is to put words to our present experiences — acknowledging what we feel, think, or do — and using only the facts to do it, without our own opinions. For example, we say to ourselves, “My stomach feels hungry,” or “I’m thinking about my mother.” Doing this lessens distraction and helps our focus.

Participate

To participate is to give ourselves fully to what we are doing at the moment (eating, talking, or feeling satisfied). We forget ourselves in it, and we act

spontaneously.

The “How” Skills

These skills, on the other hand, answer the question, “How are you going to practice mindfulness?” The answers are: (1) non-judgmentally, (2) one-mindfully, and (3) effectively.

Non-judgmentally. A non-judgmental stance sees only the facts without evaluating, and without personal opinion. We accept each moment as it is, including our circumstances and what we see in ourselves: our thoughts, our feelings, our values, etc.

One-mindfully. Practicing mindfulness one-mindfully is doing only one thing at a time, and giving it all of our attention — whether that be dancing, walking, sitting, talking, thinking. This is about maintaining our focus and increasing our concentration.

Effectively. Practicing mindfulness effectively is keeping our goals in mind, and doing what is needed to accomplish them. We do our best, and we do not let our emotions get in the way.

These core mindfulness skills are central to Dialectical Behavior Therapy, and they support all the other skills. They are called “core” mindfulness skills because there are a few other skills or perspectives on mindfulness that are less commonly practiced. We will not talk about them in detail, but among these other perspectives is one taken from a spiritual point of view, designed for those who need further help in mindfulness in light of their spirituality.

Mindfulness Exercises

Now that we know the skills, it is time to apply them to exercises so that we can see them in action. The following is a small sample from the wealth of mindfulness exercises that have already been developed for DBT.

Meditation

To observe the present moment — in a nonjudgmental way — is the purpose of meditation.

To practice meditation, find a quiet place where you won't be disturbed. The goal is daily meditation of at least 30 minutes. For beginners, 10 minutes is advised.

Sit on a chair or a cushion on the floor. Sit with your back comfortably straight, with your arms at your side, and your palms on top of your thighs.

Then bring your attention to your breathing — pay close attention to your inhalation, exhalation, and the sounds they make. Try to do this for the entire duration. Your breathing is what you are using to ground yourself in the present moment.

However, your mind will soon wander, and that is all right. Simply acknowledge your thoughts without judgment, and then return your attention to your breathing.

You may also experience some uneasy feelings while meditating, and that is all right too. Again, simply acknowledge your feelings without judgment, and then return your attention to your breathing.

Do this again and again, always returning to your breathing whenever you are distracted, until the time is up.

Mindful Walking

Mindful walking is simply practicing mindfulness while walking, to observe one's own physical body and surroundings.

First, take note of how your body moves and how it feels as you take your steps. Notice the pressure on your feet, and the aches in your joints if there are any. Notice the increased rate of your heartbeat.

Then, expand your awareness to what is around you. What do you see? What do you hear? What do you smell? Do you feel the wind or the heat of the sun on your skin?

Five Senses

This is about using your five senses to observe your present moment. Notice at least one thing that you see, feel, hear, smell, or taste.

Mindful Breathing

You can do this mindfulness exercise sitting down or standing. If the time and place allow you to sit in a lotus position, do it, if not, no problem. You just need to ensure that you are focused on your breathing for at least 60 seconds.

Begin by slowly breathing in and breathing out. One cycle of breathing must last for about six seconds.

Remember to inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth. Allow your breathing to flow without any struggle.

While doing this exercise, make sure that you can let go of your thoughts. Also, learn to let go of the things that you have to complete today or pending projects that require your attention. Let your thoughts flow their own way and focus on your breathing.

Be aware of your breathing, concentrating on your consciousness as air enters your body and gives you life.

Mindful Listening

This mindfulness exercise is intended to develop our hearing in a non-judgmental manner. This is also effective in training our brain to be less distracted by preconceptions and previous experiences.

The majority of what we feel is affected by our previous experiences. For instance, we may hate a specific song because it triggers bad memories of a moment in your life when you felt really bad.

Mindful listening is designed to allow you to listen to neutral sounds and music, with a present consciousness that is not blocked by any preconceptions.

Choose music or a soundtrack that you are not really familiar with. Perhaps you have something in your playlist that you have never listened to, or you may choose to turn on the radio to find music that you can listen to.

Close your eyes and plug in your earphones.

The objective is to suspend your judgment of any music you hear – its genre, artist, and title. Don't prejudge the label and try to go with the flow of the music.

Let yourself discover the music, despite the fact that you may not like it at first. Let go of your judgment and allow your consciousness to be with the sound.

Navigate the sound waves by discerning the vibe of every instrument used in the music. Try to separate every sound in your mind and assess each.

Also, be aware of the vocals – their tone and range. If the music has several voices, try to separate them as you did with the musical instruments.

The goal here is to listen mindfully, to become completely entwined with the music without any judgment or preconception of the music, genre, or artist. This exercise requires you to listen and not to think.

Mindful Observation

This mindfulness exercise is one of the easiest to do but is also among the most powerful because it allows you to appreciate the simpler aspects of your surroundings.

This exercise is intended to reconnect us with the beauty of our environment; something we often ignore when we are driving to work or even walking in the park.

Select a natural object that you can easily focus on for a couple of minutes. This could be the moon, the clouds, an insect, or a tree.

Try not to do anything except observe the thing you have chosen to focus on. Just relax and try to focus on the object as much as your mind allows.

Look at the object and try to observe its visual aspects. Let your consciousness be consumed by the presence of the object.

Let yourself be connected with the object’s purpose and energy within the natural environment.

Mindful Awareness

This mindfulness exercise is intended to develop our elevated consciousness and appreciation of simple everyday tasks, as well as the outcomes they achieve. Consider something that you do every day that you usually take for granted, such as brushing your teeth.

When you grab your toothbrush, stop for a few moments and be mindful of your presence, your feelings in that moment, and what that action is doing for you.

Likewise, when you open the door before you go out and face the world, take a few moments to be still, and appreciate the design of your gateway to the rest of the world.

These things don’t necessarily have to be physical. For instance, every time you feel sadness, you may opt to take a few moments to stop, identify the thought as harmful, accept the fact that human beings get sad, and then move forward, letting go of the negativity.

It can even be something very little, like every time you see a flower on your way to work, take a moment to stop and appreciate how fortunate you are to behold such a visual delight.

Select a touchpoint that really resonates with you today and rather than going through your everyday tasks like a robot, take a few moments to step back and develop purposeful consciousness of what you are currently doing, as well as the gifts these actions will generate in your life.

Mindful Appreciation

In this mindfulness exercise, you will be observing five things in your day that you often ignore. These things could be people, events, or objects. This is really your call. At the end of the day, write down a list of five things that you noticed throughout the day.

The goal of this exercise is to basically show your gratitude and appreciation of the things that may seem insignificant in life. That is, the things that also play their role in our human existence, but we often ignore because we focus way too much on the “bigger and more important” things in life.

There are so many of these little things that we barely notice. There’s the clean water that nourishes your body, the cab driver who takes you to your workplace, your computer that allows you to be productive, your tongue that allows you to savor that delicious lunch you had.

However, have you ever taken just a few moments to pause and think about your connection to these things and how they play a role in your life?

Have you ever stepped back and observed their more intricate, finer details?

Have you ever wondered what your life would be like if these things were not present?

Have you ever properly appreciated how these things give you advantages in your life and help the people you care about?

Do you really know how these things really work or how they came into existence?

After identifying these five things, try to understand everything you can about their purpose and creation. That’s how you can genuinely appreciate the way that they are supporting your life.

Mindful Immersion

Mindful immersion is an exercise that will help you develop satisfaction in the present moment and let go of persistent worry about what the future may bring.

Instead of anxiously wanting to complete our daily work so we can get on to the next item on the list, we can take the task and completely experience it. For instance, if you need to wash the dishes, focus on the specific details of the activity. Instead of treating this as a common household chore, you can choose to develop a completely new experience by taking a closer look at each aspect of your action.

Feel the rush of water when washing the plates. Is it cold water? Is it warm water? How does the running water feel on your hands as you do the dishes? Be aware of the movement you use in scrubbing off grease.

The concept is to be creative and find new experiences for a task that is quite monotonous and very common. Rather than struggling through and persistently thinking about completing the task, be conscious of each step, and completely immerse yourself in the process. Choose to take the task beyond a routine by aligning yourself with it mentally and physically – and even spiritually, if you're the spiritual kind.

Mindfulness Is for Anyone

You have now learned what mindfulness is, its benefits, the skills associated with it, and the exercises to boost yours. You will need it not just in CBT but also in DBT and ACT, as you'll see in the following chapters.

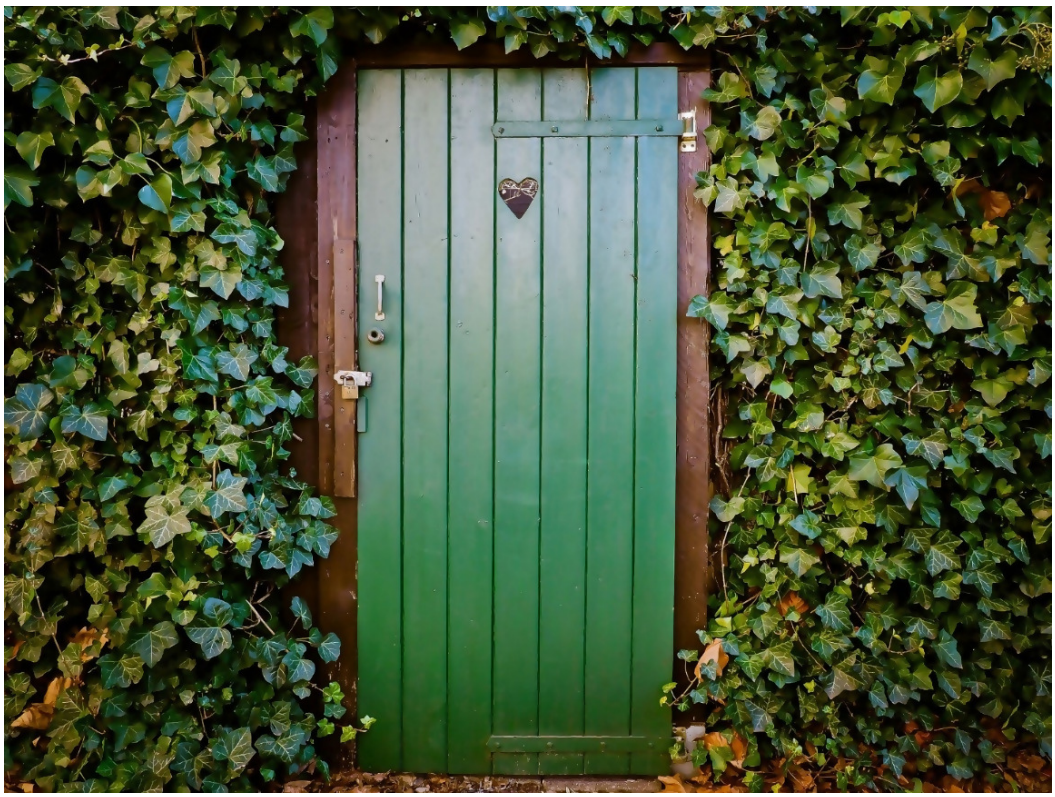
Without a doubt, becoming more mindful and learning these skills are very useful and rewarding. It is not just a treatment option for those who are afflicted with a mental disorder. Learning to act wisely, despite our irrational feelings, and being more observant of ourselves and the things around us, is sure to bring us more happiness and contentment. Nurturing our ability to be aware of every moment in our life is a beneficial practice that can help us better manage the negative feelings and thoughts that may cause us anxiety and stress.

Through regular practice of mindfulness exercises, you will be far less likely to succumb to bad habits and become influenced by fear of the future and the negative experiences of your past. You can finally develop your ability to set your mind in the present and manage the challenges of life in an assertive yet calm manner.

You can, in turn, reshape your brain to harness a completely conscious mindset that is free from the bondage of self-limiting thinking patterns. This will allow you to be totally present to focus on positive emotions that could enhance your compassion, and finally understand yourself and the people around you.

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CHAPTER 4: FUNDAMENTAL DBT SKILLS



DBT Distress Tolerance Skills

The distress tolerance skills module of DBT acknowledges the higher tendencies in certain individuals to exhibit negative behaviors. It recognizes that, for such people, these behaviors may be overwhelming; therefore, they need to be addressed at once. It is common for such people to become overwhelmed even when the slightest amount of stress arises, and they often end up developing negative behaviors. To help these people, most conventional treatment approaches emphasize avoiding painful situations. However, in the distress intolerance module, the aim is to make the clients

acknowledge that sometimes it is impossible to avoid pain, and the best way to tackle such situations is to accept the things as they are and practice tolerating the pain associated with them.

The concept of radical acceptance forms the foundation of the distress tolerance module. This means succumbing to the reality of a stressful moment and acknowledging that there is nothing you can do to change it. By practicing the concept of radical acceptance without fighting reality or being judgmental, patients become less vulnerable to developing prolonged and intense negative feelings.

The distress tolerance module in DBT comprises four different skills. These skills are meant to help individuals cope with difficult situations and experience distress without making it worse.

Distracting

Self-soothing

Improving the moment

Focusing on the pros and cons

Distracting

Distraction helps the patient shift their focus from upsetting emotions and thoughts to neutral or more enjoyable activities. It basically deals in anything to help distract you from the distress, for example, a hobby, a quick walk in the garden, helping others, or watching a movie. These activities help clients separate themselves from a distressing situation or a troubled state of mind.

The acronym “ACCEPTS” is used to help individuals practice the skill of distraction.

Activities – Using positive activities to get over a distressing situation.

Contribute – Helping out people around you or your community.

Comparisons – Comparing yourself to people who have more difficult lives than you or to yourself at your worst.

Emotions – Making yourself feel different by provoking a sense of happiness or humor with corresponding activities.

Push away – Pushing your situation to the back of your mind for some time and replacing it with something less stressful on a temporary basis.

Thoughts – Trying to forget what's distressing you and diverting your mind to think about other stuff.

Sensations – Doing something intense to give yourself a feeling, which is different from the one that you are already going through, for example, eating a spicy meal or hopping into a cold bath.

Self-Soothing

The self-soothing module is all about teaching you to respect yourself and treat yourself kindly. It includes doing anything that helps you develop a positive image of yourself with the help of your 5 senses. For example, observing a beautiful view from the window (vision), enjoying the sounds of nature like birds chirping (hearing), lighting a scented candle (smell), enjoying a hearty meal (taste), and petting an animal (touch).

This skill entails using self-managed tools to calm clients when they are irritable and stressed. Learning to self-soothe is a significant milestone in the distress tolerance module of DBT. When you self-soothe, you treat yourself with care, kindness, and compassion. This helps you build resilience and makes it easier to bounce back from difficult situations.

Improving the Moment

In this skill, the basic aim is to utilize positive mental forces to improve your current image in your own eyes. This skill can be practiced by keeping

in mind the acronym IMPROVE.

Imagery – This includes visualizing anything that relaxes you in order to melt away the negative thoughts.

Meaning – This includes deriving meaning or purpose from pain or a difficult situation. In simple words, it is all about finding a silver lining in everything you do. This helps the client find positivity in every situation and helps them learn something.

Prayer – This includes praying to God to gain strength and confidence. Prayer tends to strengthen the spiritual side of many clients and helps them pacify themselves.

Relaxation – This includes calming down your physical body and tensed muscles by doing relaxing activities such as listening to music, drinking warm milk, or getting a massage.

One thing in the moment – This encourages the individual to be mindful and focus on a neutral activity going on in the present.

Vacation – This includes encouraging clients to take a mental break from a difficult situation by imagining something pleasant or doing something that makes them happy. It can be anything, including taking a trip or simply ignoring all phone calls for some time.

Encouragement – This involves making conversation with yourself in a supportive and positive manner to get through a tough moment.

The IMPROVE skill helps clients tolerate frustration or distress without making it worse, and in ideal conditions, aims to improve it. It is particularly for people who feel stuck in situations which are hopeless and out of their control. Such people are unable to do anything about these critical situations and hence, feel hopeless, hurt, and depressed. For many people, such a situation may feel like a constant crisis, so the use of the IMPROVE skill helps them get through this situation and regain confidence.

Focusing on Pros and Cons

With this particular skill, you are usually asked to make a list of all the pros of tolerating a stressful event and compare it with the cons not tolerating it (i.e. coping with it through self-destructive behaviors). The main idea of this is to help them remember how avoiding confrontation in a difficult situation in the past affected them in a negative way and to make them realize how it will feel to be able to tolerate the current stress without acquiring negative behaviors. This helps patients reduce impulsive reactions.

Summary

The distress tolerance skills taught as a part of DBT mainly focus on dealing with the suffering and pain that is inevitable to the human condition. The distress tolerance module provides the clients with beneficial tools to help them maintain their sense of balance in critical conditions. It teaches them to accept distress and manage it in healthier ways instead of acquiring negative behaviors. Following it supports the clients to learn how to authentically connect with other people, be open to your emotions, and respond flexibly to the ups and downs of life.

By practicing how to distract themselves, improve their current moments, self-soothe their mind and body, and balance the pros and cons of a particular situation, the clients are able to weather any distressing moment and reduce the destructive impulses and painful feelings. It will help them take a break and return to life in a calmer, rejuvenated, and more focused state, like a full gas tank which can now go on for miles.

DBT Interpersonal Effectiveness and Emotion Regulation Skills

We all go through millions of emotions on a daily basis. These emotions not only affect our own state of mind but also govern our interpersonal relationships which, in turn, define our personal and social lives. Dialectical Behavior Therapy acknowledges the importance of emotional regulation and interpersonal relationships and comprises two separate modules to address the problems related to these aspects.

DBT Emotion Regulation Skills

Emotion regulation forms an important module of Dialectical Behavior Therapy, with the purpose of teaching clients the necessary skills to get a hold of themselves in negative situations and focus on increasing positive experiences. Emotional regulation refers to a complex combination of ways through which a person can relate to and act on his/her emotional experiences. This generally includes understanding and accepting emotional experiences, the ability to rely on healthy strategies to manage uncomfortable emotions whenever necessary, and the skill of observing appropriate behaviors in a stressful state of mind.

“Control your emotions or be controlled by them.”

It is common for clients with high emotional sensitivity to get stuck in a vicious cycle of negativity, often initiated by negative circumstances. These thoughts prompt an individual to respond by developing adverse or heightened emotions, eventually leading to harsh choices and self-destructive behaviors. More negative emotions, such as self-loathing or shame, may follow this detrimental behavior. For such clients, emotion regulation in DBT may be of significant help.

People who have good control of their emotion regulation are better able to control the urges to engage in impulsive behaviors like self-harm, physical aggression, or recklessness during times of emotional stress.

The DBT emotion regulation module comprises 3 goals:

1. To develop a better understanding of your emotions
2. To decrease emotional vulnerability
3. To reduce emotional suffering

A significant feature of DBT emotion regulation is making yourself understand that it is not bad to suffer from negative emotions. They are not something that you must struggle to avoid at all costs. You must make yourself realize that negative emotions are part of your normal life and will occur, no matter how hard you try to avoid them. At the same time, there are different ways of accepting these emotions and allowing yourself to better manage them so that you do not remain under their control.

1. Understanding Emotions and Naming Them

This skill involves recognizing emotions and labeling them. Clients are familiarized with the concept of descriptive labeling. They are then taught to use labels such as “anxious” or “frustrated” instead of general terms like “feeling bad.” This is because vaguely defined emotions are much harder to manage. Another important aim of this skill is to teach the client the difference between primary and secondary emotions.

A primary emotion refers to your first response to any moment or triggers in the environment surrounding you. On the other hand, a secondary emotion refers to a response directed towards your own thoughts, for example, feeling sad about letting your anger out. These emotions are usually destructive and increase your likelihood of developing destructive behaviors. So, it is important to not only label your primary and secondary emotions but also to accept your primary emotion without judging yourself for having to deal with it in the first place.

In a normal DBT skill session, group leaders tend to discuss the myths relating to emotions that have plagued our society, for example, the common misinterpretation that there are certain “right” or “wrong” ways to feel in particular situations. An additional topic is to explain the primary purpose of emotions – which is to alert you that something around you is either problematic or beneficial. These emotional responses get stored in your memory and help you prepare yourself to encounter similar situations in the future. In addition to this, your emotions help communicate messages to others via words, body language, and facial expressions.

2. Decreasing Emotional Vulnerability

To practice this skill, a suitable acronym is PLEASE MASTER.

PL – indicates taking good care of your physical health and treating any illness or pain.

E – represents eating a nutritious and balanced diet and shunning foods with excessive caffeine, fat, and sugar.

A – indicates avoiding drugs and alcohol, which aggravate emotional instability and are not good for your mental health.

S – signifies getting adequate sleep on a daily basis.

E – involves exercising every single day.

MASTER – involves performing any task that builds competence and confidence every day.

This component of emotion regulation focuses on decreasing the emotional vulnerability by building positive experiences and balancing negative feelings. For this purpose, clients are asked to plan more experiences that bring them happiness and provide them with positivity. This may include participation in a sport or hobby, going out for coffee with a childhood friend, reading a good book, or doing any activity that provides them with individual contentment.

While doing these activities, clients are asked to remain mindful, focusing on what they are currently doing. If a client is finding it difficult to focus their attention on the current activity, they have a choice to try out another activity. Planning the future and establishing goals brings positive experiences for most clients. So, it is a part of this activity to plan ahead for the future, for example, choosing a different career or moving to a different city.

3. Reducing Emotional Suffering

Reduction of emotional suffering is the last part of DBT emotion regulation, which encompasses the following skills:

Letting go

Taking the opposite action

Letting go means using mindfulness to have complete awareness of your current emotional state. It further involves labeling this emotional state and allowing it intentionally instead of avoiding it, fighting it, or dwelling on it. This may require you to take a deep breath and imagine yourself floating away from the problem. Compare your emotion with a wave of water that keeps on coming and going.

Taking the opposite action includes engaging in certain behaviors that are opposite to whatever a person is feeling in the moment. For instance, if a person is sad, they may try to be active, stand straight, and speak confidently, as a person would if they were happy. When an individual experiences anger, they may behave as if they are calm by adopting a soft tone or doing something good for someone. This skill does not aim to deny the current emotion; the client must still name the emotion and be able to let it go. However, acting the opposite is likely to lessen the duration and intensity of the negative feelings.

DBT leaders try to make the clients learn these skills in group therapies. Sometimes, clients are asked to get involved in role plays to help them use these newly learned skills in their everyday lives. Ultimately, these skills help empower people to regulate their emotions instead of being regulated by them.

DBT Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

Interpersonal effectiveness means the ability to interact with other people. It encompasses all the skills you use to:

Attend to your relationships

Maintain a balance between priorities and demands

Balance out your “wants” and “shoulds”

Develop a sense of self-respect and mastery

The Importance of Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills

DBT considers interpersonal skills as important parts of the treatment because they teach us methods of communicating with other people. The way we communicate with others determines the quality of our social life which has a major influence on our overall well-being, self-confidence, and self-esteem. For this reason, interpersonal effectiveness is the main focus of DBT. In fact, it is taught as the second core skill module in DBT sessions,

with lots of resources and materials dedicated to improving the interpersonal skills of the clients.

To enable the clients to establish communication with others, they are taught certain skills that help them get involved in everyday chats more thoughtfully and in a deliberate manner instead of speaking impulsively due to sheer stress or a distressing emotion. While there are a lot of skills associated with communication and interactions, DBT focuses on two components:

1. The skill of asking for things that you need or want
2. The skill to deny requests when suitable

DBT founder, Dr. Marsha Linehan, has identified three different forms of effectiveness that need to be addressed in this module:

Objective effectiveness

Relationship effectiveness

Self-respect effectiveness

Under any circumstances, all the above-mentioned types must be taken into account. It is also important to prioritize them according to need, as this satisfies a person with their interactions as well as the outcomes.

‘Objective effectiveness’ refers to the goal or main motive behind a certain interaction that is directly linked to a tangible result. A typical example is a woman who wishes her husband would call her to inform her whenever he is working late. ‘Relationship effectiveness’ indicates the ultimate goal of a conflict-free relationship. In the previous example, the wife may rank harmony and emotional closeness as her first and highest priority. ‘Self-respect effectiveness’ can also be considered a priority in the case of this woman, if she starts feeling that her husband is being disrespectful by not calling her according to her wishes.

Dialectical Behavior Therapy utilizes different acronyms to help clients learn the skills tied to each type of effectiveness. In the case of objective effectiveness, DEAR MAN is the acronym of choice.

Describe: Describing the situation in solid terms, while avoiding any judgment.

Express: Expressing feelings and communicating them to the other party to let them know how the situation is making you feel.

Assert: Asserting your wishes and clearly stating what you want or do not want.

Reinforce: Reinforcing why you desire a particular outcome and rewarding people who respond positively to your request.

Mindful: Being mindful and investing your attention in the current moment, focusing on the task at hand.

Appear: Appearing confident, acquiring a confident tone and posture, and maintaining eye contact during conversations.

Negotiate: Being ready to get into negotiations, believing in “give and get,” and acknowledging that everyone involved in the negotiations possesses valid feelings and needs.

For relationship effectiveness, the acronym used in DBT is GIVE:

Gentle: Approaching the other person in a non-threatening and gentle manner, avoiding judgmental comments and attacks.

Interested: Acting interested by giving others a chance to speak and listening to them wholeheartedly, and avoiding interrupting them just to give your own opinions or judgments.

Validate: Validating and acknowledging the wishes, opinions, and feelings of other people.

Easy: Assuming an easy manner by adopting a light-hearted tone and always having a smile on your face.

Lastly, the acronym used for self-respect effectiveness in DBT interpersonal effectiveness module is FAST:

Fair: Being fair to yourself and others to avoid the development of resentful emotions on both sides.

Apologize: Apologizing less and taking responsibility only when it is appropriate.

Stick: Sticking to your core values and not compromising your veracity in order to achieve a certain outcome.

Truthful: Being truthful while avoiding exaggeration or the portrayal of helplessness to manipulate others.

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CHAPTER 5: LEARN NOT TO BE OVERWHELMED BY PAINFUL SITUATIONS



Managing Stress Using DBT

The Distress Tolerance Skills taught as part of DBT can enable you to survive stressful situations without harming yourself. They may not provide you with strategies to help you in the long run but can help you learn skills to manage yourself successfully when times get tough. Strategies you can apply to get through intense stress include:

Distraction

Stress can cause you to get stuck in rumination and worry. Indulging your mind and body in a task that diverts your attention and prevents you from thinking about whatever is stressing you, at least for some time, can provide you with enough time to think about the stressor and ponder over how to get through it. Call a friend, work out, read your favorite book, or watch a funny movie to distract your mind from the stress.

Self-Soothe

Remember to be gentle and kind to yourself. It is common to be hard on yourself, especially during times of stress. You judge your abilities and feel like you are unable to handle your problems. Incorporating soothing activities in your everyday life can help you handle times of stress and tension. Listen to soothing music, bake cookies, watch a beautiful sunset, or eat your favorite food to soothe your body.

Try Relaxing

Following the distress tolerance module requires you to practice relaxation, for both the mind and the body. Try all the activities that will calm you. Take part in relaxation exercises or have a hot shower. Avoid performing multiple tasks at the same time, and try focusing on the current activity only. Form a soothing image in your mind.

Ponder the Pros and Cons

Take a paper and pen and make two lists stating the advantages as well as the disadvantages of a stressful situation. Pen down how stress can damage you if you do not care about it. Think of all the ways in which stress will help you evolve and grow as a person. Once you are done, go through the lists once again to motivate yourself.

Breathe

Observe your breathing pattern a little more closely. Try deep breathing or count your breaths to increase the focus of your mind. This can help you calm down and be more attentive.

Summary

These days, it is quite easy to fall into a rabbit hole and lose sight of the most important things in your life, all thanks to consistent stress. Keep in mind that in any moment of distress, you have control, even if this means letting go of things over which you have no influence. It may not be possible for you to solve every single problem in your life, but with DBT distress tolerance skills, you can definitely manage your frustrations much more confidently.

Do not let stress get the best of you!

Managing Worry Using DBT

There is no overnight solution to managing worry, but there is one that actually works: DBT. The troubling thoughts might linger for a very long time, but you can easily develop a Teflon mind. It only requires a bit of effort.

Look for the Canaries in the Coal Mine

Recognize that the thoughts that are worrying you are nothing but thoughts. It may take time to develop this skill, but it is possible to adopt it relatively quickly. It is the negative emotions that are trickier to handle. These two may gang up on you; thoughts that are negative leading to emotions that are negative and vice versa; trapping you in an awful loop.

When you lose yourself in worrying thoughts, you have a tendency to forget your body. Try to recognize the physical sensations that follow your emotions such as sweating, shallow breaths and muscle tightening.

Get a paper and a pen and start making a list. Recall every little thought that crosses your mind when you are worried. Note down any physical manifestation that comes by during a stressful event. This is what you call finding the canaries in the coal mine. Notice what actions you take when you are worried (such as procrastination, drinking alcohol, etc.). Familiarize yourself with these actions, so that the next time worry strikes, you know what you are dealing with.

Avoid Avoiding

Why should you avoid avoiding? Because you should prove your worries wrong. If you keep avoiding triggers, it is just going to keep the anxieties alive in you. Worrying and then realizing that your concern was silly produces a phenomenon called “extinction,” and the worry eventually stops.

On the other hand, persistently avoiding what you feel makes you believe these things are real and that fearing them is the right thing to do. This is what you call “reinforcement” and it only strengthens the worry.

Whenever your mind signals you to avoid a certain situation, recall that this is wrong. Allow yourself to appreciate the moment by considering it a chance to fight your fear and get away from your worries. Move your focus from the disturbing thoughts to the real world.

Now you know about the most important thing to avoid, let’s move on to the one that you should be doing.

Identify

Do you at times look back at a moment of worry and think, “wow that really freaked me out?”

This is because you failed to realize this at the moment it occurred. Worries tend to sneak up on a person, and as you undergo cognitive fusion, the worries overtake you. This urges you to go and make bad decisions. The best way to bypass this problem and all the fuss it creates is by identifying the increasing anxiety before it is too late.

By now, you will have made your own canaries list. Great. Now what you should do is begin identifying these things as soon as they happen. The sooner you identify these thoughts, the action impulses, and the accompanying physical manifestations, the quicker you will be able to quell them.

It is easy to identify your problem once you understand what you are looking for. This enables you to control it or handle it, at least.

Engage

Have you ever found yourself swamped by troubling thoughts about a certain problem and a bigger trouble strikes you? This newly emerged problem forces you to forget about your past tensions and use whatever

energy you have left in worrying about it. Notice how you are able to shift your attention. Doing it on purpose is, however, the tricky part.

The aim of this skill is to help you develop a connection with your feelings and experiences. It will help you learn how to remain in the current moment and establish a better connection with your life instead of wasting your energy on troubling thoughts. So, whenever you get stuck in a stressful or worrying situation, remember to focus only on the problem at hand while avoiding any worrying thoughts which may distract you.

Channel all your attention to living the current experience. If the worry is making you distracted, remember this point, and think only about the actual problem and make efforts to deal with it only.

Tend to Your Emotions

The first thing to do to tend to your emotions is to learn how to identify worry. Once you have recognized that you are stuck in troubling circumstances, observe your body closely. Look for any signs related to your heightened emotions. You may notice your heart pounding, your muscles tensing up, or your stomach sinking. Whatever you feel, pay close attention to it.

It is possible for your mind to divert its attention to any other topic. You may also feel like drowning in the pool of worries, which diverts your attention far from the actual problem. As soon as you find yourself in this situation, get yourself together. Try diverting all of your attention back to the body and focusing on the actual problem. Do not get involved in thoughts which are troublesome. You only need to notice them and keep returning your mind back to the body over and over again. Label your emotions, whether they are fear, anxiety, irritation, sadness, or shame. Remind yourself it is normal to feel how you are feeling right now, and your emotions are not going to kill you.

In short, examine, admit, and mark. The worrisome feelings will eventually dissipate. It is a skill, and it takes some time. But it definitely works. When you get good at it, it will be your superpower against worry.

Use Opposite Action

This may seem like advanced Kung Fu, so take it slow. In the end, this skill is what's going to take you from being a chronically worried individual to being a person who seldom worries. It is a mild form of "exposure therapy" and revolves around the concept of "facing your fears."

Opposite action helps your brain figure out which people and places are not dangerous, hence, do not need to be avoided. Once your brain is able to establish this connection, your fears start diminishing. You stop avoiding people or things and gain the freedom in life to do whatever you want and go wherever you like.

Take a moment to answer the following questions:

Do you worry about things that do not pose a real or immediate threat?

Do you worry so much that it becomes difficult to enjoy things?

Are you more likely to be unhappy than happy?

Are you unwilling to take reasonable risks?

Does worry interfere with your day-to-day activities?

If you answer no to the questions above, you are likely a healthy person. So, keep doing whatever you are doing because you are only sensitive to real threats. You will take every reasonable step to live a happy life.

However, if the answer to most of the above questions is no, you are suffering from worry. It is necessary to take the steps mentioned above to take the unnecessary burden off your shoulders and start living.

Unfortunately, there is no magic pill that is going to relieve you or your worries overnight. Following DBT in a stepwise approach, as mentioned above can, however, significantly impact your life and make it easier for you.

Dealing with Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms using DBT

DBT is a powerful method of thought control, which teaches you the necessary skills to deal with unpleasant thoughts and situations that lead to

suffering. Through acceptance and change strategies, people suffering from PTSD can learn how to:

Keep themselves aware of the triggers that cause negative reactivity

Practice self-soothing activities to calm their body and soul

Learn intolerance skills to deal with uncomforting feelings, situations, and thoughts

The DBT distress tolerance acronym ACCEPTS can help you manage PTSD. This skill stands for Activities, Contributing, Comparisons, Emotions, Push away, Thoughts, and Sensations. These techniques have been specially designed to manage your emotions and get over your past.

Activities

Engage in an activity. This can be any activity as long as it is healthy. Read a book, go for a walk, make some jam, or do the dishes. Anything that keeps you busy and your mind off the negative emotions associated with the past will help. When you are done, pick up a new activity. In this way, you can have a highly productive day without bringing back any haunting memories of the past.

Contributing

Do something kind for another person. Offering help can relieve you of your emotional stress in a lot of ways. An act of service is also a type of activity which will keep you distracted and take your mind off the problem. In addition to this, contributing will help you feel good about yourself. You are not always required to do something big. Help someone cook dinner, bake cookies for a relative, or offer to mow your neighbor’s lawn. Each of these activities will keep you from remembering your misery.

Comparisons

It is time to put your life in perspective. Was there ever a time when you faced more difficult challenges than you are facing now? Maybe not. Maybe this is actually the most intense situation and emotion that you have ever experienced. In this case, compare yourself to another person. Has that person suffered more than you? Are you at home, comfortably lying in your bed after having a delicious dinner while in another part of the world someone is searching for leftover food in the trash and a place to sleep after suffering a natural disaster?

The purpose of this exercise is not to increase distress or the emotional pain of your current condition. Instead, use it to add a new perspective to what you are currently experiencing.

Emotions

You have the ability to invoke the opposite emotion of what you are feeling right now. Meditating for 15 minutes can help your anxiousness too. If a past trauma is making you depressed, watch a comedy movie. Adding a bit of the opposite emotion can help reduce the intensity of PTSD.

Push Away

If you feel like you are unable to deal with your past just yet, it is okay to push it away. Throw the problem out of your mind for a short duration. But how is this possible? By distracting yourself with other thoughts, activities, or mindfulness. You can set a time to come back and address your problems. Assure yourself that it will be addressed and stay calm in the interim.

Thoughts

Replace your anxious, negative thoughts with activities that occupy most of your mind, for example, reciting the alphabet backward or enjoying a Sudoku puzzle. These distractions will help prevent self-destructive

behaviors and reliving the traumatic events until you achieve emotional stability.

Sensations

Make use of your five senses to soothe yourself during times of stress. A self-soothing activity can be anything such as taking a warm bath with relaxing music and a lavender bath bomb, eating your favorite food, or tuning in to a good TV show. Anything appealing to your senses can help you cope with PTSD for the time being.

These Dialectical Behavior Therapy skills can help you tolerate PTSD until you are able to resolve the problem once and for all. They can control the symptoms of PTSD and allow you to focus more on the present with no fragments of your traumatic past. While the ACCEPTS skills will enable you to focus on your current life, other modules of DBT, such as group therapy and interpersonal effectiveness, will motivate you to enjoy life at a basic level.

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CHAPTER 6: EMOTIONAL CONTROL



Using Mastery

Using the mastery skills in this section will help you achieve Wise Mind. If you practice Wise Mind when the seas of life are calm, it will be easier to bring to mind those skills during times of turbulence.

Doing something that makes you feel a little better every day helps relieve stress and inspire confidence. Attaining confidence helps reduce stress in stressful situations as well as in everyday situations.

Taking care of yourself helps you stay grounded so that when difficulties arise, and they will, you can keep your cool and maintain a consistent level of emotions.

Build Positive Experiences

Building positive experiences is necessary for emotion regulation in that we need a well of positives to draw from when we're running on empty. Many experiences are wonderful at the time, and then we later may not be friends with the people we had the experience with. Do not let that mar the memory. Remember who they were when you had the experience together. There are two important categories in which to build positive experiences: the short term and the long term.

Short Term

Short-term memories include talking to a good friend, taking a walk, noticing a beautiful area, going to the dog park, reading a good book, watching a show or movie you love, dining out, having a picnic, and laughing on a break with a coworker. Most of us already do something to create short-term positive experiences daily without thinking about it.

This exercise asks you to create more short-term positive experiences and do it deliberately. Call up an old friend. Stay off social media after work for a few days. Make a concerted effort to tell ridiculous, silly stories with your kids. Send your nieces and nephews presents from the clearance aisle. Do something that will create positive experiences deliberately.

When you deliberately practice making and noticing positive experiences, you'll begin to make and notice more as part of your daily life. When positivity is a part of your daily life, you feel better emotionally and physically.

Do at least one of these things, or choose something else that makes you happy, every day for a week. Go out of your way to do it for a week. After that, try to make it IN your way. Do something you've never tried before. There are probably a few things you've never thought of trying:

reading a good book

writing a good story

going out for drinks midweek

going to a movie midweek

sex

eating a good meal
going out just for dessert
going to a poetry jam
going to a karaoke bar
joining pub trivia with friends
learning to make sushi or another exotic dish
trying a new exotic dish
jogging
kickboxing
swimming
watching a children’s movie in the theater and focusing on the laughter
stopping on the dog’s walking route to smell the flowers
doing something nice for a stranger
doing something nice for a friend
playing a carnival game
getting the expensive, full inside and out car wash
completing your to-do list
writing a ridiculously easy to-do list so you can complete it
taking pictures with a real camera
going down a waterslide
playing board games with friends
playing interactive games, like “How to Host a Murder”
going to a movie or concert in the park
going to a new hobby class like painting or writing or learning to skate
organizing your bookshelf or closet

buying a new article of clothing, jewelry or book for yourself

visiting a nursing home to sing or play bingo with the residents

letting your kids teach you how to play their favorite video game

getting a massage

going to the chiropractor

going to a play or the opera

going to a high school play

going to a college football game

driving to a different city for dinner with a friend

going sightseeing

joining Toastmasters

volunteering at a homeless shelter during the months they really need it: January-October

carrying “homeless packs” in your cars: gallon Ziploc bags with personal hygiene materials, feminine hygiene products, smokes, granola bars, bottles of water, socks, candy bars, stuffed animals, cash, gift cards to McDonald’s, etc. Put them with blankets, coats, and clothes you would’ve given away. Drive around the areas where there are homeless people and give these out.

gardening

planning a party

getting your hair done

talking in a different accent for an evening

dedicating a song on the radio to someone

writing in your journal

spending some time alone without the television, radio, or internet; just you and a cup of the beverage of your choice

going out to lunch with a friend

playing volleyball

playing hide and seek with your coworkers (and trying not to go home when their eyes are closed)

singing in the car

driving to the mountains

roasting marshmallows

going to the sauna

sitting in a hot tub

sitting in a cold tub

making a fort in the elevator at work with a sign that says, ‘No bosses allowed!’

silently challenging the driver in the car next to you at a stoplight to a dance-off in your cars

keeping a box of fruit snacks in your desk for anyone having a bad day

having a song fight with your spouse

convincing a stranger you think you’re a vampire

calling a radio station and telling them a funny story

doing a jigsaw puzzle

riding a unicycle

going to a museum or aquarium

going to a psychic, just for giggles

getting a Reiki session done

taking a stuffed animal for a walk, pretending to cry when anyone points out it’s not real

calling a radio station and pretending to be psychic. Google the DJ while you’re talking and tell them all about themselves so they’ll believe you.

going to a belly dancing class

Long Term

Long-term positive experiences are more goal-oriented, creating a life worth living. What are some goals that you would like to achieve? Write down a few specific goals. Break them down into subcategories.

Money

Many people have goals that are money-oriented. Write down how much you'd like to save each month or put towards your debt. If you put it in a place you'll forget or an IRA (Individual Retirement Account) you can't touch, you're less likely to spend it.

Learn how to budget. Keep track of how much you spend versus how much you make. Keep track of all your expenses. See where you can cut back. Itemize your spending as you go – keep it on your phone until you put it into a spreadsheet. When tax time comes, you will already know how much you have spent on medical supplies or work-related expenses. Use your debit card instead of your credit card. Then you're only spending what you have, and if you don't keep your receipts, everything is on your bank statement anyway.

Get out of debt as much as possible. You may always have debt for education, health, and home, but you can pay off your credit cards and chip away at the others.

Save as much as possible. Save by packing your own lunch instead of eating out. Put that in a jar. Use those coins when your kid needs shoelaces or something. After a while of paying with change, you forget you ever had any dignity; it's cool.

If your job offers a 401(k), take it. Immediately. The 401(k) follows the person, not the job. If your job offers overtime, do it. Pick up shifts. Show up in your uniform and ask who wants to go home. When a couple complains that they don't know where their waitress is, promise to take care of them yourself because she clearly doesn't value her customers. Then pocket that $20 tip. Find little tricks to make your job, and your screw-ups work FOR you.

Relationships

1. **Repair a relationship.**

   If you have a relationship in your life that you feel must be repaired in order for you to move on with your life, you may have to take the initiative. You may have to make the first move, offer the first apology. Not a fake "I'm sorry you feel that way" apology, but a sincere "I'm sorry I treated you that way" apology. Not even a half-sincere apology – "I'm sorry I treated you that way, but you deserved it and here's why…" Let that second half come about if they accept your apology and you can open a discussion.

2. **End a relationship.**

   Not all relationships can be saved, and not all should be. If you have offered a sincere apology and have been rebuffed, it may be time to cut your losses and move on. It may be sad for both of you, but some relationships over time become toxic for one or both parties. If this is the case, you might try one last-ditch effort, and then you should actually ditch it. If they come back, you can see how you feel at that time, and whether it's something you want to renew. Some relationships are better off dead. Reviving those is the true zombie apocalypse.

3. **Create new relationships.**

   The older we get, the harder it is to create new relationships. We have to actually go out of our comfort zone to meet new people. Talk to people at your bowling league. Start a bowling league. Talk to new people at functions you attend regularly, like church or kayaking or suing people. Or even family reunions.

Go to weekly things. Join Toastmasters. You'll migrate towards the same people each week, but how much do you really talk to them? Get to know someone, more than at just surface level. Ask probing questions like, "If you invented a superpower, what would it be?" None of this already-invented superpower business. That's boring. "You can travel to the past, before a huge disaster, with the ability to warn people, but you might get stoned or burned as a witch, or you can travel twenty seconds into the future every day. Which do you choose?"

4. **Work on current relationships.**

Work on maintaining the relationships you have. Develop deeper bonds with people. Do you really know their hopes and fears, wishes, and dreams?
Go out of your way to stay in touch. Most friendships are built on convenience – when it's convenient for both or all parties to talk or hang out. Texting is a great way to let them know you're thinking about them, and they'll respond when they can. It's also a great way to miscommunicate, but that can be done in any medium.

Positive Mindfulness

1. **Be mindful of positive experiences.**

Practicing mindfulness while you're doing something you enjoy helps to savor the moment. Stay focused on the positive experience and refocus your mind as often as necessary. This will get you in the habit of mindfulness and focusing on the positive aspects of the day or the moment. The more we focus on something, the more we notice it. That's just how our brains work. That's not to say it is actually more prevalent, but it is

certainly more prevalent in our minds, which is where we have to live, so we may as well learn to enjoy the company.

2. **Be unmindful of worries.**

Distract yourself from thinking you don't deserve this happiness, or wondering when the positive experience will end or thinking about what chores need to be done elsewhere. Distract yourself from thinking about what awaits you at the end of the positive experience, or worrying about how much money you're spending on it. If you're at the circus, for example, instead of thinking, 'I don't deserve to be enjoying this,' focus on your surroundings – children laughing, cotton candy, the rides, the clowns, unless you have a deep fear of clowns. You might not want to focus on them then. Damn you, Stephen King!

3. **Practice.**

There is a lot of material in this section, and no one expects you to conquer it overnight. You shouldn't either. Like any habit, it needs to be practiced before it becomes an actual habit. And then it still needs to be practiced.

Be Mindful of Positive Emotions

Get in the habit of noticing your emotions and recognizing whether they're negative or positive. When they're negative, get in the habit of not dwelling on them. When they're positive, get in the habit of being mindful of the actual emotion. "I'm happy right now. It feels warm. It feels calm." Describe how the emotion feels, instead of getting caught up in why you're happy or peaceful, or what have you.

Using the Opposite to Emotion Action

What actions do you do with negative emotions? They're probably the go-to actions, preprogrammed by your psyche. It takes time, but you can reprogram your psyche by using the opposite actions you normally use. When you're afraid, your brain kicks in to fight, flight, or freeze mode. In some instances, this is still a vital response mechanism developed for our own safety. In other instances, the response mode has been passed down from our hunter/gatherer ancestors and serves no real purpose today. For example, test anxiety. It's real.

A test doesn't present the need for a fight/flight/freeze response that imminent death, beating, rape, a car accident, or a full-grown saber-toothed tiger would pose. However, the reaction is still the same, and we don't get to choose our subconscious reactions. But we do choose our conscious actions. In the test anxiety example, try giving yourself many practice tests to lose your anxiety.

Perhaps your fear is roller coasters. Go more often, with someone you feel safe with to desensitize you. Try to desensitize yourself to the fear. If your fear is clowns, go to McDonald's more. No need to hang around real clowns. Those freaks will eat you in your sleep.

If your reaction to anger is to yell and throw things, step away from the situation that makes you angry and work on breathing exercises. Unless you're driving. Then just work on breathing exercises.

If a particular person or politician makes you angry, try to find the small amount of truth they may have said to gain sympathy or empathy, or at the very least, not hatred. Scratch that. Turn off the television. Work on that with a real person in your life rather than a politician.

If your go-to reaction to sadness is self-isolation, take the opposite approach. Get out in the community and volunteer. Go out with your friends. Go to an ice cream store by yourself, just to get out of the house. And have some ice cream.

If you're feeling shameful, the first question to ask yourself is, "Why am I feeling like this?" Is it because you did something you're ashamed of? Admit it to yourself and your haters, then move on. The longer you deny it, the longer it draws out the feeling and adds further negative emotions to it, like anger. If you've done nothing wrong, but are being dragged through the

mud for pointing out something someone else did, welcome to the patriarchy. Even males can be oppressed by it. Just hold your head high and live your life. People will soon see who you really are. And those who don't see it often filter out. Let them.

Guilt works in many ways, as does shame. If you need to offer a sincere apology, do so. Your refusal to do so, whether it's accepted or not, whether they've offered one or not, whether they actually deserved whatever action you need to apologize for or not – that's all irrelevant. Your refusal to do so only drives the wedge in further.

The opposite reaction works best when the emotion does not fit the scenario. If you should be angry at something, it's still best to breathe deeply and assess the situation calmly. However, the other person is allowed to know you're angry. If your anger motivates you toward positive change, so much the better.

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CHAPTER 7: INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS



Using Objectiveness Effectiveness (D.E.A.R. M.A.N.)

D – Describe

Describe the event using facts only. Do not use emotions. Let it speak like a police report if you do use emotions. “Patient seemed upset.” It works better to sound like a police report if you talk in third person. However, don’t take this habit into the real world. That’s just confusing. Don’t make a request or “dry beg.” Dry begging is saying obnoxiously passive-aggressive

things like, “I really need thirty bucks,” or, “Wow, that cake looks good. I wish I had some.” The best response to dry beggars is: “Yep. You do.” Or it could be, “Yep. It is.” If they really want it, they’ll get around to asking like an adult. It might go like this – say you’re from a religious family, and your teenager decides not to go to church. You might reply, “I’ve noticed you don’t like church. Let’s discuss the options of staying home.”

This is important so that the other party understands clearly what the situation is before you ask anything, entreat, or make an executive decision.

E – Express

Express yourself with “I feel” or other “I” statements. These types of statements help the speaker take accountability and prevent the listener from immediately going into defense mode. Let’s go back to the teenager staying home from church example. Now, you might say something like, “I feel like you should believe what I believe, but I know that you’re your own person, separate from me, and I can’t force my beliefs on you. I would like you to come to church with us because my worry is you won’t be productive at home.”

This is important so that the other party understands where you’re coming from when you express how you feel about the situation you’ve just described.

A – Assert

Assert your position by either directly asking for what you need or stating your position clearly. Don’t beat around the bush, don’t use euphemisms, and don’t hesitate to the point of losing the other party’s interest. To continue with the example, let’s assert our decision for our hypothetical teenager. “I understand that you don’t want to come to church with us, and you are old enough to stay home alone. So, if you choose to stay home instead of attending church, you will prepare dinner and set the table and have everything prepared for us to be able to eat when we return, and you will make enough in case we invite people over unexpectedly. If you are unable to complete this chore, and thus, be productive for the whole family

while we are at church, you will come back with us, even if you don't believe it."

This is important because ambiguity creates miscommunication in relationships, and that is the biggest source of contention. Be unambiguous. Set boundaries now. If you're making a request, it must also be unambiguous, maybe even a little lawyerly.

For example, you might say, "Can I please borrow your car from Sunday to Tuesday? I'll return it by 7:00 pm with a full tank of gas and a wash."

The other party might have other caveats. Such as, "Yeah, but it overheats, so don't go over 55 mph, or over 55 miles away. And my tags are expired, so avoid cops. Or renew it for me."

In which case, you might say, "You know what? I can take the bus. Thanks, though."

R – Reinforce

Make sure the other party knows why they should grant your request, or acquiesce to your conditions without a fight. "Because I said so" is not a valid reason. Most people reciprocate naturally.

You might say something like, "You get to stay home from church on the condition that you are productive at home. Since you don't like church and I don't like cooking after church, it's a win for both of us."

Or in the example with the car, it might sound like this, "I actually need to drive to a different city for a few days, but I can't rent a car because of (XYZ), so I'll get your car diagnosed for you, and if I can afford to fix the overheating problem, I will. If not, I'll see if anyone else can part with their car for a few days, or find another solution."

In both examples, the other party can clearly see that they have nothing to lose by accepting your request, and everything to gain.

This is important because relationships are built on reciprocity. When one party feels slighted occasionally, it's not a big deal. But if one party feels slighted more often than not, they will most likely end the relationship.

M – Mindful (stay)

Stay focused on the conversation. If you're answering a text, they have no reason to listen to you. If they're answering a text, that's out of your control, but you can keep your mind on the conversation instead of what they're doing. If they become defensive, notice what you may have said wrong, and apologize if necessary, even if it's just to get them back on track.

This is important because it's too easy to go off track and lose focus, especially in an uncomfortable situation, where the other party might be looking to pick a fight. If you go off on tangents, whether they be to sing and dance because someone said a song lyric, or to fight, or because one of you saw a squirrel, you have less of a chance of getting what you want. Especially if you're the one singing and dancing or chasing squirrels.

Your teen may interrupt you to tell you they've been cutting church every week with their friends from Sunday School anyway, so there's no point in going. You may have to repeat yourself a few times, especially if you're letting them stay home as long as they're productive, as they may not believe their ears.

Again, repeat yourself as often as necessary, and if you have a real kid, you've done that a few times already this morning. And bring the conversation back to the topic. Detour…focus. If we're using the example of asking an adult friend for something, you don't have the clout you do as a parent. You still may have to repeat yourself, but the interruptions might just be singing and dancing.

You might say something like, "I understand you don't like church, and you cut Sunday School anyway. But you will get something out of it every week if you continue going, and I would like that." Or, "If you're going to stay home, you'll need to cook for us, and I'll take the added precaution of changing the Wi-Fi password every Saturday to make sure you'll be productive. If you can prove that you are, that you don't have friends over, that you cook and clean as you go, I'll stop doing that."

A – Appear Confident

Appear confident no matter how you actually feel. If you have this look about you all the time, little old ladies will ask you for a napkin at a restaurant when you're on a date, and it might not even occur to you to tell them you don't work there, so you walk into the kitchen and get the napkins.

Your nonverbal cues indicate confidence more than your verbal cues. Sit with your back straight, and your head held high. Make eye contact. Orient your feet towards the other person. Where your feet are oriented is where your mind subconsciously goes. Appear confident and stand your ground.

This is important because confidence signifies that your request isn't too difficult to grant and that you're harder to turn down. There's no need to be overbearing. If they do refuse you, in an adult-to-adult conversation, you might just ask if they're sure, then thank them for their time and let it go.

If your teenager refuses you, this might be a good time to tell them what the other option is. "Okay, you don't have to learn to cook. And if you can read, you can cook, by the way. You can keep coming to church with us, and thank you for letting me know about cutting Sunday School. I'll be sure to tell your friends' parents you all do that because they'll want to know too. I'll let them know you told me. Thank you for caring about the salvation of your friends, who also should go back to church." This will most likely ensure you an excellent meal every Sunday.

N – Negotiate

Negotiate. Remember, "give to get," as selfish as that sounds. Everyone wonders, What's in it for me? You aren't demanding something. You're asking for something or setting down a rule. Even in setting down rules,

you aren’t demanding. If you think you can demand something of someone, even a child, expect defensiveness and confrontation. Give options.

You may need to alter your request to make it more pleasing. In the borrowing the car example, you offered to get the car diagnosed (AutoZone does it for free) and fix it if you could – and if you couldn’t, you’d find another solution to your problem.

This is important because building relationships may or may not be the most important reason we spend a few decades on this planet, but it certainly takes up most of our time. Whether we spend that time in actual relationships with other human beings or wondering why we drive other human beings away, we spend an inordinate amount of time either with other people or thinking about them, whether we know them personally or not.

So, if we spend our energy browbeating others and expecting them to kowtow to us, that only works if you have money, and even then, not everyone likes you, even if you somehow win elections. Mere mortals, without insane amounts of money, can’t behave like that. We have to negotiate and play nice.

Going back to the example of the teenager, this is pretty much already a negotiation. They still refuse to go to church or cook, and they tell you they don’t care if you call their friends’ parents. They really do. This is when you pull out your phone and look up the numbers of the kids’ parents, who you probably know, at least by name already. Google White Pages are great. Some rules are not to be negotiated. If, however, you start the conversation with trying to force them to go to church, this idea is a perfect negotiation, and now it seems (to them) that you’ve given in some.

But for example’s sake, you do try to negotiate. You might say, “Okay, if you don’t come to church with us on Sunday, you still need to be productive at home. Would you rather have a list of chores to do? What is your suggestion for being productive, other than homework, because I don’t want you deliberately putting it off until Sunday?”

This approach helps your child feel like they have a say – like their voice is heard and not invalidated. If you start off demanding they go, then negotiate

to this, you can offer it as a suggestion, and ask which of your suggestions they like best.

You can both leave the conversation feeling like you've accomplished something, like you've got a win, like you're helping the other person out, with no ill will.

Interpersonal Effectiveness Exercises

Step 1 - Choose an area in your life that you want to work on.

This may include community, romance, education, career, personal growth, environment, family, parenting, health, finances, and many more.

Step 2 - Establish goals that are SMART - Specific, Meaningful, Adaptive, Realistic, and Time-Bound.

Specific - Try to be as specific as possible as to what actions you want to take. Be sure that you are aware of the involved steps in taking the necessary action. A specific goal is easier to achieve compared to a general goal. For example, just setting up the goal of spending more time with your child may not allow you to know if you have already achieved it. A more specific goal is to have at least a one-hour playtime every day. Being specific with your goal will allow you to assess whether you have already accomplished the goal or not and monitor your progress.

Meaningful - Assess if your goal is genuinely based on your values in comparison with a strict rule or a sense of what you must do. If you think that your goals don't have a deeper sense of purpose or meaning, try to assess if the goal is really influenced by the values you hold dear. Take note that your core values should be based on things that provide meaning to your life.

Adaptive - Make sure your goal will help you follow a direction that you think will greatly improve your life. Assess if your goal will move you closer or is steering you away from the real purpose of your life.

Realistic - There’s a big chance that you will only feel disappointment, frustration, or failure if you set goals that are not really attainable. Try to find a balance between setting goals that are quite easy versus goals that are impossible to achieve. Be realistic and practical so you can really push yourself to achieve your goals.

Time-Bound - You can specify your goals even more by adding a time and date by which you want to accomplish them. If this is not possible, or not realistic, try setting up a time frame and doing everything you can to make certain that you work within this limit.

Step 3 - Define the Urgency of Your Goals

The last step is to define the urgency with which your goal should be accomplished. Your goals could be:

Long-term - Create a plan of the necessary actions you need to take so you can be closer to your goals over the span of six months to one year.

Medium-term - Think about the necessary actions you need to take so you can move towards your goals within two to three months.

Short-term - Make a list of the things you need to do so you can achieve your goals within a month.

Immediate - What are the goals that you need to achieve within a week or even within the day?

Starting to live in accordance with your personal core values will fan the flames of your committed action.

Our best plan and values will not be meaningful if they are not supported by action. Equipped with the knowledge of the core values you really want to pursue, you can start moving forward towards living a valuable life.

Tips for A Better Life

What to avoid when trying to improve your self-esteem:

Putting other people down. Sometimes, when a person doesn't feel so great about themselves, they may have to resist the urge to tear someone else down. A great way of being masterful at this is to avoid comparing yourself to others. When you feel a sense of inferiority, then you may try to pull others down so you feel better about yourself. However, if you are not in competition with others then it's less likely that you'll feel inferior to them. When you put other people down, the positive feeling only lasts temporarily, and you don't get a positive response from others; in fact, it often just makes things worse. Focus on your own uniqueness, and not comparing yourself with others.

Thinking you're better than others. You are not better than anyone else, and no one else is better than you. This is a universal truth that all should embrace. When you start to tell yourself that you're better than other people, then you're essentially trying to replace your feelings of unworthiness with the unhelpful belief that other people are not as good as you. This tendency will ultimately make your relationships worse. Again, you should focus on your inherent value and uniqueness instead of trying to make yourself believe that you are above other people. Truly masterful people are so convinced of their own self-worth that they actually want to encourage others to have a masterful life too.

People pleasing. Often, people who are chronic people-pleasers also have a chronic and deeply-felt dislike of themselves, to the point that they feel like they have to win the approval of others. Often this dislike is subconscious, so you may not be aware of it. However, you do not have to be desperate for others to like you and approve of you. Whether they do or not does not change your own inherent value and self-worth.

Refusing constructive criticism. Everyone, without exception, has some areas that could benefit from some improvements. This is part of what makes you human. The consistent development of a person is a part of their ultimate destiny. No one ever totally arrives at it, as self-actualization is in the process. When you refuse constructive criticism, it signals that you believe critique means that you're inadequate. Change your beliefs to include the more helpful alternate belief that everyone needs healthy constructive criticism to become unstuck and continue to evolve as a person. Don't be ashamed of your shortcomings or try to use perfectionism

to cover up weaknesses. Instead try to recognize them, receive constructive criticism, and grow in the process.

Avoiding failure or rejection. If you're constantly living life in a manner that you think will help you avoid failure or rejection, then you will probably benefit from revising your thoughts and creating some healthier alternatives. Temporary failure is inevitable at times and rejection may rear its ugly head periodically. However, you must learn how to tolerate the distress and keep moving forward or else you'll end up being stagnant out of fear of failure and rejection.

Avoiding emotions. Trying to block emotions is not healthy, nor is it something that is sustainable long-term. Having a wide range of emotions is a part of the human experience, and being strong doesn't mean avoiding them. Allow yourself to fully experience negative emotions and then use strategies to change the situation or change your thoughts about the situation.

Trying to control others. That is not your job. You do not have to prove your significance by trying to make other people conform to what you want. Instead, focus on your own self-improvement.

Over-defending your self-worth. No one is saying you have to be a doormat for others to stomp all over, but if you find you are compelled to always defend yourself, then that's an indicator that you're struggling with self-confidence. If you are okay with your own inherent self-worth, you won't feel the need to constantly defend yourself. Don't allow yourself to become outraged every time a person says something about you that you don't like or offers an opinion that differs from your own. Instead agree to disagree, tolerate any negative emotion, change how you think about your own inherent self-worth and keep moving forward with your goals. Remember, you can show yourself respect even if other people don't respect you in the same way.

Blaming other people for your problems. Of course, you have had your share of difficulties. In fact, more than half the American population has had some traumatic experience, so you are in good company. What separates people who accomplish their goals from people who don't are their attitudes and behaviors. Do not blame nature or other people for your problems. Don't blame your past, genetics, hormones, or anything else for

what you're currently experiencing. Focus on accomplishing your goals and don't get sidetracked by playing the blame game.

Don't take yourself or life so seriously

Understand that you will make mistakes. You are human, which means that without question, you will make mistakes at some point in your life. During some stages of your life, you will make more mistakes than others. The key is to course-correct by changing your thinking and behavioral patterns. Expect that sometimes you will make mistakes and that they are important, because the lessons you learn are key for your own personal development.

Try new things. Don't be so afraid to try something different. The more you try new things, the more things you'll find that you're good at. Also, you'll become more confident as you see that trying new things can actually turn into positive experiences. If you "fail," surely you will have learned something in the process.

Be silly on purpose. This is a great way to avoid being ashamed when you mess up. Purposely engage in a silly activity in public. For instance, wear a big crazy hat on the train or walk through the mall wearing a loud, colorful, mismatched outfit. Practice self-acceptance skills while you're doing these silly things and you'll discover that you're not as easily shamed anymore.

Laugh at yourself. It really is that simple. When you feel the urge to be overly critical, or you start to feel shame creep up, begin to laugh at yourself. Stop taking yourself so seriously. Things happen. Learn to laugh about it instead of ruminating about it.

When in social situations, focus on things other than your own performance. Take the focus off of yourself and move your attention to a more external focus. What are your friends doing and saying? What does the atmosphere look like? What are the smells you're experiencing? Try to identify them. Enjoy the flavors of any meal you're enjoying. Try to be mindful of your environment instead of focusing on internal thoughts and impulses. This is a great distraction technique. Be intentional about not having a requirement to feel absolutely safe in your environment and learn to enjoy yourself.

Creativity. Tap into your creative side. If you have natural creative talents, express them. Take some time to participate in activities that you truly enjoy. The more masterful you become with your creative endeavors, the better and more confident you will feel overall.

Be adventurous. Stop trying to avoid unpredictable outcomes. The chances of you being able to accurately predict the outcome of every situation are slim, and your tendency to be overly cautious only makes life more chaotic for you.

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CHAPTER 8: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



How are CBT and DBT different?

DBT has its roots in CBT, but it uses a more dialectical approach than traditional CBT therapies. Although most people are able to get significant results from CBT, it was found that there was a specific group of patients who were not getting the results that the average person was receiving. Instead, this group got frustrated with the process and quickly dropped out because they did not feel validated. So, a revised CBT process that combines emotional validation with behavioral change was developed. This is known as DBT.

Are CBT and DBT more effective than other therapies?

These therapies have been scientifically proven to be very effective, and most clients make lasting changes quickly. All therapies have their positive points however, cognitive-based therapies are often favorites among clinicians because they are action-oriented, thus obtaining in quicker results. The results that most people get in a year of talk therapy can be easily obtained in 3-4 sessions of CBT or DBT.

How does the therapy work?

The amount of therapy you need varies based upon your own individual needs, however most people do well with one individual session per week. DBT also includes one additional skill-building group session per week. Your commitment to the therapy process really is the best determining

factor as to how the therapy will work. Some people do more than one individual session per week, while others are comfortable with the one session. That is something that you should discuss with your therapist to determine a specific treatment regimen.

How long does it take to see progress?

Progress varies depending on the person, but most people start seeing results very early, typically within 3-4 sessions. Of course, this depends largely on how much effort you put into the program. Doing the homework consistently and attending the group skill-building sessions every week is critical to your success in DBT. This book provides many of the techniques that you will learn during treatment.

What if I'm skeptical?

Give it a try. You won't know whether it works or not until you try it. Just like almost anything else in life, you won't know how effective it really is until you try it. Commit to doing your first behavioral experiment and see how it goes. If it works, great, keep going. If it doesn't, you can always stop.

Can I discontinue medication?

Although both CBT and DBT have both been found to be quite effective treatment approaches, even without medication, the decision to discontinue your medication should be taken very seriously and supervised by a medical professional. You should discuss that decision with your psychiatrist or another physician.

How does DBT prioritize treatment goals?

Target 1: Life-threatening behavior and behavior that interferes with treatment

Target 2: Decrease emotional suffering

Target 3: Daily living management

Target 4: Sense of wholeness and connectedness

This is the priority of the goals for DBT treatment. Of course, life-threatening goals take priority and moving through suicidal ideation or self-harm behavior is addressed first. Also, behavior that interferes with treatment is high-priority as well because no progress can be made unless there is commitment to the therapy process. The ultimate goal is to get you to a place of complete wholeness. You are one out of a whole universe, and you are universally connected with every other person in the universe. Whatever your religious or spiritual beliefs are, the ultimate goal of DBT is to help you embrace yourself, your life, and other people so that you can fully experience and enjoy life.

Is Eastern philosophy an underpinning of DBT?

DBT's core mindfulness component emphasizes staying in the present, and it does have its foundation in Eastern traditions. The goal is to help you stay in the present with your thoughts and emotions because most disturbances result from things that have happened in the past or thoughts about the future. The tradition of concentrating on the here and now has been practiced in the Eastern world for centuries and the Western world has more recently adopted the mindfulness theory. It has been very helpful for people who truly want to get unstuck so that they are no longer overwhelmed by their emotions.

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CONCLUSION



Dialectical Behavior Therapy has offered much in the realm of therapies. Dr. Linehan has saved thousands of lives with her innovative work. Borderline Personality Disorder is not being “crazy” or “unhinged.” It’s simply mental illness. It includes many other mental illnesses as facets of it. Because of that, it only makes sense that an effective therapy for this condition would include many types of therapy and self-reflection.

Mindfulness is probably the most important aspect of DBT because we have been trained not to be mindful. We’re like ants, scurrying around – hurry, hurry, hurry, but going nowhere.

Mindfulness forces you to focus on the present. Ask yourself, “Am I treading water? Am I at the bottom of a ladder I want to be on or the middle of one I don’t?” When you choose mindfulness, you look at your life for a moment.

Your questions aren’t all going to be answered in one moment of mindfulness. It’s something that must be practiced every day. DBT is an excellent medium for learning the skills of mindfulness and interpersonal relationships. When therapy is complete, you’ve acquired an outstanding toolkit of skills to reach for in any situation.

Our entire lives are our memories and our interpersonal relationships. Because DBT focuses on mindfulness and interpersonal relationships, it is one of the most effective types of therapies. When we’re mindful, we’re creating memories. We’re technically creating memories when we’re not mindful as well – but not memories of what’s actually happening.

In summary, by practicing the skills of DBT, we create memories and interpersonal relationships. And having good memories and relationships is

what makes life worth living.

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ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY

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INTRODUCTION



I want to thank you and congratulate you for downloading this book, “How to Get Out Of the ‘Worry Trap’ Using ACT. A Simple Guide To Relieve Stress And Overcome Fear. Start Living an Easy, Carefree Life”

It is normal for people to suffer. However, suffering is not just about physical or psychological pain. People also suffer from difficult self-assessments, uncomfortable feelings, and painful memories. Because we dread or worry about suffering, we do everything to avoid it. We want to minimize our suffering. Many of us place importance on feeling better. But a good life is about a lot more than just the absence of suffering. We want to live a good life and we want to make the best of our short stay on this planet.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is focused on the problem of human suffering, but it also goes beyond that. It is also about understanding human suffering as an important factor in realizing a good life. This new form of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is focused on important questions such as “What is my real purpose in life?”

But before we delve deeper into ACT as a specific CBT technique, let us first understand human suffering.

Understanding Human Suffering in the Context of Psychotherapy

For pets, perhaps a cat or a dog, happiness is easier to achieve. If their basic needs are provided – food, water, shelter, warmth, and fun – they will be happy. With the absence of human intervention, pets usually miss some of these fundamental needs. They live their lives as mere animals. In comparison, humans may also miss fundamental needs. It can be easy to understand how miserable a person can get when these needs aren’t met.

However, many of us have all the things that some people would be happy to have, but we are still not happy. With our modern wonders – technology, supermarkets, real estate – we are entertained, well fed, and protected from cold or heat. But many of us are still miserable.

We still hear stories about billionaires in their prime committing suicide. There are celebrities who have already achieved wealth and fame, but still sulk in the corner then drink alcohol or take drugs. It seems that our lives naturally come with suffering.

Physical pain has distinct psychological (mind) and physiological (body) components. The biological aspect of pain refers to the signal that is transmitted to our brain so we are aware that something is wrong.

On the other hand, the psychological aspect of pain dwells on the meaning or interpretation we provide to that message – our self-dialogue that involves our personal beliefs which then trigger our emotional responses. Human suffering results from emotional and mental responses to pain. The psychological and biological facets of chronic pain work together to function like a radar that helps us keep track of our psychological well-being.

The resolve to recover from chronic pain is distinct between the actual pain and suffering. It is also then focused on achieving comfort. While we cannot avoid pain, we can surely do something about our response to suffering, in the same way we can choose how to respond to anger.

In the psychological context, pain is a function that alerts us of the imbalance in our physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions. Anything that affects the body or mind can also affect the other dimensions of the self. Recovery from human suffering can be progressive, gradual, or a continuous process of restoring balance in these dimensions.

Human suffering is regarded as both a cause and effect of distressing emotions and the catastrophic thoughts associated with pain. These may include helplessness, hopelessness, loneliness, shame, guilt, frustration, depression, fear, anger, irritability, and anxiety.

The bad habit of negative thinking can also make our situations seem worse than it actually is. Most people, especially those who are not suffering from chronic pain, tend to magnify the negative aspects of the situation through

overthinking. Our minds are capable of making us miserable, and negative thinking can become a self-defeating and self-fulfilling prediction.

For those who are suffering from chronic pain, there is a direct link between the level of pain and negative thinking. It can be a dangerous cycle in which pain can result in negative thinking and self-doubt that translates to emotions that coincide with human suffering. This experience can increase stress and muscle tension that in turn amplifies the pain signals that trigger more pain.

The progression of human suffering can be like this:

- Pain results in negative thinking or self-doubt.
- Negative thinking or self-doubt results in negative feelings such as sadness or depression.
- Sadness or depression can lead to stress or muscle tension.
- Stress or muscle tension leads to more pain.
- Pain results in more negative thinking and self-doubt.

As you can see, it’s a vicious cycle, and the longer this cycle continues, the more out of balance we become.

We can do something about human suffering when we become more aware of the cycle and learn how to respond differently to our pain. The recovery process for pain includes significantly modifying the negative progression beginning with the cognitive and emotional balance through mindfulness and acceptance strategies.

By restoring balance, you can counteract the dynamics of deviation. Once you become aware of your negative thoughts you can harness yourself to accept the situation and detach from it. This will then lead to decreased negative emotions that will result in less muscle tension and stress.

Again, this is not supposed to be easy. But it is completely possible if you work on it. By adjusting our thoughts, and the way we think we can effectively reshape our emotional responses, including the extent to which we suffer.

Thanks for downloading this book. It's my firm belief that it will provide you with all the answers to your questions.

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CHAPTER 1: UNDERSTANDING ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY



Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, or ACT, is a form of therapy that draws from mindfulness practice and cognitive behavioral psychotherapy. It is also known as a contextual psychotherapy because it encourages patients to exhibit values-based positive behaviors even if they are experiencing negative sensations, emotions, or thoughts. In other words, it helps patients increase their psychological flexibility.

As a third wave Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), ACT (said as one word) is strongly connected to the power of behavioral change. However, ACT differs from CBT. It can change the relationship you have with your thoughts rather than change them directly. ACT promotes the notion that you don’t have to do anything with your thoughts to push change in your behavior.

ACT focuses on mindfulness, diffusion of challenging thoughts, and acceptance of unpleasant emotions. With ACT, your efforts are concentrated on moving you towards a momentous life by helping you learn to separate yourself from your thoughts. Your efforts are based on your committed action towards establishing your values.

ACT mindfulness skills have 3 categories:

- Acceptance: enables patients to make room for sensations, urges, and painful feelings, and allowing them to easily come and go
- Defusion: enables patients to let go of and distance from unhelpful thoughts, memories, and beliefs

- Contact with the present moment: enables patients to fully engage, with an attitude of curiosity and openness, with their here-and-now experience
- ACT can be delivered in many different ways:
- Ultra-brief ACT – ACT can be highly effective even in one or two twenty to thirty-minute sessions. A good example is treatment by Kirk Strosahl, co-founder of ACT, in primary care medical settings.
- Brief ACT – ACT is done with only four sessions of 1-hour each. A good example is treatment by Patty Bach, assistant professor of psychology at the Illinois Institute of Technology, used on patients with schizophrenia.
- Medium-term ACT – ACT is completed for a total of eight hours. An example is a protocol for chronic pain by professor of psychology at Uppsala University in Sweden, JoAnne Dahl.
- Long-term ACT – ACT takes forty sessions of 2-hours each. This is very effective in treating patients with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). One of the only few known users of long-term ACT is Spectrum, the Personality Disorder Service (clinic) in the state of Victoria, Australia.

Note: Therapy Affects the Brain

According to a study published in the *American Journal of Psychology* in 1998, several decades of research has revealed that all mental processes derive from brain mechanisms.

This means that any change in our psychological processes is reflected by changes in the functions or structures of the brain.

It doesn’t come as a surprise then that the outcome and effects of these therapies that brings about change in an individual have been studied on both social and psychological levels. Changes in social functioning, personality, psychological abilities, and symptoms were carefully measured. These changes are in a way, brain mechanisms.

One of several strands of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is a unique way of treating a wide range of symptoms. This approach looks for non-physical causes of mental

disorders, understanding that experiences such as depression, addictions, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and schizophrenia arise out of multiple complex factors. It considers genetic, epigenetic (not inherited through DNA), psychological, and cultural conditions. As a syndrome strategy, it identifies sets of symptoms as syndromes related to sets of conditions (Hayes and Lillis 2012, 5).

Conceived by Steven Hayes in 1980, ACT was developed into a fully-fledged therapy model by his students and colleagues, especially Kirk Strohal and Kelly Wilson in 1999 (ibid, xv). These researchers were concerned with finding a more successful way to ease human suffering and help people address problems within relationships and daily living. They were puzzled as to why people often suffer even in conditions of affluence. They see human suffering as common despite the high-level accomplishments that any individual may make. Hayes and his students and colleagues thought it best to examine the root causes more than the symptoms. Considering the context of each case, this approach is inductive and process-oriented for comprehending human misery and failure (ibid, 6).

Very few therapists practiced ACT until the new millennium (ibid, 15). That may be because Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) was in vogue until the end of the 20th century. As CBT declined, ACT carried on and grew.

History

As behavioral therapy based on empiricism rose throughout the 1960s, there was little research on psychological intervention methods. Empirical results were easily measured, and theoretical foundations tended to be weak, according to Hayes and Lillis (2012, 16), based on humanism and psychoanalysis. Misdiagnosis frequently occurred, they say, citing some of Freud’s cases where analytical symbolism, revolving around things like defecation and sex, went too far.

Perhaps in a backlash to analytical psychology, reliance spread on clearly measurable empirical evidence observed in controlled conditions. Behavioral principles were rigidly set, and the application of technologies rigidly tested. ACT arose out of behavioral therapy but made concessions to psychoanalytical and humanist approaches. It, thus, began as a less conventional approach which demanded direct and overt modifications to the behavior of the treated person (ibid, 18). Acceptance and commitment

therapists want to see behavioral changes, but they also want to explore the underlying human issues to problem behavior. They view social conditions as deep, rich and complex (ibid.).

Behaviorism set great stimulus-response training and behavior choices. But it is inadequate because it does not take into consideration language and higher-level cognitive processes – meaning, conceptualization, and symbolism (ibid .). In laboratory experiments, only the external factors that the scientist can manipulate can be altered. Cognition, the internal processes of the mind, were harder to decipher. Cognition psychology was likewise insufficient. Models sprouted up, but the evidence for them was lacking. Achieving practical results from cognitive therapy seemed too difficult. By holding conversations with patients, however, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy began to develop, teaching clients to acknowledge and self-direct themselves to correct “behavioral errors” (ibid, 20) while tending to abandon evidence-based treatments in the beginning. Alternative approaches started to be put forward.

ACT – Experienced-Based Psychotherapy

ACT is a new form of CBT that has gained a lot of attention in recent years. It emphasizes values, acceptance, mindfulness and processes to help people overcome life’s hurdles.

The concept of human suffering as a natural and unavoidable aspect of humanity is a fundamental assumption of ACT. It also revolves around the attempt of people to take control of or avoid their own experiences that could lead to human suffering and other areas that are not working in our lives. ACT can help people learn effective ways of managing pain, practicing mindfulness, obtaining clarity on what is really important, and seeking a life with more meaning. The objective of ACT is not to get rid of pain, but instead to learn how to experience life without too much struggle.

ACT is regarded as an empirical psychotherapy because its researchers and practitioners are committed to the progress of science and the empirical assessment of its causes and effects.

As of 2014, ACT has been scrutinized in more than 80 randomized clinical trials for different concerns in studies with more than 5,000 subjects. This form of CBT has also been used to build a non-therapeutic version of the same processes known as Acceptance and Commitment Training, which is focused on the development of values skills, acceptance, and mindfulness.

Relational Frame Theory

The Relational Frame Theory (RFT) frames the fundamental concept of ACT. RFT aims to explore the link between behavior and human language.

Understanding language is crucial in psychotherapy. Many of us use language in private when we think or in public when we speak with the people around us. We use language to think about, read about, write about, talk about, evaluate, relate, categorize, and describe everything around us.

Language is a useful tool in our existence as human beings, and without it we may never have had the chance to build our civilizations. For example, without language, we could not develop laws and societal rules to regulate our behavior.

While human language offers a lot of benefits, it can also have negative aspects. It’s like the yin and yang – it has a powerful dark side and a powerful bright side. And based on RFT, language plays a critical role in human suffering. Language is a tool we use to form prejudiced and hateful assumptions about people around us, construct negative thoughts, obsess over things, and revisit events that caused us trauma in the past. Too much use of language and thinking can also make it hard to keep in touch with the present moment. We can spend so much time thinking about our past and worrying about our future that we end up being unable to enjoy the present.

Through a deeper understanding of human language and its mechanism, we can better harness its bright side to minimize the effects of the dark side. This form of understanding is what RFT is trying to provide through ACT.

Psychotherapists who are studying how human language affects our behavior usually concentrate on two remarkable aspects of language: generativity and symbolism.

It is easy to understand symbolism as language is used to refer to an object or an idea. For example, the word “tree” refers to a type of plant with a trunk that supports branches, leaves, and may or may not bear flowers or fruits. Language is used to symbolize things. When you gain a better understanding of a specific word, then you can understand its meaning.

Meanwhile, generativity refers to our ability to create and understand an endless number of sentences with meaning. It is also known as productivity. Every language has a specific number of basic letters, sounds, and words. However, each one of us can produce an endless number of totally unique sentences with these words, letters, and sounds.

Various theories have been developed to explore these features and usually describe the important properties or concentrate on various concerns. For instance, linguists believe that the novelty and complexity and generativity of language are mainly due to genetic factors. However, cognitive psychologists believe that our brain is responsible for how we process and store information, including symbols.

In spite of the differences in focus, most language studies are based on the similar idea that language is used to express information that is developed by our brains. Basically, language is a system of symbols that will allow us to express our ideas that can be understood by other people. These theories often concentrate on what are deemed to be the important processes of language.

Researchers and practitioners of RFT take a different method of exploring language and cognition. Instead of explaining language as a means of communicating ideas from one person to another, RFT focuses on how humans obtain language through interaction with people and their environment. This is framed to provide a useful and practical language analysis and cognition and not just a description of a concept.

ACT is considered as the applied technology of RFT as it tries to help people use language as a way to resolve specific psychological issues. This can be done through the psychological flexibility model that is distinct in ACT.

The Psychological Flexibility Model

The main objective when undergoing ACT is to enhance our psychological flexibility, which refers to our capacity to keep in touch with the present as a fully aware human being, and depending on what the circumstances call for, persisting or changing in behavior to serve preferred values.

To put this simply, this means taking our own emotions and thoughts a bit more lightly, and behaving on long-term values instead of momentary feelings and thoughts, and impulses.

Emotions and thoughts tend to be shaky indicators for long-term values. It's not easy to control them, and they have the tendency to go to extremes. When we allow our emotions and thoughts to influence our behavior, we might overlook the more significant, emerging trends of action and fail to grasp genuine meaning in our lives, or experience life's richness.

At present, psychological flexibility is measured through the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire, which is used by psychotherapists and ACT specialists to predict the following psychological concerns:

- Depression
- Poor work performance
- Substance abuse
- Anxiety sensitivity
- Long-term disability
- Higher anxiety
- General pathology
- Alexithymia
- Worry

There are six fundamental ACT processes that establish psychological flexibility, and these will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. Take note that each process is considered as a positive psychological skill and not a special technique to resolve psychological concerns.

Getting Through with ACT

The journey that is life, just like your ACT odyssey, is filled with starts and stops, ups and downs, progress and setbacks. Here are four pitfalls that people sometimes encounter while living the ACT life. Understanding them will help keep you from becoming discouraged.

Impatience

If you've ever watched a preschooler learning to tie their shoes, then you know what impatience looks like. In Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, too, people sometimes get frustrated and feel that they're not achieving "the outcome" quickly enough. Remember, though, that ACT is an odyssey, not a quick fix for your problems. It's a process, just like learning to tie your shoes. Being patient with yourself will go a long way toward helping you develop a values-driven life over the long term.

Speeding

Beginning your odyssey of creating and living a high-quality life is exciting. But sometimes people try to go too fast, and they set goals that are not achievable in the short term. If you take the time you need to learn about the ACT concepts and how to work with them, and if you complete all the exercises in this book, you'll be able to take more and more effective action as your journey unfolds. You don't want to be like the kid who quickly wads their shoelaces into a loose lump and then takes off running, only to trip and fall when the laces come undone.

Hesitation

Just as you don't want to create goals and attempt actions that are too big for this stage of your journey, you don't want your goals and actions to be so small that you don't experience any progress. But it can be difficult and scary to make changes, even when you know you're ready for a different kind of life. What if you don't like the results? What if you fail? Those are

uncomfortable questions, and people sometimes try to avoid them by setting goals that are too easy or too small to create any forward movement. But remember when you were a child and knew that you needed to learn how to tie your shoes? What would have happened if you'd just left them in your closet and thought about learning to tie them someday? To sidestep the pitfall of hesitation, never set a goal without asking yourself how its achievement will help you move ahead.

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CHAPTER 2: FUNDAMENTAL PROCESSES OF ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY



Basically, ACT is focused on the six core processes that revolve around psychological flexibility. This largely defines the expansive way to frame our thoughts. It is important to take note that all these processes work with each other and not as individual techniques for psychotherapy.

The six processes of ACT are acceptance, being present, cognitive defusion, committed action, self as context, and values.

Acceptance

Acceptance is considered an alternative approach for experiential avoidance. It also involves the conscious and active acceptance of personal history without trying to change its form or frequency, especially if doing so will result in damage to the person's psychological health.

For instance, people who suffer from anxiety are encouraged to feel anxiety as an emotion that is natural for people to feel. Meanwhile, people who suffer from chronic pain are encouraged to undergo specific treatments that will allow them to cope. Take note that this process is not an end in itself. Instead, it is developed as a way to increase actions that are based on values.

Most people who suffer from anxiety usually find it odd when they are advised by their ACT specialists to accept something that has been causing them suffering. This may not make sense initially. Some people ask "Why would we want to accept anxiety? Doesn't that mean that we have to live with this harmful emotion?"

But that’s the ACT way. The process requires acceptance, after which you will have to go. It may sound contradictory, because how can you let go of something you have already accepted?

Keep in mind that language is used to represent something, and that there are instances when it also represents what is beyond the literal meaning. In the most literal sense, acceptance refers to the action of receiving something.

Old school mental health practitioners promoted the idea of acceptance as learning how to live with something; in this example, anxiety. However, this notion could be detrimental as it may build an internal conflict that can cause confusion and make the anxiety worse.

From an ACT perspective, acceptance and letting go means turning something into another object that can help you live a more meaningful life. This kind of thinking will not only empower you but will also undermine the power of anxiety. Much like anger, anxiety gets its strength from the way we respond to it. In the ATC context, acceptance means suspending all our judgment and becoming more conscious as if we are observing ourselves from the outside.

Letting go of anxiety can automatically happen when we stop judging and being afraid. If we are not aware of negative thoughts, we will end up fortifying our attachment to the things that could hurt us. It might seem that we are protecting ourselves by avoiding negative feelings, but sometimes, trying hard to eliminate something can result in an even stronger attachment.

Being Present

ACT encourages the persistent non-judgmental link between environmental and psychological events as they happen. The objective is for us to feel a more straightforward experience so that we increase the flexibility of our behavior and so our actions are more aligned with the values that are important to us. We can achieve this by permitting our behavior to be influenced by our workability, and also through language, to take note and describe events and not to merely judge or predict them.

A study conducted by Harvard University reveals that humans spend 50% of their time daydreaming. This is a surprising fact considering the limited time we have. Humans have the ability to detach from the present and think over the past or the future. This is considered as a gift because we can revisit our past and learn from it to improve ourselves. This will allow us to grow as individuals and as a society as we can collectively look after our well-being.

It also allows us to plan for our future. It is a good thing if we can anticipate what could happen in the next few years. Our ability to place ourselves in the possible situation will allow us to think about how we might deal with different circumstances when they happen.

However, if our daydreaming results in emotional disturbance, it could significantly affect our mental health and steal our happiness. It becomes a burden – a hurdle that we need to overcome.

Too much thinking about the past can lead us down the path of regrets or the inability to accept and let things go. It should not be altogether eliminated because it allows us to plan for the future. However, thinking too much of the future can be a bad thing because it could mean that we are not living our lives to the fullest and that we are wasting our time and energy preparing for scenarios that aren’t even likely to happen.

Daniel Gilbert, a renowned psychologist from Harvard University, explores the psychological immune system that activates during stressful events allowing us to cope. More often than not, these things are not as bad as we had expected them to be. Overthinking something is proven to be just a waste of time and resources.

Another study conducted by Harvard psychologist Dr. Matt Killingsworth reveals that humans are far less happy when they are daydreaming. Focusing on worries about the future can easily rob you of the gift of the present. It can prevent you from actually doing something to improve your situation. Time is important, and while daydreaming is not always a bad thing, spending too much time on it is not a good idea. That time could be spent with family or friends. Spending too much time away from the present is not a good way to experience life.

It will take time and effort to teach our minds not to daydream too much, but it is doable. Here are some pointers you can follow:

Practice Mindfulness

You don’t need to be a monk who is adept at meditation to practice the art of mindfulness.

You can practice the simple joy of being conscious and aware by making the effort to eat your breakfast without any form of distraction. Feel the warmth of coffee in your mouth, savor the bittersweet taste and smell the aroma of the wonderful drink. Try to use your five senses and focus on what you can gain from the present. Try to do this as regularly as you can, but begin with a simple activity that you regularly do every day.

Regain Focus on the Simplicity of Life

As soon as you notice that your mind is wandering off again, immediately regain your focus. Get your attention back to something that is simple and monotonous right at the moment. It could be a piece of paper, a paper bill, a cup of coffee, a notebook, or even just your hand.

Try to focus on things that will not trigger any emotion. The goal is to concentrate all your attention on the item that will bring your awareness back to the present. You can do this each time you find yourself daydreaming until you are ready to naturally move on to what it is you are actually doing.

Do New Things Every Day

Have you realized that when we were kids, the day seems to slowly pass by? This is partly because when we were kids, we were experiencing life for the first time, and processing it all requires our complete attention. It is ideal to focus our attention when we try new things and notice how much of the attention we manage to win over. We have to focus so we can learn how to do something. We generally have to steer ourselves to the present as we learn to do new things.

It can be fairly easy to give in to the habit of always looking forward. We usually do so in order to avoid a frustrating result – we want to be prepared

for the worst-case scenario, or stay on top of things. That's why we sometimes spend too much time with our minds wandering instead of enjoying the present. As a result, we sometimes fail to truly experience the precious moments of our life. It is great to have a plan, but it could be detrimental if we spend our time thinking about the thousands of possible scenarios that probably aren't going to ever happen.

Cognitive Defusion

ACT encourages us to defuse or detach ourselves from harmful thinking patterns through a core process known as cognitive defusion. The idea is that we all have the tendency to become too attached to our thoughts, and we tend to blow things out of proportion. Once we become too fused – too much attached – to our thoughts, they become stronger.

We need to accept the reality that thoughts are only thoughts. This statement is not designed to diminish the emotional effects of thoughts or deny the reality that thoughts can help us be more aware of what is happening around us. These ideas are valid, but the point is that our thoughts are no stronger than we allow them to become. There are words and images that float through our mind, but we are the ones responsible for giving meaning to them.

It is not necessary to always respond to our ideas. When we think about something that is strong or frightening, there is usually a sense of urgency linked to them that drives us to act immediately. If thoughts pop into your mind or if you have thoughts that you just can't shake off, it is best to apply the principles of acceptance and mindfulness before you take action.

Cognitive defusion is the practice of observing thoughts instead of becoming attached to the thought, looking *at* thoughts instead of looking *from* thoughts, and allowing thoughts to come and go instead of becoming attached to them.

Through cognitive defusion, we can observe the essence of our thoughts – that they are mere words or images that our mind conjures because of the emotions we feel. It will also help us respond to our thoughts by taking a workable action that is based on what actually works.

This is where mindfulness also comes in handy. We need to be able to recognize when we are too attached to thoughts. They should not always dictate our behavior.

Cognitive defusion is also effective if we need to change the thoughts that serve as obstacles in trying to live a life that is based on values.

Try assessing how you respond to your thoughts. But keep in mind that using cognitive defusion doesn't mean thoughts are naturally harmful. Our capacity as humans to think and make sense of our thoughts allows us to live a more dynamic life.

Thinking patterns can become detrimental if they cause considerable tension or stress. You may choose to start becoming more aware of your thoughts instead of becoming more attached with them. Their strength is only amplified by our illusion that these thoughts are stronger than us.

Self as Context

Because of relational frames such as Here vs. There, Now vs. Then, and I vs. You, the human language is directed to the context of self, and builds a spiritual, transcendent side our humanity.

This concept is one of the core tenets of RFT and ACT, and there is now progressive evidence of its essence to the functions of language such as sense of self, theory of mind, and empathy.

Self as context is also crucial in ACT because it allows someone to be aware of his own flow of experience without forming any form of attachment. Self as context is developed in ACT through experiential processes, metaphors, and mindfulness exercises.

Mindfulness is the seed of this core process, as this will allow you to get in touch with your senses. This will harness your skill in observing yourself. For example, through this core process, you can take a closer look at your own human development and where you are in life. You will be aware of the influence of your upbringing and how it can affect your future.

Mindfulness is a critical aspect of ACT. That's why we have devoted a full chapter to it.

Values

In the context of cognitive behavior, values refer to specific qualities that warrant purposeful action.

In ACT, your specialist will encourage you to perform exercises that will help you select your direction in life in different areas such as career, family, and spirituality. This will also help you undermine the verbal processes that can lead to decisions based on attachment, social compliance, or avoidance.

For example, parents generally value honesty. A good person values integrity. A good leader values justice.

Remember, in the core processes of being present, defusion, and acceptance are not individual psychotherapy techniques but rather, they serve as guideposts for a more vital life that is consistent with the values that are important to you.

How to Discover Your Personal Core Values

Discovering your personal values will allow you to find the specific traits that reflect your needs, wants, and what you really care about life. By exploring your inner self to look for your core values, you can find great forces that will guide you in your decisions. This will also help you figure out what to seek and what to avoid. Through this core ACT process, you can start harnessing your own moral compass. Personal core values can serve as your guide posts to highlight what you really cherish, and when you are in a difficult situation, you can choose to behave based on the standards you have set for yourself.

Be Conscious of Your Emerging Values

Mindfulness plays a crucial role in discovering your values. To do this, you should first find a quiet place where no one can disturb you. Exploring your inner self to find your personal values requires your own space and time. Turn off your phone, listen to calming music, or anything that can help you

focus and relax. Some people use aromatherapy. Lavender oil is especially calming.

Remember Happy and Sad Moments in Your Life

Begin the process of discovering your personal values by writing down the moments in which you experienced great happiness or sadness. Try to remember the peaks and valleys of your experiences and take note of the details that surround every memory. Focus on the memories that had the most significant influence on your life, instead of those in which you earned recognition or praise.

For example, you might have experienced great joy when your family visited a beach for the first time. This may not have been the best moment for your success, but this could be the root memory for your personality and how you bond with your loved ones.

Explore the common themes that run through your strongest memories, which could be influenced by your religious beliefs or political affiliation. There's a good chance that you will find specific things that trigger strong emotions of anger, sadness, injustice, or a combination of these things. Take note of the things that are missing and then try to look for value during your most joyous moments.

Examine Human Needs in General

We all have our basic needs based on the composition of our bodies and our common needs within the society we belong to. Our personal values generally stem from our needs. Hence, we feel strong passion and commitment towards our values. By exploring human needs, we can gain a powerful boost to define our personal values. Basically, the universal needs of humans include:

- Physical requirements (food, water, shelter, clothes)
- Peace (hope, acceptance, ease of mind)
- Connection (consideration, respect, warmth)
- Autonomy (self-expression, dignity, choice)
- Play (joy, humor, adventure)
- Meaning (understanding, participation, celebration)

Create a Draft of Your Personal Core Values

Make a temporary list of the personal core values you believe you cannot live without. In this step, you have to connect your personal experiences with the values that are important in your culture (and to you) on top of the fundamental needs of humans based on our biological composition.

Write the values using wording that holds true for yourself. For example, if you value truth, you may want to write this as “I value the courage of honesty and integrity.”

Try to start with at least seven core values, but take note that this could be trimmed down to at least three core values later on in the process.

Write About How You Usually Practice These Values

Personal values could be different from the strategies you use to define them. More often than not, these strategies are based on the values of your family. By understanding how you practice your personal values, you can gain better insight into the values that influence you to do things that you can be proud of.

For example, you may choose service as one of your personal core values. Will you practice this value by running for an elected position or by volunteering in a charitable organization? If you value peace, do you discourage noise in your home, or are you more active in seeking reconciliation between people who disagree with each other? It is crucial to make these strong connections between your values and the things you do every day.

Look at the Results of Your Decisions

You can do this step in either imagined or real situations that require decisions. How would you decide if you value love of family, and you have to pick between staying with your loved ones and pursuing a career overseas? If you value independence, and you are given a choice to move in with your special someone, would you do it?

In these scenarios, your personal values can really help you make creative decisions that mirror how you care for yourself and the people around you. You should understand that you can see the value in action when you need

to make a real-life decision. There are times that we are so attached to a certain core value that we always think it will result in the best decision.

Make the Final List of Your Personal Core Values

By doing the first six steps, you should be able to make the final lists of values that you really care about. Remember, these values must be based on your initial inclination on what is essential for you. Moreover, you should integrate what you learned about writing down your values and testing them out in different scenarios. Try to trim down to three to four primary values.

These values are effective tools. Personal core values can reshape your brain to help you live the life you really want.

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CHAPTER 3: SETTING UP GOALS WITH THE ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY PROCESS



ACT encourages setting up of goals that are based on values. It specifies three major steps:

1. Choose an area in your life that you want to work on.

This may include community, romance, education, career, personal growth, environment, family, parenting, health, finances, and many more.

2. Establish goals that are SMART – Specific, Meaningful, Adaptive, Realistic, and Time-Bound.

Specific - Try to be specific as possible as to what actions you want to take. Be sure that you are aware of the steps involved in taking the necessary action. A specific goal is easier to achieve than a general goal. For example, just setting up the goal of spending more time with your child may not allow you to know if you have already achieved it. A more specific goal is to spend at least one hour playing every day. Being specific with your goal will allow you to assess whether or not you have already accomplished the goal and monitor your progress accordingly.

Meaningful - Assess whether your goal is genuinely based on your values in comparison with a strict rule or a sense of what you must do. If you think that your goals don’t have a deeper sense of purpose or meaning, try to assess whether the goal is really influenced by the values you hold dear. Take note that your core values should be based on things that provide meaning to your life.

Adaptive - Make sure your goal will help you follow a direction that you think will greatly improve your life. Assess whether your goal will move

you closer to or is steering you away from the real purpose of your life.

Realistic - There's a big chance that you will only feel disappointment, frustration, or failure if you set goals that are not really attainable. Try to find a balance between setting goals that are quite easy versus goals that are impossible to achieve. Be realistic and practical.

Time-Bound - Specify your goals even more by adding a time and date by which you want to accomplish them. If this is not possible, or not realistic, try setting up a time frame and do everything you can to make certain that you work within this bond.

3. Define the Urgency of Your Goals

The last step is to define the urgency with which your goal should be accomplished. Your goals could be:

- Long-term - Create a plan of the actions you need to take so you can be closer to your goals over the span of six months to one year.
- Medium-term - Think about the actions you need to take so you can move towards your goals within two to three months.
- Short-term - Make a list of the things you need to do so you can achieve your goals within a month.
- Immediate - What are the goals that you need to achieve within a week or even within the day?

Starting to live in accordance with your personal core values will fan the flames of your committed action.

Our best plans and values will not be meaningful if they are not supported by action. Equipped with the knowledge of the core values you really want to pursue, you can start moving forward towards living a valuable life.

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CHAPTER 4: OVERCOMING POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER WITH ACT



If you have lived through or witnessed a shocking, scary or dangerous event, you might develop a condition known as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. These traumatic events can range from losing a house to fire, losing a loved one, or surviving a road accident. The more an event excites horror, helplessness, serious injury or death, the more potent the PTSD.

Main Symptoms of PTSD

Re-experiencing symptoms: This is where a person relives the terrible experience in their minds. If the traumatic event they went through was the loss of their house in a fire that even claimed one of their loved ones, the affected person might start having flashbacks of the event. Traumatic events tend to make a person feel helpless, and when they come back to haunt them in the form of flashbacks or intrusive thoughts, the affected person feels drained of energy. They lose their capacity to move on with the rest of the day after re-experiencing the traumatic event through their mind's eye.

Avoidance symptoms: Sufferers of PTSD tend to avoid events or situations that might lead them to think back to their traumatic event. For instance, if someone lost their loved one in a water accident, whereby their boat capsized, the sufferer may actively avoid ever getting into a boat again. This is because if they entered the boat, they would have no peace at all; a mixture of fearing that whatever happened to their loved one might happen to them, and getting to relive the horrific event in their mind.

Hyper arousal symptom: If you have lived through a traumatic event, it can modify your nervous system in such a way that you become too sensitive. For instance, you could become anxious at a loud noise, or bright light. These are merely your survival instincts kicking into gear. Additionally, you could have trouble falling asleep or concentrating. Such problems can cause you to become bitter, can eliminate happiness, and potentially ruin your life.

Cognition and mood symptoms: Another obvious sign of PTSD is an inability to remember the exact details of the traumatic event. The rush of adrenaline you experienced back then might be responsible for blocking out some of the details. Then you might experience guilt or blame someone for what happened. If you think that you had a chance of mitigating the trauma, but failed to do so, you may experience an immense amount of guilt. Additionally, PTSD can make you lose interest in activities that you once enjoyed.

There are a number of ways of treating Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, but one of the most effective ways involves the use of ACT. Actually, it is believed to be the most effective form of treatment, with people living with PTSD getting rid of their symptoms in as few as twelve sessions.

The following are some of the methods used in treating PTSD:

Prolonged Exposure

If someone has lived through a traumatic event, it is only natural to want to stay away from the thought patterns that call back those traumatic memories. However, this treatment method seeks to do just that: expose the person to memories of the trauma for an extended amount of time. The logic behind this treatment method is that once the person with PTSD confronts their fears, they will eventually stop being bothered by them. However, if they keep running away, then the traumatic memories will hold a lot of power over the individual. In numerous scientific studies, this treatment method has received praise for being effective in eliminating recurring symptoms, anxiety arousal, and avoidance of PTSD-arousing stimuli. Positive results can be achieved by the third session.

Cognitive Processing Therapy

When a traumatic event takes place, the affected person might develop various maladaptive assumptions that will increase the potency of their trauma. Cognitive processing therapy is used in detecting and restructuring the maladaptive patterns in their thoughts. This method helps people with PTSD find meaning in the trauma, and it also helps decrease their anxiety and boost their self-esteem. Cognitive processing therapy has been shown to have a high success rate of curing PTSD symptoms. To a large extent, the success of this treatment model is down to the sufferer, i.e., they must be cooperative.

Seeking Safety

When you live through a traumatic event, your emotional makeup might become twisted. For instance, if you survive a road accident, you will become an extremely sensitive person. Something as ordinary as experiencing a bump while riding a car will suddenly make you fearful, cause a flood of emotions, and it will take a long time to return to normal. Seeking safety helps people overcome their emotional dysregulation and cope with their extreme fears. One of the ways of curing emotional dysregulation is through practicing mindfulness. When your mind is focused on savoring the present moment, it is less likely to jump back to the traumatic past.

Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing

EMDR is much like prolonged exposure, except that it utilizes eye movement exercises. This treatment was popular a few years back but seems to have fallen out of favor with therapists since evidence came out that the eye movement exercises achieved nothing. However, some therapists still employ this method of treatment. In keeping with the tradition of prolonged exposure, the sufferer is made to relive their trauma through their minds, and then the therapist guides them in performing various eye exercises.

Studies have shown that PTSD subjects' efforts at thought suppression are futile. Such strategies even increase the frequency of unwanted thoughts, memories, and emotions. This effect is demonstrated to be strongest among female PTSD sufferers who have been raped. There have also been studies on self-reported coping strategies that provide evidence of avoidance.

Research has further revealed that dissociation, which would likely have occurred at the original event of trauma, and delayed reactions worsen the symptoms of PTSD.

ACT can be applied to a full range of diagnoses, comorbid states, and difficulties in managing daily life. Also, it addresses a range of responses, not just fear-based responses in PTSD. Furthermore, ACT explicitly addresses quality of life. Through self-examination and acknowledgment, a client can commit to behavior changes, and thereby raise their quality of life.

ACT's protocol consists of three components:

Generation of values narratives – Sometimes done as a homework assignment, the client describes his or her values and priorities in seven common areas of life, including family, intimate relationships, employment, health, and spirituality. These descriptions are reviewed and refined with the therapist.

Rating of values narratives –The client rates them in absolute terms first. Then he or she rates how successfully they think they have lived up to those values. Finally, they rank all those values.

Identification of goals, actions, and barriers – The client names the things he or she wants to achieve. Actions required to meet these goals are drawn up. The client then names the obstacles that might get in the way of these goals. The therapist and client then discuss how certain barriers might be overcome. Finally, the therapist persists in working on motivating the client to try despite any barriers that may arise.

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CHAPTER 5: HOW TO DEAL WITH DEPRESSION USING ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY



From the perspective of ACT, depression is understood as avoidance behavior and psychological inflexibility. Depression is a set of behaviors, ideas, and emotions connected to a way of functioning. Behaviors associated with depression are part of a strategy to avoid personal experiences.

Managing depression is an extremely important skill and, unfortunately, it's one that many people with Borderline Personality Disorder and related mood/emotional disorders seem to lack. This doesn't mean that all is lost, however. Much of your reactions to things come from a combination of learned behaviors and the environment around you. By re-learning your methodology for processing and handling emotions, you can actually start to rebuild your ability to tolerate distress.

ACT places a rather large emphasis on the ability of the person to handle distress, such as trauma, circumstance, and generally worrying events. In some cases, they may utterly lack the ability to rationalize in a healthy way why certain things are happening to them, as well as why they are the way that they are. Other therapy methods tend to place an emphasis on things such as asserting the problems or how one can have a proactive effect on them.

The reason that ACT places an emphasis on accepting things rather than making a proactive change is because people who would be helped by ACT are often the type to overcompensate when they try to assert problems in their life. They might have an emotional overreaction or any number of other issues in response to a given stimulus. This is in contrast to the normal

response to overwhelming stimuli, which is to become confused and potentially stay stagnant until a clear course is given to them.

Because of this, a lot of focus is placed in ACT on not allowing stressful stimuli to place an emotional burden on you. In other words, allowing it to not unsettle your waters too much.

The ability to deal with stressful conditions is paramount in the development of a happy and healthy way of life. You can't expect to be happy if you don't have a regular, efficient, and healthy way of dealing with emotional trauma and general distress. There's a relatively decent chance that the reason you're pursuing this course in the first place is because you have a hard time dealing with your emotions as they come.

The thing you need to realize is that no matter how much you want it to, blocking out or trying to change a situation which is out of your hands often won't do anything to really change it. Sometimes, things happen. Accepting this isn't a quitter mentality; trying to reject it is a quitter mentality, because it means that you aren't up to the challenge that's in front of you.

Often, people develop this mentality of self-rejection as a response to other stimuli. To have that response of trying to change or reject a situation means that you don't think that you are cut out to stand up to the situation. Part of Dialectical Behavior Therapy consists of thinking about what causes you to feel this way and how you can avoid those triggers.

ACT has a number of methods by which you can start to practice different methods which are useful in the development of skills for depression. You need to practice these as much as you can in your day-to-day life so that you can start to intuitively use them when the need arises.

Review these daily when you're in the depression block so that you can firmly cement them into your mind. Also try to carry them with you in one way or another so you can remember what steps to take when you need any of the given sets of actions.

The first set of actions that have been developed are methods of distraction. These are used so that when a distasteful emotion or situation comes up, you can start to distract yourself and divert your attention away from it in a productive manner. This will aid you in dealing with emotional response. This also goes hand in hand with your mindfulness practice because the

focusing ability that you develop when working with mindfulness will allow you to quickly draw your attention elsewhere and handle the things that are happening inside your head.

Those ideas outline the basis of the accepts distraction strategy. A bright idea would be to put them all on note cards and summarize them, then refresh yourself every morning when you wake up and every night before you go to bed when you're doing your depression block. These will help you in developing tolerance skills for distasteful or stressful situations.

Another thing you need to focus on is finding a way to soothe yourself. This is a concept known as self-soothing, and it's especially important in Dialectical Behavior Therapy. Essentially, this is all about finding ways that you can be kind and comforting to yourself.

We aren't supposed to run all the time without having an opportunity to get rid of the stress. You are supposed to have periods of leisure time and simplicity. These are intended to help you with decompressing and unloading. Allowing yourself time to do this is important because it lets your mind reset to a bit of a blank slate.

Many people who have extant emotional problems are often exacerbated by being in high stress environments and not allowing themselves the opportunity to really decompress and relax. While this won't solve all of your emotional problems at once, it can definitely help you in processing them when you're out and about. Remembering that you have the opportunity to destress at a later point in the day can also make it easier to take on the various stresses of any given day. Don't be afraid to set time aside for yourself.

What exactly should you be doing in this time? This is one of those things where the choice truly is yours. There is no right or wrong thing to be doing. Much like the final rule of meditation, the real goal here is just to be effective: do what works for you!

There are many different things that you may find soothes you. For example, give yourself time to take a bath at night, to read literature of your favorite genre, or to work on some sort of hobby or project. In effect, just be kind to yourself. Allow yourself the opportunity to relax. Know that there's

nothing wrong with taking time to yourself. This is an important part of the depression block, so be sure to incorporate it into your day.

I'm going to digress for a moment, to be real and truthful with you. The fact is that most people who practice ACT do so because they have Borderline Personality Disorder. When people have Borderline Personality Disorder, their prognosis isn't exactly great. While it's largely treatable with adequate therapy and possibly supplemental medication to aid with depression, ten percent of people with Borderline Personality Disorder will end up killing themselves. This is a tragic and terrifying number.

If you are reading this because you have Borderline Personality Disorder, or you have read about it and think that you may fit the bill, I'd like to refer you to seeking the help of a medical professional who can be there in person with you and talk you through the various different options. Depression is real, it is heavy, and Borderline Personality Disorder is constantly comorbid with it. While everybody can benefit from the skills that are developed through Dialectical Behavior Therapy, if you're here because you fear that you might have Borderline Personality Disorder, seek genuine help and get into a program with a personal therapist so that you can be sure you're getting the best and most personalized experience possible.

The reason that this is relevant and not a total digression is that sometimes, the ability to encourage yourself is going to be very, very difficult to maintain. In fact, if you do have depression comorbid with your mood or personality disorder, the chances are good that when I say you need to cheer yourself on, you have no idea what I'm even talking about. While it's easy to say from a certain perspective that you ideally should tell yourself that you can do anything, it's not the reality of the situation that just because you do it, you're going to believe it.

At first, when you tell yourself that you can do it, you're likely not even going to have an emotional kickback reaction; you're going to ask yourself, "What if I can't? Why would I be able to do it?" and this is a tragic starting point. But even if you don't believe it, you need to fake it until you make it.

There are a lot of reasons that this is helpful. Your brain ultimately accepts what it's given, and if you say that you can do something, it's going to over time believe that it can. What you say and do is a very powerful emotional

input, and recent psychological studies have shown that faking it until you make it is a very real phenomenon in terms of your brain structure.

More than that, the very act of telling yourself that you can do it, and accept whatever is happening, and cope with it properly, is extremely powerful. It's a psychological sword, if you will. If you do this, you can build the skill to accept what is coming your way and really work your way through it all, no matter what it may be. Telling yourself that you can do it is impactful.

Beyond all of that, over time you're going to develop the ability to believe in yourself, because of the simple fact that you are going to make it through everything that you're trying to do. While you may not believe it, you will always be able to ultimately cope with whatever you're trying to do. Think of it this way: all of life follows the same pattern. They are either moving forward, or they are at rock bottom, and rock bottom implicates dying. If you aren't dying, then you're progressing still. Find security in that fact. Your mind is designed to deal with various things, though it may not be designed to deal with them immediately. Your mind has an especially difficult time with this, because for one reason or another it has become wired to deal with things in an unhealthy manner.

However, that doesn't mean you can't undo this, and more importantly, the point of all of this is that hard things are, well, hard. You're going to have to work to get through them, and unfortunately that's just the nature of the beast. However, if you bear that in mind and ultimately work on accepting that fact, then you'll start to realize with time that when you tell yourself you can deal with something, you ultimately do. This will reinforce the statement.

The statement also serves to make you more resilient to whatever may happen to you. For example, if you tell yourself you can deal with things constantly, if things do get worse or if another bad thing does happen, you'll remember that you're able to deal with them whenever they do come up. Ultimately, you'll remember that the power absolutely lies within you to make what needs to happen, happen. This is your most powerful tool – your ability to encourage yourself and remember that whatever it takes, you can do it.

That brings an end to the specific improve set. As I said earlier, try to find a way to work these into your daily routine while you're doing the depression

block so that you can remember them better when the time comes. Also consider setting them up in such a way that you can see them whenever you most find yourself needing them. This can be something as simple as writing them down in a notes app on your phone and summarizing them so that they're within easy reach, or even taking a screenshot of the pages that they're written on if you're reading this on something like a Kindle or Books app.

The next big part of depression is the ability to evaluate the pros and cons of something. Think about your given situation and think about what positives and negatives can come from it if you decide not to tolerate the situation. Is there any real and proactive change that you can initiate?

A lot of the time, when you're trying actively not to do something, there will be a kickback response in your mind that will manifest until you respond to it. (Unless you have OCD, in which case this is most likely a compulsion and you should avoid meditating on it.) Until you satisfy the answer of what would happen if you did respond to a situation – and analyze such in a realistic manner – you aren't going to feel comfortable with not responding to the situation. This shouldn't happen all the time, as it's a bad habit to ingrain, but when you do have the kickback response it's not a bad thing to think objectively about what would and wouldn't happen if you did decide to respond to the given stimulus.

Another thing you need to practice is the concept of total acceptance. The truth is that a lot of the time, you're trying to actively fight against the reality of a situation. Sometimes, this is because you feel like you can't handle it. Other times, it's because you don't want to lose control of the situation. In these sorts of situations, what you ultimately need to do is allow yourself to completely and total accept whatever is happening to you.

The fact is that you aren't going to change a reality that you can't change, no matter how much you try. Focusing on your inability to change it will only prove frustrating. There are some things that you only have so much of a hand in. In these cases, you can only do as much as you are able to do, and no amount of action will change it.

Consider, for example, an illness in the family. What could you really do to change this stressful situation? Can you take away their illness? Can you fight against this tide? No, unfortunately. The sad truth is that you cannot.

And while it’s painful, the only thing you can do which is healthy is to accept whatever might happen as something that you aren’t able to change.

This should be practiced in tandem with your mindfulness strategies and your willpower so that you’re able to practice the next skill: turning your mind around. The objective of this skill is working on your ability to make yourself accept what is happening instead of rejecting it. One of the major problems in issues like Borderline Personality Disorder is that you develop a personality which has a very difficult time accepting whatever is happening. Your knee-jerk reaction is to reject whatever is happening because it means losing control of the situation or becoming powerless.

You need to work on honing that skill so that you can start to accept whatever may happen. You need to practice your ability to make yourself accept things. Acceptance is a habit, and while you shouldn’t accept everything which passes, you must learn to accept those things which you have no hand in. Any other reaction is irrational, as there was little that you could have done to change it. While you can fight with yourself over what this phrase really means and whether or not you can do anything to change something, the simplest answer is the correct one: often, you can’t.

Building the habit of acceptance will shift you toward a generally healthier state of mind that will let you start to work with things and concepts in a far better way than you are right now. You’ll be able to process your emotions in a better way.

All of these skills culminate in the last skill of depression which is to learn the difference between being willing to do something and being excessively willful. Willingness is the will to do that which can actually have an effect. For example, if you don’t like how much you make and you can financially afford to go and get another degree, you should be willing to do so. Don’t accept a bad lot in life just because you develop an acceptance stance. Willfulness is the will to do something which won’t have an effect; in essence, willfulness is being excessively willful to the point that you want to change things that you cannot. In these cases, your willfulness is breaking from your ability to be accepting of the things you cannot change, which causes unnecessary inner tension. You have to release that tension and allow yourself to accept that which you cannot change. In that, you will find your place in life becoming happier and your way of looking at life

becoming healthier. You will no longer obsess over changing things you cannot, but you will find yourself being more willing to do those things which are effective.

That brings the chapter on depression to the end. All of these skills should be practiced during your depression block.

The important thing to note about your blocks, if you haven't already, is that you need to be carrying these skills into your day-to-day life even outside of their designated block; the designated block is merely intended to give you a time for extended focus on a given subject so that you can train those methods and start working on retaining them.

If you're reading through this book and thinking that you should try to implement all of these things at once, I'd like to warn you not to; your therapy will be more ineffective. Your brain isn't set up to deal with that much change at once. Remember that this is a marathon and not a sprint, just like I said earlier; your success with these methods is highly dependent upon your ability to retain these things and use them actionably. Carry them with you, but don't load them all on yourself at once.

Some studies indicate that ACT can be more successful in one-on-one therapy sessions as opposed to group sessions (ibid.). Studies also reveal that ACT may be superior in treating some conditions including depression, especially with respect to reducing self-harm behaviors of depressed subjects.

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CHAPTER 6: THE BEST WAYS TO BEAT ANXIETY WITH ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY



People battling anxiety have to struggle with unwanted thoughts popping into their mind. Sometimes, your intrusive thoughts may be informed by the nature of your anxiety. For instance, people with generalized anxiety have a tendency to receive intrusive thoughts involving one of their loved ones, whereas people with social phobias tend to receive intrusive thoughts that remind them of a moment they embarrassed themselves. Forms of anxiety include:

- Generalized anxiety disorder
- Social anxiety disorder
- Agoraphobia
- Selective mutism
- Separation anxiety
- Panic disorder
- Specific phobias

Around 12 percent of the population may have an anxiety disorder in any given year. Between five and 30 percent report having one sometime during their lifetime. It usually occurs between the ages of 15 and 35. The most common variety of anxiety disorder is a phobia.

The causes of anxiety disorders may be genetic and environmental. A history of trauma, such as child abuse or hardship (i.e. poverty) can lead to it. The experience of anxiety disorder can coincide with other mental health disorders, such as forms of depression and personality disorders. The physical wear of an anxiety disorder or the combination of multiple

disorders can tax the body to the point of heart disease, substance abuse, or hyperthyroidism.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and pharmaceutical therapies are frequently the treatments for anxiety disorders. Mindfulness exercises work, and many OCD patients opt for self-help sources.

What Makes You Anxious?

Anxiety is merely a persistent fear, and it extends to your future. Having an anxiety disorder will surely harm your quality of life. You get into the mindset of seeing problems where there are none. Anxiety puts a quality of extremity to your life so that you're either withdrawn and isolated, or aggressive. Both extremes tend to stifle social cohesion.

How Does Fear Manifest?

When you are frightened or anxious, both your body and mind operate too quickly. The following are some of the things that may happen thanks to fear and anxiety:

- Increased heartbeat
- Increased rate of breathing
- Weak muscles
- Profuse sweating
- Stomach pains
- Lack of concentration
- Lightheadedness
- A feeling of getting frozen
- Loss of appetite
- Hot and cold sweats
- Tense muscles
- Dry mouth

The physical symptoms of fear can be very frustrating, especially if you have no idea about the cause of your fear or anxiety. There are various

triggers for fear and sometimes the brain keeps sending these messages even unnecessarily. You can only improve your capacity to understand your relationship with fear by raising your self-awareness.

Panic Attacks

This is the condition of being overwhelmed by the mental and physical feelings of fear. Sufferers of heart attacks report difficulty breathing, increased heartbeat, and a crazy sensation of losing it.

Worry

This is the magnification of issues so that a person tends to believe that the future is bleak. A worrying individual has a loss of hope, and they expect terrible things to happen at a later time.

The following are some of the techniques for getting rid of your fear, worry, anxiety, depression, and pretty much any other mental disorder:

Face Your Fears

It might sound counterintuitive, but it is the way to go. You gain more power by exposing yourself to your fears rather than running away from them. When you expose yourself to your fears, you gain something valuable: knowledge. Thus, you banish ignorance and realize effective ways of overcoming your anxiety.

Know Yourself

To deliver yourself wholesomely from your fears, you have to spend some time understanding the person that you really are. What are the origins of your fears? What was your childhood like? Knowing that most of our attitudes and fears were formed from early childhood, as well as our experiences, it is incredibly important to unravel as much as you can about yourself.

Exercise

Performing a workout requires your full attention. Thus, your mind is taken away from its fears and focuses upon the task at hand. This is a great technique for getting rid of your fears and anxiety. Additionally, exercises improve heart health, leading to great blood circulation, strong immunity, and effectively decreasing bad emotions.

Relax

When you make your body and mind relax, fears will be pushed away. This state of relaxation may be achieved through deep breathing. This involves assuming a meditation position and breathing in and out while clearing the noise from your mind. It helps in restoring the body to a state of balance.

Healthy Eating

Having a clean diet is critical in ensuring that you stay in perfect mental and emotional health. A clean diet focuses on key nutrients and eliminates junk. You want to keep a healthy blood sugar level. When your blood sugar goes down, you are susceptible to panic attacks and anxiety.

Drink Alcohol in Moderation or Avoid It Altogether

If you are nervous, it can be tempting to down a few bottles. However, understand that the ensuing state of bliss is short-lived. You cannot drink your way to calmness. Instead, learn to face your fears and anxieties while sober. This is more fruitful.

Faith

If you believe in a supernatural entity that oversees the universe and the people in it, then it is helpful to trust upon them for deliverance. The more faith you have that this supernatural entity will reach out to you, the better your chances of actually getting rid of your fears and anxieties.

Medication

Medications appeal to people who have time constraints. They may not be the best treatment model, but when combined with other models, the use of medication becomes incredibly helpful.

Support Groups

There are many people battling fears and anxieties just like you. Thanks to the internet, you don’t even have to stress out finding these people. They have forums, Facebook groups, websites, and so on. However, before you request to join a support group, make a point of understanding their principles, so that you can weigh up whether you would fit in.

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CHAPTER 7: USING ACT TO MANAGE AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR



Physical aggression most often manifests as grabbing, pushing, and slapping, but more serious aggression is less common (including forcible restraint and punching). Although males commit more severely aggressive acts, particularly to dominate women, research shows that both men and women engage in the more common forms of aggressive behavior.

Extensive research has led to better understanding of aggression and its causes, but treatment for it is lacking. Most treatments tend to be outdated and not well supported by empirical evidence. The information on risk factors was taken and employed in contextual behavioral science to construct a model. In that model, psychological and physical aggression are seen as ways to escape from or avoid undesirable personal experiences. The unique model comprises connected techniques and components of treatment, examining the processes that affect treatment.

Physical aggression is often closely connected to depression, anxiety, substance use, and physical health issues, as well as relationship distress, separation, and divorce. Overall, aggression exacerbates problem conditions such as depression and relationship management. It drags down occupational and cognitive functioning.

A thesis by Zarling compartmentalizes the risk factors for aggression in this way (2013, 6-9):

1. Family – Partner aggression in family situations featuring severe discipline, low cohesion and acute conflict in relation to relationships among non-aggressive adults are reviewed.
2. Relationship – Aggression precedes relationship dissolution and distress, complicated by interpersonal skill deficits that increase the

potential for conflict within the couple.

3. Personality and psychopathy – Personality and psychopathy are the most predominant predictors, and are likely rooted in childhood or adolescent antisocial behavior, childhood trauma or abuse, depression, and comportment issues. Axis II pathologies (e.g., Antisocial Personality Disorder and Borderline Personality Disorder) are correlated with partner aggression, sometimes complicated by depression and maladaptive attachment patterns linked with anxiety, and an unstable sense of self and impulsivity.
4. Cognitive and affective factors – Anger being the most researched factor, the problem may lie in how individuals respond to anger. Fear, shame, and jealousy may also be associated, as are symptoms reported by patients with panic attacks. There is weak research based on self-reporting by aggressive people that cognitive biases and irrational beliefs may be in play, as may be blame toward the victims.
5. Other factors – Substance abuse, stress, and the characteristics of relationships are reviewed, though how these factors bear on aggression is hazy. Arguments and verbal aggression often accompany psychological and physical aggression, suggesting that such verbal exchanges may set the stage for other aggression.

Arising out of social learning theory, CBT treatments have resulted in modest improvements compared to other forms of treatment. They prefer motivational techniques over confrontational techniques (Zarling, 2013, 18). They aim to change problem behavior, ideas, beliefs, and emotions to prevent violence. Motivation to end the violence is encouraged, crisis and anger-management strategies are learned, and communication skills are instilled.

Zarling cites some shortcomings of social learning theory and CBT as well as feminist approaches in treating partner aggression. Techniques are adjusted for partner aggression, but CBT cannot account for perpetrators of aggression who have no history of learned aggression. Also, social learning theory, feminist theory, and CBT can explain the onset of aggression but not the maintenance of aggressive behavior. Additionally, research has not proven that substantive modifications to aggression cognitions and personality traits result from treatment. Consequences to emotional

functioning through this treatment are unknown. Finally, the frequency of anger may not be reduced.

So far, claims Zarling, no one treatment set has been shown to be superior in the treatment of aggression (2013, 20). She discusses the limitations of CBT and other kinds of treatments and a paucity of research that would identify the best techniques.

A better form of treatment would single out the change processes underlying treatment, asserts Zarling (2013, 25). An understanding of them is necessary for more successful therapy. Therapeutic techniques ought to be finely linked to change processes. The assumptions behind social learning, feminist and other theories in therapy should be critically examined, including the assumptions underlying partner aggression. Models are too "mechanistic." Information on how internal events and overt behaviors work together is required.

Therefore, ACT is (probably) well suited for the treatment of partner aggression, Zarling concludes (ibid.), as it is from the stance of functional contextualism. Functions of emotions and cognitions should be discovered to proceed with improved treatment. Personal historical events are contacted with the present situational context. ACT can lead to "the prediction and influence of behavior," known as "workability truth criterion" (Zarling, 2013, 27). It can lead to specific criteria for change. Causes are only explored for their impact on changing behavior. This is a practical approach.

ACT looks for variables that the patient can manipulate in order to bring about change. One set is values, and another a range of consciously altered meanings and language that can overtake the problem cognitive system. For example, the person becomes aware of the personal experience of anger and its relationship to outbursts of aggression. ACT can, thus, work with clients to "enhance the development and selection of more effective and efficient behavior modification techniques." (Zarling, 2013, 28)

Zarling recommends a model of therapy that aims to change the contexts that are causally attached to the content of thoughts or feelings (ibid.). A principle of a more successful model would be avoidance. The role of fear is discussed. ACT sees experiential avoidance as commonly connected to a range of anxiety and other negative states. A person strives to avoid internal

experiences they do not want in an effort to control or modify those internal experiences. They fight their feelings and thoughts. This is fine for short-term coping but not as a longer-term strategy for getting through the challenges of daily life and relationships, for problems are bound to arise. Prolonged thought suppression and thought control are examples (Zarling, 2013, 30).

Substance use is another problematic pattern of behavior that interferes with normal functioning. Problematic behavior blocks more effective adaptive behavior from developing. Acceptance and redirected values can be implemented to face the troublesome inner experiences and set behavior on value-based action. These two processes have been clinically tested and shown to be effective.

Zarling came up with a functional perspective of partner aggression to provide a framework so that processes in partner aggression can be pinpointed and joined with therapeutic change processes (2013, 36). This offers practical outcomes.

Her model contrasts with feminist perspectives that understand aggression as an effort to overpower women, and it contrasts with CBT approaches that understand aggression as a direct result of anger (Zarling, 2013, 37). Instead, ACT perceives aggression as an especially efficient strategy for avoiding unwanted emotions. Zarling's model sees aggression being triggered by an emotional response and ideas due to an "evocative interpersonal conflict" and a learning history (ibid.).

The aggressor retains fear or sensitivity to the inner experience urging him or her to avoid the inner experience. This arousal may be more intense on the part of individuals who commit partner aggression, and such individuals may have less tolerance and skill with social interactions (Zarling 2013, 41 and 42). This is the context for engaging in aggression, which can momentarily distract him or her or reduce the psychological process. Success, albeit brief, in averting the unwanted inner experience reinforces the desire to be aggressive.

Zarling depicts this process that produces partner aggression in this fashion (2013, 38):

STIMULUS (interpersonal conflict) >> INTERNAL EXPERIENCE >> AGGRESSION >> RELIEF

ACT's objective is to undermine the emotional response (Zarling 2013, 46). By decreasing the need to control the innermost experiences, aggressive behavior can be reduced (ibid.). The subject comes to see and verbalize the effects of the strategy of aggression, recognizing his or her own avoidance and control tactics. The therapist teaches more adaptive responses, so that the person unlearns the rigid rules of avoidance of that former strategy. The therapist redirects his or her behavior towards value-oriented goals. The person discusses and explores his or her priority values to construct a new direction. Work on values is paramount in the population of perpetrators of partner aggression.

Regarding mindfulness, several CBT approaches employ it as a therapeutic intervention. Hershfield defines it as a range of "specific techniques for challenging distorted thought processes" which lead to compulsions (The OCD Stories, 2016). It is used as an enhancement tool to cognitively reframe their experiences in a healthy way. It can also help one to be in the presence of an uncomfortable thought. In Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP), mindfulness is coupled with exposure for response prevention.

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CHAPTER 8: HOW TO STOP INTRUSIVE AND OBSESSIVE THOUGHTS



Every sufferer of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder battles a severe form of intrusive thoughts. It leads to the sufferer having a negative evaluation of thoughts. This is basically a person thinking that something is wrong with them for having such intrusive thoughts. People with OCD get extremely distressed about intrusive thoughts, and in their bid to get rid of these thoughts, they fall into an even worse state.

The most recommended treatments for Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) are Cognitive Behavioral Therapies (CBT), and ACT is one of them. According to *Medline Plus Medical Dictionary*, the main symptoms of OCD are unwanted compulsive thoughts, sensations, emotions, concepts, and behaviors. Sensations are obsessions for individuals experiencing OCD.

It’s perfectly normal to check that your door is locked occasionally. However, if you suffer from an obsessive personality, you will tirelessly keep checking to see that the door is really shut. Obsessive thoughts and compulsive actions tend to overwhelm a person to the point that they alter their normal living patterns. The person becomes helpless against these thoughts.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is characterized by uncontainable thoughts and ritualized, recurring behaviors that you are forced to perform. A sufferer of OCD considers their thoughts and behaviors irrational, but still, they are not in a position to resist these repetitive patterns.

The following are the categories of sufferers of OCD:

- *Washers:* they are afraid of contaminating germs. They have a cleaning compulsion.

- *Checkers:* they recurrently check things related to danger or harm.
- *Doubters and sinners*: they are afraid that if everything isn't carried out in a perfect manner, then something terrible will go down.
- *Counters and arrangers:* they have obsessions centered on order and symmetry.
- *Hoarders:* they are scared of throwing anything in their possession away for fear of something terrible happening.

No matter how compulsive the symptoms of your disorder appear, there are numerous techniques of overcoming your condition. The first step is to get rid of the behaviors that arouse your obsessions.

Don't Shun Your Fears

Shunning your fears might seem like a smart move, but the more you run away from your fears, the more you will boost the recurrence of your obsessive patterns and deepen your fears. If you want to get rid of your triggers, learn to endure them for as long as you possibly can. Expose yourself to your OCD triggers and then suppress your urge to perform a ritual. This can be quite challenging if you're not mentally prepared, but you can adjust the intensity of your ritual. The more you expose yourself to your OCD triggers, the lesser your anxiety will become, and ultimately, you will be in a position to take control of your thoughts.

Anticipate OCD Urges

Become aware of situations that trigger your OCD, and take care of them. For instance, if you have an obsession with checking whether the doors are locked, the next time you are locking the door, don't do it just casually and walk away. Carefully lock the door and check to see that it is indeed locked. Don't be in a hurry. When you walk off, you are less likely to battle a compulsion to check the door because you know too well that you ascertained that the door was locked. With your power of imagination, create a vivid image in your mind, depicting the locked door or the shut drapes, and label the image, "The door is locked." Every time you acquire a compulsion to check on the door or the drapes, you can simply flash the

image through your mind, and rightly tag that thought as merely “an obsessive thought.”

Refocus Your Attention

Every time you experience an OCD compulsion, don’t dwell on it but focus on something else instead. You could work out, go for a jog, read a book, watch a movie, catch up with a friend or listen to music. The idea is to eliminate your OCD compulsion by introducing a new line of thought. When you refocus your attention for at least fifteen minutes, you effectively delay your response to the compulsive thought. When you’re done refocusing your thoughts to something else, check up on the original thought, and you will find that the urge will either be feeble or entirely absent.

Write Down Your Compulsive Thoughts

Every person experiences troubling thoughts from time to time. However, people with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder are stuck in a vortex of compulsion-inducing thoughts. These thoughts keep playing through their mind over and again, up until they indulge in the ritual. Write down these thoughts as they happen. Using a pen and paper or your favorite gadget, write down any obsessive thought that passes through your mind.

Create an OCD Worry Time

Instead of fighting away your compulsions and thoughts, just reschedule them. During the day, you can have two sessions dedicated to worrying. But you want to have these sessions at a time when you’re not vulnerable to anxiety. When you experience compulsive thoughts outside of worrying time, just write the thoughts down, so that you can think about them during the worrying session.

Create a Recording of Your OCD Obsessions

Record your obsessive thoughts. Focus on a specific obsession and tape it into your gadget. Ensure that you capture their nature extremely well. Then watch or listen over and over to yourself explaining these obsessive thoughts. When you continuously confront your worries and obsessions, you become less affected by them.

Avoid Alcohol and Nicotine

Though alcohol reduces anxiety and worry, the effects last for only a short moment. As the alcohol wears off, anxiety becomes much more pronounced. Cigarettes also tend to increase anxiety. When you indulge in these vices, you will be throwing yourself into a bottomless pit of negative thought cycles. It is better to face your OCD with a sober mind.

Hang Out with Your Friends and Family More

Obsessive thoughts can plague your life to the point of isolation. But don’t let this happen. When you are isolated, the effects of OCD get full blown. Focus on spending time with your loved ones to be more grounded.

Join a Support Group

One of the advantages of living in the modern era is the fact that people who share a common problem are empowered to come together so that they might help one another. Support groups are critical because through sharing and learning from others, you become more empowered to overcome your obsessive compulsions.

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CHAPTER 9: THE ROOT CAUSE OF ADDICTION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE



ACT is especially relevant for treating addiction because it addresses both the underlying issues and the behaviors related to addiction.

Although people with addictions may be acutely aware of their urges and sensations in the present, they may be unaware of the consequences in interpersonal interactions and the potential for punishment and threats of violence that go along with addiction behaviors. By connecting with the present, one's flexibility of attention is enhanced.

Should a client with addiction be over-identifying with their role as an addict and unable to perceive behavioral options contradicting that role, then self-as-content may be operational. The therapist's focus is on psychological inflexibility. In addition, if the client continues their awareness of thoughts, feelings, cravings, etc., the self-as-process could be an appropriate aspect of the treatment. The therapist would then implement mindfulness techniques. Finally, a self-as-context would be applied to clients who are overly channeling their energy inward. The therapy shifts the process to the act of observing oneself so that he or she is better able to see things from the perspective of other people. This therapeutic process also helps to move through looking to the past, the present, and future so that the client might remember what life was like before addiction.

ACT also addresses experiential avoidance. As an abundance of clinical research proves, substance use is an "extremely effective" tactic of experiential avoidance. Someone might start out using recreationally or socially, to have usage become habitual for the purpose of avoidance. Part of the reward is the temporary relief from painful or worrisome inner experience. Patients learn to acknowledge and accept their innermost experiences through ACT.

From the perspective of ACT, fusion to problematic ideas results in rigid belief in the content of these thoughts, even though these thoughts may propel unwanted or problem behaviors. As for an addict, such a belief might be that drugs are necessary, for example. ACT tries to have the client defuse those thoughts. The person comes to separate from those thoughts and change his or her connection to them.

The ACT client also retunes and reorganizes his or her own values. Bad feelings and thoughts may prevent the substance abuser from living up to their sense of family values. They might seek to avoid family in order to avoid guilt or shame, etc. As another example, a mother might self-identify as a bad parent, and this thought restricts her interaction with her children. With ACT, however, people choose and adjust their set of values and learn to live up to them.

The sixth process of ACT is committed action. An addict might make abstinence part of their plan. The therapist would coach him or her to scrutinize how sobriety is connected to his or her chosen values. The therapist would assist the person in defining value-based actions to strengthen the commitment to abstain.

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CHAPTER 10: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU STOP SMOKING?



In 2015, *BP Magazine* wrote about how ACT can work to get individuals to stop smoking (tobacco). It referred to a new study that examined the effects of ACT for treating Bipolar Disorder customers to get them to quit smoking. The article provided some background data: Persons with Bipolar Disorder are two or three times more likely to smoke, yet half as likely to leave as persons in the universal population.

The scheme registered persons with slight bipolar signs who smoked. One collection of these persons sported nicotine coverings while getting ten ACT sessions over the phone during a 30-day period. Another group had face-to-face meetings. By the close of the month, 30 percent of members who had experienced therapy in person testified they had not smoked for seven days. Only 17 percent of those who had completed therapy via phone calls were no longer smoking. In addition, the receivers of the phone call therapy meetings did not follow to the nicotine patch treatment at all. In contrast, 62 percent of the group who went through in-person meetings kept using the patch. Fifty-five percent of both groups said they had started tolerating their cigarette cravings.

E. Gifford et al. showed a pilot development applying a “hypothetically resultant model of acceptance-based treatment procedure to smoking end” and compared it with a medical necessity model of pharmaceutical treatment (2004). They detected 76 members with a nicotine addiction. They exposed half to a Nicotine Replacement Treatment (NRT) and the other half to a “smoking absorbed version of ACT.” (2004, 689) Females totaled 59 percent of these subjects and males 41 percent. The subjects were of diverse cultural backgrounds. Over half had post-secondary education, and 39 percent had incomes beyond $29,999. All the members smoked an

average of 21.4 cigarettes a day and said they had struggled to leave for at least one whole day four times in the past two years.

Consequences were superlative for the last group, as understood at the one-year follow-up study.

Conduct therapy to treat smoking was used during the 1960s and 70s, during which time numerous technologies aiming at helping people quit smoking end sprung up (Gifford et al. 2004, 690). The growth of behavioral therapy tapered off, and a wide variety of methods was practiced going onward. They have not been so operative, write Gifford and company, because success would need the understanding of the procedure's primary for the indications. Missing is the hypothesis of the bond between evasion and maladaptive policies for managing.

This Gifford et al. study is founded on a contextual reasoning and behavior philosophy. This model undertakes that smokers are skilled in replying contrarily in the existence of problematic inside experience. It struggles to improve acceptance skills, alleviate evasion, and enlarge mental and behavior flexibility.

With the objective of nurturing self-control, Gifford and company draft out the four mechanisms of the healing model used for this learning:

1. A relational setting
2. Intellectual, emotional and physical self-discrimination skills to get the customer to point out experience features that have brought about bad conduct
3. Directed contact to the undesirable individual experience with deterrence of undesired answers
4. Productive behavior initiation challenging unwelcome individual experiences

The learning likened this method with Nicotine Replacement Treatment (NRT), which offers another method of beating nicotine addiction that hypothetically dismisses withdrawal indications normally understood when persons try to quit smoking nicotine (ibid., 690). The practical procedure model, on the other hand, is proposed to address the customer's worries of extraction and other incentives that trigger evasion behavior. By lessening

practical evasion, litheness is amplified to let the customer to select a diverse pathway.

The NRT group received consideration from a specialized therapist and a psychotherapy occupant, with the former on call 24-hours a day during the treatment period. All these members got nicotine patches and were told not to smoke while wearing the patch, and they joined a 1.5-hour informative meeting, which comprised a 30-minute Q & A period. Everyone went to the clinic once a week to substitute used patches with new ones.

The ACT group saw a counsellor seven times for individual meetings lasting 50 minutes each and seven group meetings of 90 minutes each for seven weeks. They had an exhaustive experimental training program to help the patients notice their inner prompts and agree to take what they could not alter, but still modify other actions, opinions, and feelings. They practiced some helpful activities.

The ACT etiquette highlighted the following:

1. Inner versus outside causes
2. Problems with control energies
3. Standards, goals, and blocks
4. Acceptance and preparedness
5. Mindfulness skills
6. Advanced contact – Subjects experienced progressively severe withdrawl symptoms and hostile internal experiences.
7. Planned smoking – Time intervals grew between the smoking-inducing stimuli and the smoking replies; the late reply permitted the individual to try identifying and replying in a novel way to remove internal prompts after the treatment meetings.
8. Dispersion skills
9. Behavior initiation and obligation

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CHAPTER 11: CHRONIC PAIN RELIEF



Aching is a communication from the body to the intellectual cortex, a signal to get the brain to find liberation. This indication becomes worthless if the hurting never gets fixed (Tolman, n.d.). Enduring pain is pain continuously felt for more than three months. It is a disorder suffered by seven percent of Americans in 2010 and investigated at length (ibid.).

The basis of the pain is frequently bodily. Occasionally, however, the pain rises out of emotive, biochemical, nervous, or ecological aspects that the intellectual cortex misjudges. Such mistakes may lead to miserable and disheartening long-lasting pain, which leads to a mysterious longer-term pain experience (Tolman, n.d., 1).

Tolman states that Acceptance and Commitment therapists employ cerebral dispersion methods to get a viewpoint on the supposed pain (ibid). ACT understands the patients' fight against such opinions, which can get worse in the experience of pain. Hard work to sidestep negative thoughts can intensifying the bad experience. ACT encourages acceptance of the bothersome thoughts and leads a person to take value-oriented deeds to regain fulfillment and efficiency in everyday life. He or she comes to agree to take the thought of pain but re-evaluates it so that it turns out to be less of an interruption, disbursing more consideration to standards and goals. By opening up to the disturbing or irritating thought, emotional elasticity is learned, so the individual can change his or her conduct and feelings relative to that thought.

Tolman describes acceptance as the "capacity to become an impartial onlooker of thoughts with the aptitude to admit, but not control, thoughts" (ibid.). The concentration is transferred, though thoughts such as "It hurts too much to move today," remain in the background.

Pain investigators have recognized the probability for ACT to dismiss long-lasting agony because of its method that does not intend to hit or eliminate the indicators. Long-lasting pain patients describe that the more they attempt to challenge the thought of pain, the worse the experience of pain turns out to be. Through ACT, the influence of a bad (pain-related) thought is debilitated, and the person functions better because of a new emphasis on standards and goals to help them get on with life.

In ACT, values calculation is done to discover out what the individual values more in life. Tolman (ibid.,1) offers the case of a subject who is incapacitated by long-lasting pain but is ready to try to devote additional time with grandchildren. Positioning his concentration to the goal of being with the children more and highlighting the worth of sighting them, the customer can decrease the effect of the thought of tenacious pain.

Tolman reports that cross-sectional training discloses the connection between acceptance and the understanding of long-lasting pain. Low acceptance leads to superior pain, while more acceptance decreases the feeling of pain. In some studies, the analysis of a patient’s diary discloses this reality. Also, studies show that helpful thought activities can expand the mood and boldness of patients.

Such studies found that experimental evasion is extremely connected to pain evasion. Treatment intended to change a person’s pain management approach, and helping them take up a values-based policy, can work.

Learning the connotation between sleeplessness and long-lasting pain, some scholars revealed that less insomnia was suffered by patients with advanced mental suppleness (ibid.) However, other studies specified a struggle to acceptance if there is the possibility of additional disastrous the penalties, specifically in cases of mental disorders associated to long-lasting pain. All the same, a 2012 study of some Iranian women established they found liberation from continuing headaches after ACT. Likewise, study of groups of youths and elders have revealed that ACT can improve the experience of long-lasting pain (ibid.).

L. M. McCracken uses ACT in treatments for long-lasting pain. He uses the scheme of leading the customer to perceive (be aware of) the disturbing thought, conduct or sensation, comprehend its message, take it as correct, and connect to it in the present-day (n.d., slide 16). He sketches the mental

series of suffering and distress, rigidity, avoidance, and poor operation with continuous pain (slide 17).

McCracken and Vowles (2008, cited in McCracken, n.d., slide 21) measured the optimistic effects of acceptance that was values-based in treating continuing pain. More than 75 percent of their study group confirmed positive results.

They directed a three-year follow-up study in Bath, calculating information that comprised of medical visits, illness effect outlines, and a pain nervousness signs scale (ibid., slide 24). Twenty-eight persons partook in ten separate meetings each. The 14 student psychotherapists positioned in this study project each treated two patients, using CBT with one and ACT with the other (ibid., slide 25). That is to say that 14 of the 28 members received ACT and 14 received CBT. Each student therapist had the same exercise in ACT and CBT before opening the project's treatment sessions. This study found that acceptance "seemed to be the most vital procedure to result in both groups" (ibid., slide 30).

Methods for mental treatment for long-lasting pain comprise of mental litheness and acceptance of sorrow more frequently (ibid., slide 38). These methods teach patients to face their uneasiness and act with consciousness and flexibility. Psychotherapists aim to be thoughtful to persons undergoing pain.

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CHAPTER 12: SIMPLE MINDFULNESS EXERCISES IN EVERYDAY LIFE



Mindfulness Techniques in Therapy Sessions

Mindfulness is a key element of ACT. Mindfulness methods must be started early in the therapy program, and which methods work best in each circumstance must be determined by both the client and the therapist, say Hayes and Lillis (2012, 97). Just having a customer close his or her eyes is not sufficient. Exercises to be tried at home can be allocated, too.

Using mindfulness exercises to start each meeting could be helpful (Hayes and Lillis, 98). Get the customer to notice how it feels to be sitting there in that room. Say, “Close your eyes, plant your feet on the floor and see” (ibid.). Starting a meeting this way may bring about a more attentive 50-minute session of therapy.

Walking for mindfulness can be helpful, say Hayes and Lillis (ibid.). The therapist could walk with the customer or ask the customer to go for mindfulness walks. Emphasize on one part of the environment for one or two minutes at a time.

As the mindfulness exercises are going on, the therapist might suggest that the customer envisages putting thoughts, feelings, and sensations into boxes (ibid.).

Without more advanced mindfulness, remark Luoma, Hayes, and Walser (2017, 137), patients find it more difficult to connect to the self without self-assessment (for example, using evaluative language such as “I’m lonely” or “I’m short). One’s internal language can weed out “the distinction between self as knower and self as known” (ibid.). Connecting with the current moment can help the individual see himself or herself as a self-in-process that is growing and ever-flowing.

Organized mindfulness exercises allow an individual to comprehend their self-as-process in a healthier way. One closed-eyes exercise is Floating Leaves on a Moving Stream (ibid.,). Subjects see themselves in a bending position at the edge of a stream and notice the leaves floating along it. The patient is supposed to visualize putting each thought on each floating leaf. If they experiences one of the thoughts dragging them away, he or she forces themselves to return to the chore of putting thoughts on leaves. The therapist asks if the customer's mind appears to be wandering along the stream. This exercise can be done using other images, such as cars on a road driving past.

An alternative to such an exercise is imaging the clouds detached in the sky (Luoma, Hayes and Walser, 2012, 138). The patient envisions they are lying on a green field watching to the atmosphere. They visualizes that his or her experience is devoted to one of the clouds as a word or image. Next, the therapist appeals that the patient imagines assigning each thought to a cloud. If the mind drifts, the customer should jerk his or her devotion back to the clouds.

After each exercise, discussion of the experience can be helpful.

Meditation

Meditation can be helpful. Customers might do mindfulness meditation at home. There are satisfactory CDs, books, and network pages offering a number of different meditation styles.

Hershfield (*The OCD Stories*, 2016) defines meditation as directing devotion to some broadcaster and noticing when you drift, then readdressing your mind.

Mindfulness and meditation exercises should be cautiously standardized for each patient. For example, an individual with a difficult childhood might profit more from eyes-open exercises, since closing their eyes might lead to images of their past ordeals.

As the treatment improves mental flexibility, mediation becomes even more effective.

Hershfield writes that just ten minutes of meditation every day is all it takes to function well (ibid.). Make it part of your everyday routine. It is superlative when employed in tandem with other mindfulness methods. “Stop and see,” see the road on which you’re traveling. Anticipate a song or the taste of food. You can do mindfulness actions anyplace, anytime. This way you can develop mastery of your own attention and life, remarks Hershfield (ibid.). You can control your actions and responses through mindfulness, particularly when it comes to anger management.

Numerous Western people who practice meditation may assign a faith or divine trust to it. In fact, complains Hayes (The OCD Stories), they may see it used only in that method. They may have scorn for those who are only involved in meditation as a life skill and maintain that it can only be used properly if it is part of a rule or routine rotating around spirituality or religious beliefs. However, Hayes believes is not necessary to take on a whole belief system in order to practice meditation for good health.

Used in healing, meditation is a nonspiritual life skill. It is not the method of meditation that is important, says Hayes. Meditation is applied to convey more better honesty, flexibility, and standards (*The OCD Stories*, n.d.). It can help the patient become who they wish to be.

Mindfulness Exercises for Anxiety Reduction and Quietness in Everyday Life

Pocket Mindfulness is a website that offers tips for practicing mindfulness. They printed six such guidelines in a website article (2017). Remaining mindful is particularly vital for those of us leading chaotic lives.

It may be tough to find time to rest and get in touch with our inner selves, but it is unconditionally essential. Our welfare needs it. We must stop and take the time to “nurture intellectual openness and attain an optimistic mind-body stability,” according to *Pocket Mindfulness*. Here are the suggested mindfulness events to squeeze into your day:

1. **Breathing**

In six-second sequences, breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth, letting the air drift over the whole body. While breathing, let go of all opinions. Also, watch your breath and be completely conscious of it as the air feeds your body with life. Let your attention travel through the body and back out through the mouth and nose, becoming aware of the energy around you.

2. **Observation**

Connect with the beauty of the natural atmosphere by singling out one ordinary item in your immediate neighborhood and watch it for one to two minutes. Do nothing but notice it. Relax. Perceive as if you have never noticed it before and discover each part and feature. Connect with this item and its life energy.

3. **Awareness**

Contemplate a modest and apparently insignificant duty that you do every day, such as opening a door. Start this duty, observing all the minutiae of your movements and feelings. If opening a door, for example, touch the handle with your hand, noticing how you feel and where the entranceway will lead. Notice thoughts that arise while performing this modest deed.

Tag any undesirable thought and let go of it. You may also choose to reflect on your standards as you do repetitive happenings. For instance, appreciate food when you smell it. Contemplate the chance to share food with family and friends, too.

Whatever you do, counsels *Pocket Mindfulness*, select a “touch point” that is eloquent today instead of carrying on unconsciously, on autopilot. This determines consciousness and adds worth to your day-to-day activities.

4. Listening

It is the purpose of this exercise to pay attention to the present and alleviate the impacts of your previous experiences and presumptions. Focus on the present to lessen the interferences of negative memories and any related nervousness or pain.

Select a piece of music you have never listened to. Try to listen from a unbiased viewpoint. Using earphones, close your eyes. Do not just the genre, title, or artists' name. Instead of making judgements, just "climb inside the track and dance between the sound," suggests *Pocket Mindfulness.*

Pay attention to the changing aspects of the music, unravelling and examining each kind of sound. If there are lyrics, reflect on the timbre, array, and tones of each voice. Listen intentionally and intensely, merging your mind with the sound. Let judgement fall away and just listen.

5. Immersion

This is a serenity growth exercise. Release the power of the everyday errands and goals that tug at you. Be gratified in the moment. Select one action, such as doing housework, and focus on each detail of it. See it as a brand-new experience and perceive everything.

Become one with the action, sensation and gestures. See the newness in familiar tasks. Be aware of every movement to immerse yourself in the activity and align yourself with the repetitive – mentally, bodily, and psychologically.

6. Appreciation

Notice five things in your day that you frequently under-appreciate – objects or individuals. Give appreciation to the ordinary, the small yet significant things that make up our being. This might be others around you,

or objects such as water taps and electrical cables, plants, pavements, and vans.

Descriptions are inherent to the therapist-client interactions during meetings. They help customers see and comprehend their own inner workings. Here are some:

7. The Sailing Boat Comparison

You are the pilot of a ship. Water flapping onto the deck irregularly wets your feet. There is a pail for discharging the undesired water from inside the boat. It is necessary for you to make good use of it and bail out the liquid.

On a day without clouds and storm, a large wave unexpectedly crashes onto the boat. It is time to begin bailing once again. It is a normal and routine action that is part of handling a boat while sailing. You do the work serenely and mindfully, but somehow stiffness builds, and you start to feel insecure. Your motions become panicky, your heart races and you feel anxious, fearing what may happen if the water is not emptied very soon.

You get so caught up in your suffering that you lose touch with the handling and course of your boat. What is it doing and where is it going now? How long has it been wandering? Perhaps you have been bailing, not navigating. You have lost control of the vessel.

Turn your attention to the bucket. You notice that it is really a filter, full of holes. What can you do now?

Normally, you would be in a place to correct the boat’s pathway after the bailing is completed, yet your tool is unsuitable. It cannot do its job. You are stressed like a hamster on a wheel, whipping your arms around, slouching and intensifying your actions, again and again. All this energy could be better managed vanished if your tool was an actual bucket.

With this comparison, the key thing to ask yourself is this: Which condition do you prefer – being in a boat with little water that is travelling in the wrong direction? Or being water-logged but travelling in the direction you wish? By means of the right tools, you can both go in the right direction and manage the water as it arrives.

This symbolism can help envision what life activities may or not be working for a customer. Some problem-solving tools may be more beneficial than others, like the bucket and filter. Peoples may excitedly avoid a condition of uneasiness, such as having wet feet only to cause greater problems. By acquiring a different viewpoint, you may appreciate that having wet feet is not such a big deal after all.

8. **The Mind Bully**

The symbol of the Mind Bully is proposed for work with persons fighting annoyance, nervousness, or despair.

The Mind Bully, extremely large and influential, signifies a problem. You are holding a rope across a deep pit, with the Mind Bully holding the other end. The Mind Bully hopes to pull you into the gulf.

However, the Mind Bully can only hurt you if you believe what it says. Dragging on the rope, you listen and pay attention to the vocal sound of the monster. Paying attention to the monster means you trust in its influence. Giving them energy is really what is nourishing them.

Reflect on what would occur were you to abandon the duty and just let the rope drop. What would happen to the Mind Bully?

It would still be there in front of you. It would still be roaring horrifying things, being mean and aggressive to you. But unlike when you seized the rope, it would not be able to pull you near the pit any longer. If we do not feed the monster, the less magnificent and loud it appears.

We can disempower a matter, such as nervousness or despair if we can change our attention. We do have to notice and recognize it, but we can unfasten ourselves from it and trust in it less. Mindfulness exercises can help you rapidly alter your mind from opinions about despair or anxiety and keep you on track for what you want to achieve.

9. **The Quicksand Metaphor**

What is quicksand? A wet cover of moveable sand that is unable to carry much weight. You sink if you step into quicksand; you cannot get a secure foothold on the ground.

Fighting quicksand only drags you down farther and farther. The degree of the descent hastens when you struggle. When you try to climb out, it is useless, for your stepladders will only take you down more.

How do individuals extract themselves from quicksand? They are able to spread their body weight over a big patch. Lie down, tolerating the fix you are in as an alternative to rebelling against the condition. The quicksand is the only victor in a fight. It may appear irrational, but it is true.

The moral is that it is better to accept your condition and stop fighting its presence. That is the only method to set the stage for an escape.

Pain and grief can have the result of deceiving us, just as quicksand does. It is natural to fight against unfriendly internal knowledge, but anybody who does so only struggles, taking themselves down further and further in life.

To agree to take sorrow is to prepare to stop sorrow. It allows us to put together a proper plan of action founded on that data. Understanding that agony is part of life is hard. But a person can experience sorrow and come through it tougher, more unbroken.

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CHAPTER 13: THE MOST ACCURATE WAYS TO MEASURE YOUR WEIGHT LOSS PROGRESS

According to Lillis and Kendra (2014), outdated social weight loss treatments are not practical for weight loss upkeep or long-term weight loss. They propose that ACT may be more effective in the long term. ACT may be supplementary to or joined with other systems of treatment for weight loss. More investigations must take place to confirm this belief.

Numerous weight loss programs teach a schedule of fasting, exercise, and social therapy. Over six-month periods, such programs are proven to increase weight loss by an average of eight to ten percent (Lillis and Kendra, 2014, 1). However, the members of such programs usually regain weight after treatment, registering a one-third gain within the first year, and 100 percent plus in five years (ibid.). As much as 30 percent do not complete those programs. This low degree of achievement over the long term means that more effective treatment must be found.

Binge eating, mental distress, feeling insufficient, and a self-imposed idea of body image, as well as value of life, look as if to be the forecasters of weight loss program erosion (ibid.). Weight gain risk determinants are “psycho-social stressors, disinhibition, reaction or stress eating, despair and moods of food-related deficiency,” assert Lillis and Kendra.

Mindfulness and meditation methods may move treatments for weight loss frontward. Such methods aim to change the individual’s relationship to the invasive or painful internal experiences.

Lillis and Kendra oppose the standard method to talking about obesity: standard behavioral treatment (SBT), which is based on learning theory (ibid.). From the viewpoint of learning theory, altering the setting in which

problem signs happen can challenge the maladaptive approaches. This technique depends on persons monitoring themselves and background and their own goals. Monitoring the factors that lead to weight gain, such as meal servings and accessibility of exercise action, also feature in SBT. As well, cognitive interventions intend to enable one to single out distinctive intellectual and emotive prompts from which overwhelming food and dormancy are evident. This way, the client is directed to test their maladaptive thoughts and favor their weight loss strategies and goals. Methods include thought-ending and anxiety decrease.

Lillis and Kendra liken SBT to ACT (ibid.). SBT is all about skills. Therapeutic teaching can be completed at home, or in group meetings. For instance, once a caloric goal is set in proportion to the subject's real weight, calorie consumption and calorie burning activities are deliberated. Thus, the skills to grow new methods of conduct, such as everyday weight monitoring at home, are imparted.

While ACT was born out of the social alteration movement, its expectations about learned deeds that play into obesity differ from those of SBT, etc. Rooted in Relational Frame Theory (RFT) that undertakes the role of ordinary and usual language in founding damaging conduct designs, ACT positions its work and viewpoint on the concept that dialectal licenses allow mental pain to happen. The ideas of an event of scorn, for instance, which signified in retention by words are causes of agony in themselves.

The awareness of mockery turns out to be as influential an intoxicant of pain as the actual occurrence of mockery. As language serves to understand all, an individual may implement it randomly and activate emotive pain in reply to everything. For instance, just treading on a weight scale can activate an unfriendly internal experience.

ACT also undertakes that persons generally try to evade pain. The moods and opinions about pain can develop into experiences to be dodged. For example, the view of swimming may cause nervousness, terror of being mediated, feeling ugly and opening oneself up to self-criticism. So, swimming is evaded in order to avoid that nervousness, terror, and negative self-imaging. Experimental evasion is key to numerous psychological and behavior wellbeing problems, as well as overweightness. A person's efforts to evade an undesirable inner experience may involve anxiety eating to

alleviate the bad moods, which causes more weight gain and more bad sensations. Disgrace around overeating can cultivate and develop a target of maladaptive individual approaches of evasion.

ACT uses six procedures to make the customer get their dislikes and bad spirits, actions, and thoughts into view, highlighting the importance of standards and values-based goals that lead to improved behavior. The objective of ACT is a more productive everyday life, rather than a focus on weight loss or weight gain stoppage. Healthy living is well-defined by standards, such as engaging in family life, passing a stage of education, getting and keeping a decent job, etc.

The client focus less on food and weight by concentrating more on things such as standards and goals. It also turns things around by helping to get the client to approve a new viewpoint. For example, the client is requested to contemplate what the consequences of not working out or not changing their diet would be, so that they are more conscious of the battle with their own standards and goals in life. Therefore, the connection with moods, thoughts, and deeds around eating emphasize alteration, not the bad eating ways or disregard of exercise.

Some studies of ACT have revealed that it can offer success with increases self-esteem as a treatment for weight loss and maintenance.

Success may also be reached by therapy, proposes Lillis and Kendra (2014). Such therapy could comprise of honesty, mindfulness exercises, and values work, adding to detailed activities such as dieting and exercise. For one item, the everyday caloric quota, which may seem impractical and even unbearable to numerous overweight clients, can be viewed in a diverse, more optimistic light. Likewise, the rewards that may come from altering conduct in line with standards, such as boosting self-respect, an improved self-image, and optimistic social collaboration, can inspire a client. Studies supporting the combining of approaches have been developing since the start of the new era, state Lillis and Kendra.

They describe a planned model merging SBT and ACT. However, one struggle with this is the incompatible all-embracing goals of each method. Similarly, shared weight loss activites, such as observing the scales each day, can strengthen bad individual experiences. Consequently, weight loss methods (eating and exercise regimes) must be a part of a joint program.

The emphasis on altering food desires is an additional problem for a joint program. Nervousness positioned around monitoring past desires can replicate problematic actions, opinions, and moods. Even a regime of grocery shopping may be hard in the context of ACT and its expectations. Additionally, teaching and conversations would have to be retooled to fit into ACT approaches.

Lillis and Kendra recommend trying several programs and monitoring results to come up with the best treatment for losing weight.

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CHAPTER 14: IMPROVE THE SELF - MANAGEMENT OF DIABETES



In a scientific paper, Laura Melton (2016, 211-213) defines the progression of ACT for diabetic individuals. Its principle is that diabetes patients require more than therapeutic treatment, for they have an emotional load to tolerate as well.

This paper outlines the following:

1. Competence and supply administration
2. The program’s group nature
3. Reduction of stigma and enlarged contribution.
4. Time commitment of members.

The beneficial model combined the six procedures of ACT. Since not all subjects were acquainted with ACT at the start of the treatment program, short outlines of each of these mechanisms were provided in the first meeting. The effort on each of the six procedures was dispersed over four workshops of this program.

Meeting one focused on morals and the current moment. The second on intellectual dispersion and reception, starting with an exercise of mindfulness. The third spoke of self-as-context and receipt. In each meeting, the preceding effort was studied, plus exercises and descriptions. Likewise, the submission of ACT to diabetes was clarified. Members finished the workshops by classifying their standards and doing a dedicated action exercise.

This investigational program verified that ACT might be beneficial, as long as members were present throughout the program. Very few were present at all the meetings.

Jennifer Gregg, Steven Hayes, and Glenn Callaghan wrote a guide for treating diabetes with ACT which was uploaded on the San Jose State University website. They clarify their aim for making the guide: Diabetes patients require more than schooling; they require approaches to existing with diabetes. They state the two resolutions:

- Treatment method. This uses moods, schooling and thought reception to distinguish between existing zones that are in an individual's control and the zones that aren't.
- Conveyance in a diversity of ways. This method and treatment will suit the requirements of a healthcare capacity.

There can be numerous undesirable moods, opinions, and actions associated with the existence of diabetes. To some customers, the news that they have this disease is devastating. Similarly, there are some characteristics of the involvement that lead to anxiety and worry, such as the essential routine deviations. Gregg, Hayes, and Callaghan list the distinctive routine variations that diabetes patients must tolerate:

1. Watch the food eaten. They must eat low cholesterol, calories, sugar, protein, sodium, and carbohydrates.
2. Checking the levels of blood glucose every day to know the effects of everyday actions such as exercise.
3. Exercise regularly to successively arouse the aptitude of the body to conceal and use insulin.

The difficulties of obesity, sedentary habits, and choosing sweet food make it particularly hard for individuals with full, type 2 diabetes to manage.

Not only does the person have to stick to a medical command and fundamentally change their diet, but anticipating the difficulty and the existence of diabetes is an additional problem. Obviously, evasion is a potential concern. Seeing that food is a remedy to painful moods and opinions, and that carbohydrate-laden food is observed as a relief, talking evasion is dynamic if an individual with diabetes is going to advance their operation in the existence of diabetes.

There is certainly going to be uneasiness and worries related with having diabetes. As per the ACT viewpoint, an all-inclusive therapeutic treatment was intended to attain improved self-management of patients with diabetes. The primary half of this program talks about education on existing with diabetes and the second aims to exact motivational and reception sections. Five units were prearranged:

Module I: Education and Information

Module II: Food, Diabetes, and Your Health

Module III: Exercise and Diabetes

Module IV: Coping and Stress Management

Module V: Acceptance and Action

Therapy is given in groups with clinicians as group leaders.

The guide offers numerous procedures and skill-building actions: registering and self-assessment forms, facts sheets, notes on mindfulness and other subjects, well-being management instructions such as foot care, values questionnaires, questionnaires to record opinions and emotions and unit plans. The last of the resources is a questionnaire for writing down goals.

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CHAPTER 15: STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES



Mental stress is a type of emotional pain. Nevertheless, slight stress can be healthy and helpful in encouraging a person to get things done, solve problems, enhance motivation and be careful. It helps a person adapt and react to their social and physical environments. This is recognized as positive stress. Conversely, extreme stress can cause mental disorders, strokes, ulcers, heart attacks and other diseases.

Stress may be related to or caused by outside factors but can as well be triggered by internal insights which activate negative emotions and anxiety, ideas and behaviors. Things seem intimidating to people when they lack the confidence to cope and manage.

Disasters, conflicts and huge changes produce severe stress. Such situations include natural disasters, war, failing a crucial exam, witnessing or surviving a severe injury or accident, or ending a relationship. Important life changes such as graduating, moving, marriage, or beginning a new job may also bring about high stress levels.

Another factor on stress is time. When matters continue beyond weeks, months, or years, stress builds up and its effect on the body and the mind becomes apparent. To many people, decision making also brings about stress.

Stress also depends on insight. For example, Person A may enjoy speaking in public whereas Person B doesn’t. One person can be able to handle daily bothers even when they are very annoying while someone else may be stressed over them regularly. There is also a variation in the internal procedures every person uses to avoid or reduce stress.

There are three ways of managing stress-producing conflicts. They are:

- *Approach-approach conflict.* This occurs when someone has to choose between two similarly wanted or valued options (like if you should go to a concert or watch a movie).
- *Avoidance-avoidance conflict.* A situation where one must pick one out of two options which are similarly unwanted choices. (Accepting another loan which has poor terms to be able to pay off the mortgage or the foreclosure of a house).
- *Approach-avoidance conflict.* When someone is obliged to choose a group or an activity which boasts unattractive and attractive features (For example, going to an expensive school, which may require you to borrow funds, but it offers extremely high-quality education and can lead to decent post-grad employment).

Adding to this, most people get stressed while traveling. Travelers can be stressed for unhappy reasons like loss of luggage, delays which lead to time wastage, or simply the stress of being outside one's comfort zone.

Stressors that are ambient are another group of causes. These may include circumstances like pollution, crowds, lighting, noise and someone may not realize that they are getting their stress from such conditions.

Overall mindfulness and acceptance methods can help reduce the negative effects of daily routine, travel stress and ambient stress. For serious stress manifestations, one can apply ACT to deal with them.

Six essential processes are applied in order to uncover stressors. This leads to a development of awareness. The customer views his or her internal processes in which stress awareness is involved.

Someone learns to opens up to receive the thoughts that are negative which describe and feed their stress. Standards are worked on in order to achieve an improved outlook of the conflicts or the annoying factors.

Goals and values put as a priority in order for the thoughts that induce stress to diminish and lose power over the mind and actions of the person. The person learns to function and adapt regardless of feeling stress sometimes. The frequency of stress reduces.

You will likely be aware of most methods of stress reducing. These may include the following:

- Reliable exercise – Putting in place a routine that has at least four or five sessions a week
- Putting in place a support network
- Establishing one's time into a structure, for example a timetable
- Relaxing and visualization images
- Muscle loosening
- Confidence training with good communication
- Expressing and reflecting on your true emotions and thoughts by maintaining a diary
- Programs at the workplace for stress management

Many methods can be applied, especially in regards to stress at the work place (Lockhart, 2018). In the process of facing change, we evaluate and prepare for the advantages of change making so it becomes less scary. Similarly, we may use resources for help if we are stressing because we have less trust in our ability to finish a job. If relationship effects troubles interfere with work, notify the manager of that personal thing and seek counselling.

Likewise, one should look into their physical health problems and take medicine to ease pain and enhance the health of the body and be better able to manage stress. It may be necessary to notify a manager of your conditions. Stress causes at work include poor communication and organizational difficulties.

You should study the situation and take note of potential stressors the workplace has, for example when you are expected to finish tasks without enough information. In this case, you can ask for assistance and clarification right away.

Techniques like these may be used to keep up energy, motivation and health management. They may also be merged in therapeutic programs.

In cases of student and workplace stress, ACT has been applied. Certain work settings encourage more stress than others. Working in situations of life and death like rescue operations, emergency care, seeing trauma or even making some decisions which influence people's lives will justifiably enhanced levels of stress. Examples of high-stress jobs include utility or

industrial safety monitors, social workers, medical practitioners, firefighters and heavy machinery operators.

Below is a summary of an article on stress treatment between social workers with ACT by Brinkborg et al. (2011). They tried a controlled and randomized trial with members from the social work field who suffered from stress and were categorized according to a baseline by researchers. At the baseline, two-thirds of members were shown to have high levels of stress. This study revealed further that ACT was influential in helping reduce levels of stress and increase and burnout. Forty-two percent saw notable change. Results were different for the members who registered with low levels of stress. In conclusion, researchers say that ACT is beneficial for social workers as a short-term intervention.

Grace Bullock (2017) quoted two studies which encourage approaches that are mindfulness-based, aiming at reducing stress at work. Among all types of stress that humans know, job burnout and stress related to work are amongst the ones which mostly affect their physical and mental health. One study includes 30 executives of a huge firm of petroleum jelly who got mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR). Each was given three sessions four weeks apart. With the help of audio recordings, they were to do mindfulness exercises daily. They were also given a workbook by the researchers, and instructions for dealing with stress. Few of these executives put up a group for practice that would meet every day for 30 minutes. As a result of MBSR, the study proved that reducing levels of stress and the general improvement of self-efficacy, health and self-compassion advanced.

Results were determined through blood cortisol level testing, and readings of blood pressure and also reports from those who participated. Blood tests verified that levels of cortisol were lowered as well as diastolic and systolic blood pressure, and they also experienced less physical and mental stress by the time the program ended.

The second study Grace Bullock talks about put together members of staff from two universities in Australia and 15 faculties who for seven weeks received a revised MBSR program. For the first four weeks, this program gave sessions weekly of 60 to 90 minutes and before and after the program,

those who has participated completed questionnaires. Two weeks after the end of the program, five of them were interviewed.

After the seven weeks, the employees informed that there had been enhancement in mindfulness skills including sharp awareness of the present moment and improved focus. They showed improved sleep quality, just like the first study. (Bullock, 2017, no page)

Nevertheless, after the therapy program, few signs of enhanced job satisfaction were realized. Irrespective, the researchers noted that the people who participated reported that they were feeling more relaxed and calmer, had less stress and even the wellbeing at the workplace was much greater. Interviews were also revealing. Interviewees reported having more skills for keeping calm, staying in the given moment, and being able to regulate behavior, thoughts, sensations and feelings and even during situations that created more stress. Some participants also reported that there was enhancement in family relationships and being able to forget about work when the workday ended.

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CHAPTER 16: ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY VERSUS DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY



Dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) is a type of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy that emphasizes collaboration, support of the patient, and the cultivation of skills required to handle charged emotional situations. This treatment was originally tailored for people who struggle with suicidal thoughts, but it came to encompass a broad range of other conditions that involve dysfunctional emotional regulation.

There are two broad categories of dialectical behavior therapy:

- Individual weekly therapy sessions
- Weekly group therapy sessions

The following are some of the essential DBT skills and techniques to master:

Objectiveness effectiveness skills

Describe: This explains your capacity to capture your internal feelings. The patient must find the right words that capture exactly how they feel. DBT awakens a patient to their true feelings. The more a patient can explain what ails them, the more they are likely to receive help.

Express: A patient should be in a position to express their needs and wants. If they have an idea about how to improve their situation, then, by all means, they should express their idea, and ensure that they make the best use of the resources handed down to them.

Assert: DBT therapy teaches patients to wield some power and not seem like victims. Their power can be seen in their assertiveness. Being an assertive person doesn't mean that one is aggressive or boastful; it is merely a way of expressing their needs and standing their ground.

Reinforce: No matter how great your ideas or plans might be, you will always need some form of reinforcement to actualize your plans. Knowing this, a patient should approach every challenge knowing that they will have to reinforce their ideas before they achieve whatever they set out to do.

Mindful: This skill restores a patient's focus to their present moment. Instead of letting their minds wander, pondering the various things they have been engaged in or disengaged from, a patient should learn to have laser focus. This is a very critical element in the struggle against emotional health problems.

Confidence: It is critical to have a high level of self-esteem. Being confident in yourself won't make you capable of moving mountains, but it will equip you with a positive mindset, which is a tremendous advantage. The more confident you are, the more likely you are to draw favorable circumstances to your life and make progress.

Negotiate: DBT empowers a patient to learn of their power. They can challenge the existing order or way of doing things. Thus, a patient should try to negotiate terms, seeking ways that are favorable to them. When they are successful at establishing new terms, while banking on their power of negotiating, it can give their self-esteem a boost.

Relationship Effectiveness Skills

Gentle: DBT teaches a patient to be gentle with their partner. Their partner would be more receptive to them if they took a gentle approach. However, if they are rough and pay no attention to how they handle their partner, then there are going to be a whole lot of problems.

Interested: DBT emphasizes showing interest, and not merely hoping that your partner will understand how you value them. Partners are incredibly sensitive to the little things that are done or not done, and this can mean a huge difference between the success and failure of a relationship.

Validate: The idea that we don't need validation is kind of flawed. The truth is that we are in need of validation from the people we consider important. Our relationship partners are important enough, and their validation means a lot. But then, just as you seek validation from your spouse, you must return the favor, lest it becomes a toxic arrangement.

Self-Respect Effectiveness Skills

Fair: At all times, one must seek to practice fairness. This means you must be fair to others, but more importantly, you must be fair to yourself. Never let others have their way at your expense. If you don't care about yourself, no one else will. Being fair is a step in the right direction.

Apologies: You are going to have unpleasant encounters with people. If you're in the wrong, you must offer an apology, and if you're wronged, you should solicit an apology. A solicited apology is not the best, but it shows that the aggressor has goodwill.

Truthful: Telling the truth is the one thing that you owe yourself and the world alike. It is not a very common thing, but there's no harm to it. Furthermore, it simplifies your life.

When it comes to Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), the goal is to increase psychological flexibility and establish more focus on the present.

The following are some of the principles of ACT:

Acceptance

Each person struggles with their negative thoughts. Their instinctive reaction is to try to suppress these thoughts, but is it worth it? ACT teaches patients to accept their negative thoughts. They have to make room for unpleasant feelings, urges, and sensations. The apparent abundance mindset makes it easier to get rid of the negative things that you have always taken an interest in.

Cognitive Defusion

This entails perceiving thoughts, words, images, and other cognitive activities in a standalone sense. They are to mean the exact thing that they stand for and must not be pieced together to form a bigger idea. It is the opposite of what is known as cognitive fusion, which seeks to “fuse” various cognitions and form a large mental product. For instance, the mere words, “chocolate cake” are enough to have us drooling as they plant the image of the cake in our minds. Patients may use cognitive defusion to not pay great meaning to the images and languages that pop up in their minds.

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CHAPTER 17: ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY VERSUS COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY



All suggested therapies for OCD are kinds of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy or CBT (*Intrusive Thoughts*, n.d., no page). CBTs include Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP), ACT, Cognitive Therapy and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). CBT concentrates on building plans to live well and function well with negative thinking, conduct, and feelings.

ERP and ACT are mainly applicable in treating OCD. The *Intrusive Thoughts* website distinguishes ACT from ERP and other CBTs:

Hershfield (*The OCD Stories*, 2016) uses mindfulness in CBT for patients with OCD. He reports that CBT tests a person's distorted thought processes which lead to coercions. ACT does not test the problem opinions. Rather, it gets a person to change their standards and the significance they allocate to the problem views so that they become less anxiety-ridden and less stimulating to the person.

In treating hostility, Zarling holds that CBT is too restraining mostly because it undertakes that hostility happens partly from skills shortages. Its theoretic foundation is "essentially faulty" as alteration processes are misinterpreted (Zarling, 2013, 21). CBT works on developing actions such as conflict resolution and pressure decrease. Zarling found many studies showings that skills growth did little to attain a decrease in hostile conduct (ibid., 21-22). The client may not have a skills deficit. Also, a skills deficit is perhaps too naïve an idea. Essential skills vary in different settings, after all. For example, someone may be able to adaptively connect but have problems cooperating when the dreaded emotional reply is increasing. CBT may increase the impetus to change conduct.

Also, CBT methods mainly focus on thought constructions that produce violent conduct (ibid., 23). So, they try to alter or remove the problem structures and content. This is an error, from the viewpoint of ACT. The remedy should not concentrate on emotional control. Rather, feelings should be experiential and re-envisioned, recognized but given less position. Lots of studies establish that interior skills activate actions that try to change the conduct. In other words, emotional control may be the cause of the hostility. Self-awareness and value-orientation is a better healing path for treatment of hostility.

Hayes and Lillis explain in detail how ACT stands out (2012, 3-8). They begin by pointing out that struggling with difficulties and sorrow is usual for humans. The field of thinking is inclined to see the mental syndromes (sets and series of symptoms) as reasons for grief. This is an error, assert Hayes and Lillis. Though they are structures of unhappiness, they are not essentially the reasons. There are fundamental causes that yield symptoms and conditions. The indications cannot clarify themselves.

Conditions may earn the label of “diseases.” The indications are signs of a psychiatric disease, viewed as pathology in conservative thinking, Hayes and Lillis remind us. Though, it is infrequent that the disease is established to be the underlying cause. Treatment of the signs does not frequently determination the situation, in physical or psychiatric medicine.

Though ACT is an evidence-based therapy, claim Hayes and Lillis, it tests some parts of clinical thinking. ACT aims to target the main, problem-solving mode of the mind that literal language and reasoning appear to lead toward so easily. From an ACT viewpoint, this style of mind is not the only or the best way to address many human problems. That very fact is inconsistent: people come to rehabilitation because of their problems. Going to therapy itself is a problem-solving approach. And yet ACT is doubtful about the universal applicability of problem resolving. (ibid., 8)

ACT is “an inductive, process-oriented method to understanding human unhappiness and letdowns” (ibid., 6). It undertakes “that a small set of usual and essential emotional procedures can give increase to human sorrow or bounds to human thriving.” (6). The human capacity to resolve difficulties and have many wonderful effects may have “properties that can lead to psychopathology and human restraint” (ibid.).

McCracken (n.d., slide 5) cites an article by Curran et al. (2008) that questions CBT's emphasis on long-term observance to treatment in healing long-lasting pain. Their learning displayed that devotion only affected treatment consequences by three percent. CBT treatment approaches, such as stimulating assumed designs, bore slight results, according to this study. In fact, the patient's sorrow may rise after CBT (slide 11). McCracken cites a paper by Shapiro et al. (2005) that commends a mindfulness and meditation method (ibid.).

Furthermore, claims McCracken (n.d., slide 10), CBT therapists have a habit of talking too much, and engaging too little. They want to be too nice or defensive of patients; they do not cause impulsive behavior in their clients (slide 10).

It is healthier to start from the principle that misery is usual (McCracken, n.d., slide 12). McCracken (slide 14) counsels therapists to address emotional rigidity by means of "a procedure founded in relations of language and understanding with straight involvements that produces an incapability to keep it up in or alter an action design in the facility of long-term goals or standards," citing Hayes et al. (2006). In ACT, the client is led to perceive (be aware of) the troubling belief, conduct or sensation, comprehend its communication, take it as right and interact it in the current (McCracken, slide 16).

John T. Blackledge (2015) also provides a contrast. He claims that, though dispersion methods may be functional extensively, he underlines the elementary inconsistency of CBT.

Asmundson and other CBT supporters accept that the troublesome action is a consequence of problem opinions and sensations, so those opinions and moods must be removed.

Blackledge proposes uniting the methods. He writes that there are CBT therapists whose work is not founded on the main supposition behind reform methods.

However, as the reader may have understood, there is an inconsistency among dispersion and restructuring approaches. Dispersion methods aim to unglue the glued-in thoughts and moods on which a customer is wedged, waning the add-on to painful feelings and thoughts and the supplementary

upsetting actions. In ACT, the inquiry is not in what way to rid the individual of those undesirable opinions and moods for conduct alteration, but rather to change the individual's emphasis from them to favored moods and opinions constructed on an explanation of standards and goals.

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CHAPTER 18: USEFUL RESOURCES



1. Autistic Community Training website, British Columbia

- Videos
- Online streaming podcasts

2. L’Institut de Psychologie Contextuelle (the Contextual Psychology Institute) in Montreal.
3. Portland Psychotherapy workshops by Dr. Jason Luoma
4. Association for Contextual Behavioral Science

- Self-study or community study.
- DVDs
- Training workshops as per their calendar

5. Positive Psychology Program

- Toolkit
- Books
- Videos
- Articles

6. Jack Hirose and Associates, Inc. – Workshops

http://www.jackhirose.com/workshop/act-forsyth-edmonton2018/

7. Dr. Russ Harris, “ACT Mindfully”

- Online and in-person workshops
- Free textbooks.

8. The California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare.

- Depression Treatment
- Webinars

9. Praxis (training and continuing education) https://www.praxiscet.com/events

- ACT Bootcamps
- Mastering ACT
- Superhero Therapy

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CONCLUSION



Psychological health matters. It is my hope that by trying some of these approaches, you can learn to reach deep within yourself. By doing this you will start to make major changes to your life. Psychological health inequities are incapacitating to everyday life. The vital issue here is that they are treatable.

When we think of an infection, we assume the treatment to be pharmaceutical or surgical. Infrequently do we stop and comprehend that the cure could be the control of our own attention. This is where some may accuse us of entering the dominions of divine practice. Yet, technical studies show that we can materially change the procedures in our body, by using our thoughts.

When exposed to danger, it is only normal that the brain warns the rest of our body to take essential action. But occasionally we see a hazard that isn't really there. When that occurs, the body starts the procedure of defense. By learning to identify the independent responses in your own body, you can learn how to control them. That is how easy it can be. Taking control of those maladaptive opinions will totally alter your hormonal production. This does not require skyrocket discipline, rather it is a medicinal truth of how the human body works.

ACT is not only successful in improving mental circumstances but medical ones too. It is proven to help manage pain. It is my confidence that you will apply what is labeled in this book in order to attain your goal with ACT.

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