LOVE IS NOT ENOUGH

What It Takes to Make It Work

HENRY KELLERMAN

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Henry Kellerman

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For
Richard Grillo
Lifelong blood brother.
Love you, Rich.

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Introduction

In this book, we will look at how love is affected by various things, and we will try to show how these various things make it so that love is not ever really enough to make the relationship work. Therefore, in this book, the *why* to why love is not enough will include a bird's-eye view of certain problems of relationships with respect to three major considerations:

Your Relationship

This consideration of why love is not enough will include an examination of the very nature of your relationship, with a focus on the interactions that you have with your partner, that is to say, how you talk to one another, relate to one another, and even think about one another.

You

This consideration of why love is not enough will include an examination of the common problems each person brings to the table, that is to say, the problems you had before you got into the relationship, which you then carried into it.

Personality Styles

This consideration of why love is not enough will examine the deeply etched personality of individuals that, by itself, surely contributes to the difficulty in relationships—meaning a description of basic personality types or styles with which people automatically react, including the style with which you react as well as the one your partner has. Case examples are included.

We will see how these three major considerations combine to produce problems, and then we will suggest certain wisdoms that, if carefully followed, can contribute to an increasingly healthy relationship—a healthy marriage.

BACKGROUND

First off, we need to report that in the United States, the divorce rate borders on 50 percent. In addition, 80 percent of those who have children before marriage never even make it to marriage. In other words, of all relationships, most don't make it. Many fall apart within the first two years of marriage or less, and 40 percent certainly within the first five years. And when examining these relationships, in almost all cases, each of the partners admits that at the beginning of the courtship as well as after, he or she was in love, was happy, was grateful that the partners were together in the first place, and, in fact, looked forward to being together always.

Later on, after the breakup or divorce, many people, of course, then list some things they knew were not right with their partner to begin with. People claim that they tended to deny this to themselves, or if not denying them, they simply decided to put such dissatisfactions aside—perhaps to be dealt with later. Thus, apparently, during the love period, people basically need to overlook their complaints. It looks like that when in love, it's easy to overlook potential problems or even downright dissatisfactions with your partner. In contrast, and amazingly so, after the divorce, it's usually extremely difficult for each of the partners even to remember how it was ever possible to be in love with the other person in the first place.

We all know that there are all kinds of reasons people give to explain why they fell in love. And for sure, not all of them are the usual reason of the swoon of love; that is, not all of these reasons are even predictable. For example, I've heard of a woman who desperately needed to marry her boyfriend because he couldn't drive a car—didn't have a license—and the thought of his needing to depend on her (as in needing her

to drive him wherever he needed to be) was an irresistible attraction for her. Another unusual reason why a man married concerned his inability to furnish his apartment. Other than the fact that he was generally inept, more specifically, he couldn't furnish it because shopping for furniture seemed overwhelming to him, and therefore for him, this kind of task was impossible. He was smitten with his girlfriend for a number of reasons—but there was one reason that was most important: she was a world-class shopper and, in fact, furnished his apartment in one shopping spree. However, even in such cases, the divorce rate is high. Thus marrying when at first in love is just not enough to lock down and thus ensure that the relationship will remain intact.

A beginning wisdom (to jump the gun) is to suggest that love is only enough when you feel *understood* by your partner. To this end, I'm suggesting that this book can help you as well as your partner feel better understood and, of course, help you both to become more understanding.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

This book comprises three parts: part 1, "Your Relationship," concerns the drama between you and your partner; part 2, "You," deals with problems that you have that you bring into the relationship; and part 3, "Personality Styles," discusses those styles that work pretty well with a partner, those that work less well, and those that don't work at all—with case examples.

Each of the three parts of the book contains several chapters, and each chapter is formatted so that a wisdom appears at the end of each part of a chapter. These wisdoms accent the issue of that part of the chapter. Therefore, to quickly trigger anyone's emotional recognition, all the points made in the book are organized into a one- or two-page format—briefly and to the point—for easy reading and, it is hoped, easy listening. With this in mind, it would be good if the reader could feel, "That's right, I've been there" or "So that's what it's meant!"

GETTING DOWN TO IT

A final word about the value of this book:

- If you, the reader, are looking for something that is not necessarily going to help you, but instead, will only make you feel good, kind of like a tranquilizer would, then this book might not be for you.

- On the other hand, if you really care more about getting a wake-up call and, along with that, you find yourself in the mood even to consider the possibility of helping your relationship, rather than being tranquilized by it, then this book just might be for you.
- And if you're really serious about getting down to brass tacks, rather than being romanced with false hopes, then again, this book could most definitely be for you.
- Finally, if you want to talk turkey, rather than beating around the bush, then get ready, because we're not going on a joyride. We're going to open up the guts of the relationship to see what in the world is going on in there.

Let's go.

Part One

Your Relationship

PREVIEW

In part one, "Your Relationship," we will examine some of the problems that show up as a result of each person in a couple interacting with the other. We will try to point out many of the problematic factors occurring as a result of merely being in a relationship, and we will suggest what to do about them.

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1

Getting Close in the Relationship

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF A GOOD RELATIONSHIP?

What's the goal of a relationship? It could be said that all life is a struggle and that either you do it pretty well, or maybe not so good. Therefore it seems that perhaps the goal in life is for a person to struggle better. The same is true in relationships—and *struggle* simply means "trying to do it better." Because of personality differences, there will always be a struggle in any basic relationship by which feelings get hurt and people experience anything from not being understood to not being loved. Therefore trying to do it better is a wonderful goal, and then actually succeeding is a wonderful achievement.

The question is, how do we struggle better? How can you do it better? And that's what this book is about—how to struggle better in relationships. Make no mistake about it: your relationship will be a struggle. But that's OK. Don't be afraid of the struggle, just as you shouldn't be afraid of the relationship. The struggle could be a good one and well worth it.

And keep in mind that when children arrive in the family, it never makes the struggle better; rather, it makes the struggle more complex, more difficult. Even without children, differences of personality begin to chip away at the feelings of love—so much so that we often hear, "I love him, but I don't like him."

You see, people get their feelings hurt very easily. They suffer because they don't feel understood. *And feeling understood is crucial.* Without it, love is simply not enough! Without feeling understood, love doesn't have what it takes to absorb the relentless shocks of life. Without feeling understood, love doesn't stand a chance. Feeling understood is the best shock absorber and enables the struggle to generate great results. Feeling understood deepens the love.

Wisdom

The goal of a good relationship is to struggle better so that the possibility of each partner feeling understood increases. And as feeling understood increases, the love will deepen.

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT EVERYONE MARRIES FOR THE WRONG REASON?

Is it possible that people marry for the right reasons? What are the right reasons? Even at age 40 or so, and never having been married, some people marry because they feel it's the last train out, the doors are open, and either they get on the train or they feel they're forever left at the station. Obviously, there are all sorts of reasons people use to marry or to connect with another in some form of pairing. The point is that it doesn't matter if you're from a disadvantaged, undereducated slice of society or from the most elitist element, whether you're a teenager or a 40-year-old. Once any pairing occurs, the same problems will confront all couples.

People marry because they're of the same religion, race, ethnic background, and so forth. That is to say, they marry because they feel entirely similar in any number of ways. On the other hand, they marry because they feel most comfortable with someone who is entirely different from them, or they marry because she's dominant and he's weak, or the other way around. In a word, people marry for a wide variety of reasons. The question is, are any of the reasons to marry the right reason?

The answer, of course, is that it really doesn't matter what the reason is. It doesn't matter if the reason was a good one or a bad one, if the reason was justified or not. Why? Because nothing really matters about why the couple married. *The only thing that matters is what they do once they get there.* Do they work on the

relationship? Do they talk with, and listen to, one another? Do they express their dissatisfactions to one another? Do they grow together, discuss everything, express their entitlements? Are they able to repair difficulties with one another? And most important, can they remember that *each negative element of the relationship is far less significant than the ongoing underlying history of the relationship*—its continuity and the whole process of the thing? This sort of relationship understanding is crucial to the marriage, and compared to this, why you married is, in the long run, really not very relevant. Working on the marriage in a way that deepens the relationship is what is relevant.

WISDOM
Why you married pales in importance to what you do once you get there.

VALUES VERSUS PERSONALITY

Values do not make relationships. Personality differences can have a much more crucial impact on the making or breaking of a relationship. Thus can you tolerate those personality qualities or idiosyncrasies of your partner that make you angry or drive you crazy? If you can't tolerate your partner's idiosyncrasies, then you will suffer. The question is, do you and your partner know how to solve the problem of personality conflict? And make no mistake about it, there are definite ways to solve it—and, surely, to make it better.

Thus whether the couple is able to harmonize with one another really depends on whether they're able to manage and deal with one another's personality differences, including habit patterns, needs, wishes, personality traits, and emotional styles. Other issues, such as religious similarity, spiritual similarity, similar humanitarian values, similar political positions, and so forth, are never as strong as the issues derived from personality problems and differences.

WISDOM
Personality differences affect relationships far more intensely than do issues of values.

SUFFERING AND PERSONALITY

Suffering means you can handle bad feelings. You see, the point is that because personality is so well defined in each person, people are really set in their ways. Each partner in a relationship will very soon find it difficult to bear certain ways of the other. And to change, or even to modify in a small way, one's typical reactions resulting from such set personality traits is actually hugely difficult. And don't think it's only you. This issue of trying to get used to your partner happens to all people.

In light of personality differences of each partner, a marriage still stands a good chance of doing well if at least one of the partners is able to tolerate difficult qualities in the other—in other words, if at least one of the partners is able to, say, suffer a bit. If both partners are able to do this, then things have a great chance to work. And this means that so long as a bit of trying exists (and, it is hoped, each partner possesses the necessary emotional shock absorbers to be able to tolerate dissatisfaction), then, for sure, the relationship has great hope.

If neither partner can sustain or absorb even a small amount of suffering (of frustration), the relationship will surely end. The reason is that other than being defined by love, marriage is *trying.* That's what is meant by "working on it." It—the marriage—requires each partner to be able to tolerate a lot of difference in the other.

WISDOM

For a marriage to remain intact, at least one of the partners needs to be able to suffer a bit, and sometimes even inordinately (greatly).

TALKING

It's vital that partners talk to one another because arguments, disagreements, fights, hatreds, spitefulness, vengeance, and all varieties of unhappiness can occur. With some, it's always spewing hatred and curses, or throwing things, or even physical attack. Of course, along with talking to one another, physical attack needs special attention and intervention. Otherwise, all other negative interactions need to be talked about and talked through.

Remember that talking is what makes us different from lizards or worms, or even amoeba. We can talk about it, and talk it through. We can appeal to one another,

apologize, admit faults, learn how not to try to win all arguments, and so forth. If we talk about it, then the tendency to do the same neurotic thing decreases. The more we talk, the more things get better.

It's a sure bet that most divorces occur because the partners either didn't talk, or didn't talk enough, or didn't know what to say or how to say it. Freud said that if you don't talk, then you tend to do the same thing over and over. Others have amplified this idea by predicting that doing negative things repeatedly is self-defeating and actually will become your fate. That is to say, without talking about the problem, your destiny will be to repeat the outcome of failure—forever.

WISDOM

In relationships, it is vital to talk, talk, talk.

LISTENING VERSUS DISREGARD

Do you listen to your partner? Listening means three things: patience, hearing, and respect. Of course, one can listen but not hear, and therefore not compute what's being said. Why? Because at best, that person is impatient, and at worst, simply not interested. And when this is the case, it's usually because the one talking is being taken for granted and is essentially not seen as an equal and is not being considered as an equal. Of course, this kind of listening but not hearing only has the appearance of listening.

A good example of a lack of concern for what the other is saying can be appreciated in the comments often heard by an ignored spouse: "When I talk to him, I have to follow him from room to room while I'm talking." The fact is that good listening can reinforce the good aspects of a marriage, support a better culture of a marriage, and (are you listening?) save a marriage; that is, listening and hearing support togetherness and establish and reinforce ways of joining together.

So not listening means three things: impatience, not hearing, and most important, disregard for your partner. Not listening is a dismissal of the other person's importance. This dismissal is what is meant by taking the partner for granted, along with actually conveying a sense of disregard—behavior that actually expresses hostility. In contrast, listening and hearing invite loving responses and appreciation.

WISDOM
Not listening is disrespectful.

Getting Close in the Relationship

Remember

No one is perfectly suited to anyone else.

Dissatisfactions are to be expected. Don't feel defeated because of differences.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Do we try to help one another?	☑	❑
Do I talk?	☑	❑
Do I listen?	☑	❑
Do I feel understood?	☑	❑

2

The Relationship in Its Context

CULTURE OF THE MARRIAGE

What is a culture in a marriage? Well, like the definition of *culture,* the relationship will consist of agreed-on values; typical and familiar responses to one another; likes and dislikes in common; and similar approaches to social obligations, friends, and relatives. The culture of a marriage is also expressed in what the couple does with their home, how they decide on which of the people they meet will become friends, what music they prefer, and so on. In a narrow sense, the culture of a relationship consists of agreed-on and typical ways the partners respond to the world—how they see it—as well as how they meld their responses to one another. It's about commonality.

And it is precisely this commonality that usually needs work. The reason is that couples fall into emotional traps. They can begin to disagree about almost everything, and the repeated disagreements begin to cause a general marital reflex of disagreement. Then this reflex of disagreement become a disagreement style and gets knitted into the culture of the relationship, and then even becomes the culture of the relationship.

As these negative emotional traps get repeated, so, too, does this negative culture of the relationship also get repeated. Thus a self-defeating culture will contain

habit patterns of disagreement and of not offering ways of working out problems. A new objective, then, a new goal, would be to build in new habits and new patterns, largely of agreement, which, when repeated, comprise new ways of relating—relationship-enhancing ways—thereby improving the culture of the relationship.

When this happens, then this newer agreement culture can begin to compete rather effectively with the older, not-so-good disagreement one. Then, and only then, can the new culture take over and begin to nourish the relationship, rather than degrade it, as the older culture had.

WISDOM

The culture of a relationship refers to the traditions of the relationship that have been built in by the typical responses of the partners themselves. The culture of the relationship is the container in which the marriage is nourished.

REPAIR

The habits of each person reflect that person's personality signature. Such habits affect the relationship and call forth—invite—corresponding typical habit responses from the partner. This habit exchange also becomes part of the culture of the relationship—how the partners respond to one another. These habits are really personality traits—the way each person is.

The problem is that the habits of each person have been developing since early childhood and, of course, were not developed out of a need to help the marriage relationship, which is a later event in that person's life. Thus these lifelong habits usually do not facilitate the growth of the relationship because they were not designed with the relationship in mind. In this sense, the different habit patterns or styles of each partner often clash with respect to the other's needs.

What is very important is that the building in of a good working relationship will contain what we can call *repair mechanisms*; that is, people can go back an hour later, or a day later, or to some future point and try to make amends by initiating a discussion. Saying I'm sorry is good but usually not enough. It's good with respect to the event that was troublesome, but it falls short with respect to the longer-term and more important process of examining the habit pattern of the relationship itself—especially if the apology

is not followed by discussion. Yet, in either case—whether an attempt to repair the event simply by an apology, or to contribute to the underlying process of the relationship (its ongoing history and culture building) by adding discussion to the apology—repair becomes an essential tool in the developing culture of the relationship, the building of the relationship itself, and the enabling of the partners to struggle better.

WISDOM

Repair *means to be willing to recreate the troublesome event, dig into it, and talk it through. It's not easy. Requires guts! But is definitely worth it.*

CHANGE IN RELATIONSHIPS

The question is, can people change? The answer is yes, people can change. A second question is, from 0 to 100 percent, how much would each partner have to change so that each can feel better, thereby improving the relationship? Usually, people answer this question in guesses that begin at 25 percent and reach even to 100 percent.

The truth is that people can't really change their spots very much at all. Yet zero change is for leopards only. People can, in fact, change—a bit. And a bit can be significant. People can struggle to make things better. How? By talking. We can talk it over.

The percentage change in a person that can make all the difference is about 2 or 3 percent. A change of 2 or 3 percent in personality, response pattern, insight, habits, expectations, general behavior, and, specifically, with respect to consideration of the other person is all that's needed. And this 2 or 3 percent change is actually an enormous shift and will produce dramatic acknowledgment in the partner; that is, the change of 2 or 3 percent will be quickly noticed and appreciated by the partner.

Thus change in one of the partners will, in turn, act as an inducement—a model—for the other partner to do the same. Then, when the other partner also changes by 2 or 3 percent, the marriage gains an immeasurable probability of being healthy and able to continue to grow.

WISDOM

Have faith in small gains; they can be atomic.

THE IMPORTANT PEOPLE ARE HERE

Show up! Showing up is 90 percent of success. Einstein said that this 90 percent of success was made up of perspiration. That's true. But you need to be there to persist and to perspire. So show up. And then, when you show up, be on time, be early, and have your tools at hand, whether hammer, nails, computer, notes, or calculator. Prepare in advance.

There are those who show up promptly and those who show up sometimes, and there are those who usually show up late. The point is that if you're not there, you miss the beginning. Then it's pretty clear that in your relationship, you miss the beginning in exactly the same way. Not being there means not being there. It's disrespectful and reveals that the emotion of contempt lurks beneath, in the unconscious, in a never-ending self-absorption.

Thus the important people are there—on time. If you're not there on time, then you're simply not important, and of course, you then communicate the idea that you don't consider the other person important. Remember that it's important to be in the conversation, and when you're not there, you're not in the conversation. It's that simple.

WISDOM
Show up—on time. Better yet, be early.

RULES OF APPROACH AND REJECTION

Two concepts are especially important to understand in the dynamic interplay of the couple. These can be identified as the concepts of *approach* and *rejection:*

Rejection

The feeling of rejection will work the first time. You don't need any reminders that you're rejected. You can feel it the moment it's handed to you, or your partner can feel it the moment you say or do something hurtful. So a truism about rejection is that rejection always works the first time.

Approach

With respect to approaches, you or your partner may want to apologize for the bad remark, or nasty tone, or rejecting gesture. The problem is that approaches almost never work the first time. Thus, when the approach is made, the partner's reply is likely to be "drop dead," or some equivalent rejecting response to the one making the apology. The trick here is not to take the rejection of this approach too seriously. In other words, knowing full well that rejections only take one try to work, you must not permit that one try to succeed. You must wait some moments before you speak again because if you understand these rules, you will realize that the original rejected party usually cannot accept an apology straight off. This is what is meant by not taking seriously the turndown of the apology.

Therefore approaches will always require two or three tries before an apology is accepted. This is another example of working on the relationship and building new patterns into a better culture of the relationship.

Wisdom
Don't be disappointed too quickly if the apology doesn't immediately work.

PARTNERS TAKE EACH OTHER VERY SERIOUSLY

The reason that approaches take two, or three, or even more attempts to succeed, and rejections only one attempt, concerns how couples typically take each other very seriously because each partner is especially important to the other. Especially with couples in love, the very first thing one says is taken quite literally by the other. There is no latitude, no ease, no tolerance, and no relaxing. It's life and death. We may wonder, is such a reflexive response appropriate, implying that anything your partner says requires an immediate response? Do you both need to argue the point to death? Then, after no one wins, how long will the freeze last? One hour? One day? Longer?

The point is that couples typically behave as competing siblings and not as helpmates; rather, what happens is that one will be angry at the other and make an accusation or criticism, and then the other will join the fight and strenuously disagree, taking up the other side of the argument—each trying to justify his or her position.

Along with these reasons for the vigilance with which partners treat one another is the idea that each person is hoping for the other to be nice and good and loving. Each person wants to be admired by the other. In the absence of such admiration, each person instantly feels an uh-oh and then springs into a defensive posture.

Wisdom

Resist the temptation to take everything seriously. It's not that serious.

YOU BEHAVE TOWARD YOUR SPOUSE AS YOU DID TOWARD YOUR SAME-GENDER PARENT

If you want to better understand your behavior, attitudes, and emotional reactions to your spouse, it's frequently a good bet that these approaches and feelings toward your spouse resemble very closely how you related to your same-gender parent: men with their fathers, women with their mothers. For example, the formal relationship (not very affectionate) that a woman had with her mother will account for her modest approach with her husband, while if the husband had a warm relationship with his father, then his affectionate behavior toward his wife will clash with her modest nature—and this also works the other way around.

The almost bad news is that this equation can be, but doesn't have to be, locked in for life. The good news is that it can get better—although never the way you exactly wish. But isn't it true that hardly anything in life is exactly the way we wish it? The best news, of course, is that knowing about this same-gender identification gives each of you a productive opportunity, a tool for understanding the other. And when the other feels understood by you, one of the rooms in the house that was, so to speak, perhaps suddenly closed because of bad feelings between you can immediately reopen. Guess which one?

Wisdom

Men, keep in mind that your wife is really not your father.
Women, ditto for your mother and husband.

The World of the Relationship

Remember

Both partners in the relationship are together building relationship habits.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Am I creating good traditions in the relationship?	☑	❑
Can I ever say I'm sorry?	☑	❑
Is it possible for me to change certain habits of mine, even just a little?	☑	❑
Am I on time?	☑	❑
If I feel insulted, does it mean the world is coming to an end?	❑	☑

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3

How to Save the Relationship

THE GOOD PARENT

There are five roles that spouses play, or could play, for one another:

1. *Spouse.* A role characterized by spousal duties—"You wash, I'll dry"; "You market, I'll cook."
2. *Friend.* A role characterized by the sharing of feelings, being companionable, and trusting your spouse with important information.
3. *Lover.* A role characterized by the ability to be affectionate as well as sexual as an important part of the relationship.
4. *Parent.* A role characterized by being the good parent; that is, being supportive, giving, and understanding, without expecting anything in return.
5. *Child.* A role characterized by a partner behaving with temper tantrums or acting impulsively or provocatively.

The point is that when one of these roles disappears from the relationship, the relationship can find itself in dire straits—even heading for the drain, finished. This role is that of the parent—the good parent. Without the appearance of the good parent role, at least from time to time, the room in the house that is likely to close down is

the bedroom. The question is: Why? And the answer is simply that *love is not enough.* Each partner needs to feel understood, and it is the appearance of the good parent role in the other partner that offers understanding, listening, and hearing. Under such conditions, all the doors to all the rooms of the house remain open.

The good parent does not rush in to solve problems. Instead, this good parent is supportive, empathetic, and patient and tries almost always to reflect the other's feelings, rather than solve the problem. Comments like "That must have been difficult for you" or "That must have been frightening" are reflective and help the partner feel understood. Problem solving, as in saying, "Do it this way or that way" or "The thing to do is . . . ," is most definitely not the thing to do.

The good parent is a forgiving soul and does not always try to make the partner seem wrong.

Wisdom

From time to time, remember to be the good parent.

EVENT VERSUS PROCESS

A sense of estrangement in the relationship will result when the rules of approach and rejection are ignored. This is so because in such cases, each partner takes the other entirely seriously and everything breaks down. Of course, this literalness of each partner toward the other indicates that the good parent role that one partner should, from time to time, play for the other is nowhere to be found.

This kind of emotional blindness—of not seeing the bigger picture—leads directly to a feeling that the disagreement event is actually a deadly one—catastrophic-like. The dilemma becomes how to understand the situation to overcome the hurt feelings people experience when accused or rejected.

The point is that a specific disagreement is an event (a single event), and the marriage hardly ever lives or dies on any given event. Relationships should not have to live or die on the basis of any single event (extremes notwithstanding). The exception is that, at times, such an event may be an example of some larger issue that that specific event represents. Then the relationship may simply be escalating its bad habits. However, other than this, people need to realize that events are always challenging the process and underlying history of the relationship. For example, the relationship

may be a decadelong one in which the couple courted, fell in love, married, traveled, had children, and so forth—an ongoing and unfolding history created by the joint activity of the couple. Now, can one event compete with the power of the historical process that underpins such a cumulative experience? No, not usually. Yet couples are frequently compelled by single events, while not usually understanding the great power of their underlying history. Of course, when the history of the relationship is contaminated with a host of bad habits, then single events themselves become the history of the relationship, and in such cases, a point of no return in the estrangement is the bad news. In such cases, the relationship will be quite weak.

The points previously made about approach and rejection rules, on one hand, and the presence of the good parent, on the other, will always save the day.

Wisdom

Build a healthy accumulated history that can defeat any individual event—even an intense one.

THE ALGEBRA OF RELATIONSHIPS

Each partner needs to feel, and be treated, as a first among equals. In algebra, this is akin to a plus multiplied by a plus to yield a plus. In such a case, the relationship will be a good one. However, when one partner is a second among equals and the other a first, then again, the relationship can be rated with reference to algebra; that is, in algebraic terms, a minus multiplied by a plus always equals a minus. In all likelihood, in such a case, where one partner is higher and the other lower, the relationship will need at least one of the partners to be able to suffer inordinately because the relationship will need a lot of work.

If both partners are equals as seconds, then even though the relationship may not be terribly exciting, nevertheless, it can work. Algebraically speaking, even a minus multiplied by a minus will always yield a plus. So what the entire thing means is that so long as both partners are on the same level, the relationship has a much better chance.

In a nutshell, equal respect for oneself and for one's partner is vital to a relationship. For each to be a first among equals creates the best soil for the cultivation of the relationship and contributes to a good, working relationship culture.

Wisdom

Study your algebra because when both partners are firsts among equals, the good parent is sure to be there.

REMINDER: BE A FIRST AMONG EQUALS

Self-respect is crucial for each member of a relationship to convey to the other. Conveying self-respect doesn't mean to say to the other, "I have self-respect." No, your self-respect must be experienced by your partner through your typical behavior. It's not what you say that makes you who you are; rather, it's how you behave. And as all great literature tells us, behavior is character.

Therefore the qualities of respect, trustworthiness, dignity, courage, honesty, fidelity, and so forth, comprise a cluster of characteristics, traits, and behaviors that contribute to make you someone to respect—a first among equals. Correspondingly, it's important to treat your partner as an equal, and it's very important for your partner to behave as an equal so that your partner can be a first, too.

When both partners are reasonably equally firsts, then each, by definition, will behave with self-respect and, in addition, will be proud of the other as well as feel happy to be part of the other.

Wisdom

Equal to equal triumphs!

TO LOSE, NOT TO WIN

In marriage, both for men and women, an important job from time to time is for each partner to lose. It's important not to insist on winning each and every dispute or argument. As a matter of interest, one of the most difficult tasks in relationship building is to work to lose and not to be right all the time. It's just not that important to try to win every argument. Who is smarter, more dominant, more in the driver's seat, and needs more respect is what most marital disputes are about anyway. Even though it doesn't seem that way, the specific subject matter of the argument is usually a secondary consideration. Winning it is usually the unspoken contest.

Lose, lose, lose. Come in second. Of course, this is a negotiating position. It really means that only from time to time should you lose, or try to lose. Doing so will help the relationship. Your partner will appreciate the chance not to fight and to see that you're not intent on subjugating him or her.

Of course, this entire enterprise of losing almost seems un-American because Americans like to win. On the other hand, Americans are compassionate people.

WISDOM

Losing sometimes, nay, frequently, leads to sex.

Saving the Relationship

Remember

Respect—all around—is essential.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Am I ever the good parent to my partner?	☑	❑
Am I always defeated by each event—terribly despairing because of it?	❑	☑
Do I always insist on being right?	❑	☑
Do I respect myself as well as my partner?	☑	❑
Does my partner respect himself or herself as well as respecting me?	☑	❑

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Differences between Men and Women

ROLES

In the vast majority of cases, mothers are the primary caregivers of the family. Because identification with a parent is a major guide or a major factor in one's development, more often than not, girls will identify with their mothers in a major way (with identification with the father also a factor, but not as great as with the mother), and boys will mostly identify with their fathers (with identification with the mother also a factor, but not as great as with the father).

The problem is that boys frequently see their fathers absenting themselves, going to ball games, playing video games, and watching television, while hearing their mothers issuing instructions about what needs to be done around the house. In the modern-day world, if the man is still the head of the family, it is usually only as the self-imposed ceremonial resident. And girls as well as boys see this.

Hence girls grow up to be women, like their mothers, and boys grow up to be boys—somewhat immature—like their fathers. If fathers were the primary caregivers, one could assume that it would be the other way around—girls would grow up to be girls, and boys to be men. But, men, do not worry because there are

things with which women have a hard time that you can do easily. In a minute or so, we'll get to those.

Let's assume this is true. So, what about it? Well, the problem is that frequently (although not always), at some point after a couple marries, the woman feels like she's married to a boy. Then the honeymoon is really over. She wants him to be more mature, to have more initiative, to be more manly, to be able to say no out of a sense of maturity, and not just to assert his wished-for dominance.

This imbalance in the relationship needs to be righted. The problem is that should he right himself, it frequently happens that she becomes a bit disoriented because even though she hoped for an equal, she no longer automatically wins the day. Now she has to adjust to the stranger—a man—and therefore she can no longer always be right.

WISDOM

Be present in the relationship by forcing yourself to do the necessary things you really don't want to do but that you know need to be done.

COMMUNICATION: YES VERSUS NO

In a primary relationship, such as a marriage, saying yes will make your partner feel good. Yet, if the yes is the predictable response—always—it's likely that your partner could begin accumulating angry feelings. Saying yes to everything means that the person saying it has no discernible form. People need to express their preferences so that a no becomes extremely important to be able to say.

Yes usually means love. And yet, no is probably the most important word in any language. Even an occasional no means you're a person—an independent person. Of course, always saying no also means that you're oppositional, argumentative, negative, always protesting, and of course, simply impossible. The always-no is what forces one spouse to remark about the oppositional one, "It doesn't matter what the question is; the answer is always no."

Subtracting this kind of crazy no, it can be said that an occasional no is an invitation for a discussion. After all, each partner should not be robotic; rather, each partner is human and as such should have needs, feelings, and very importantly, preferences.

WISDOM

Be able to say no at least once in a while,
and then be available to discuss it.

COMMUNICATION: YES AND NO, AGAIN

The simultaneous yes-and-no reaction to any challenge is what is known as *ambivalence*. You want to go, and you don't want to go. It means *ambi-valent*—forces pulling in opposite directions. Some call it mixed feelings. You want to purchase it, and then again, you don't want to purchase it. And it doesn't matter what the it is. The only question is, what is the nature of the yes and no—of this ambivalence?

The nature of the ambivalence—of the yes and no—is that ambivalence is not democratic. What this means is that in any example of ambivalence, the yes gets only one vote, while the no always gets two votes. Thus the negative pull of the ambivalence is always twice that of the positive pull. Buyers regret is an example of how this undemocratic ambivalent decision making works. For example, an item is purchased and then instantly returned. Buyer's regret is the punishment for going against the no. It is the person's anger toward the self for permitting the status quo to change.

Psychoanalytically speaking, the no side of the ambivalence is related to issues regarding one's early history with parents. What the no means is that the person is rooted and loyal to one parent with a strong prohibition against changing this status quo. In this sense, a yes is experienced as a moment of disloyalty or as a shifting of loyalty to the other parent. Therefore such a person feels that the yes decision needs to be immediately withdrawn. If not worked on, then this sort of conflict gets forever played out in the person's psychological life, especially in marriage, toward the spouse.

Thus an ambivalent person who says yes will experience the yes as real trouble, presumably because it is experienced from a historical-childhood point of view. Therefore it can be helpful for a person who is typically ambivalent to see that the struggle in working on this sort of issue can be considered only aggravation and not real trouble, and that such ambivalence is a carryover from childhood. So remember that you're an adult; you're no longer a child.

Wisdom

Those shackles you have on are only invisible childhood constraints. Throw them off.

COMMUNICATION: THE DIFFICULT THEME FOR MEN

We know that role assignments in society are in many ways different for men than they are for women. First, for men, we can ask, what embarrasses men? Is there some overarching theme that men find difficult to manage? The answer is yes—it is the theme of humiliation. Men do not manage humiliation well at all. It's the old western saga, where no slight goes unanswered. Duels and fist fights were and are characteristic responses when a man feels insulted.

Thus most men experience a gut reaction to humiliation and, most frequently, can't let it go, either with respect to an immediate physical response or an inability to forget a slight. In marriage, for example, women often report that their husbands will respond to some comment by saying, "I don't like your tone of voice." And there is a whole psychology to this. In marriage, men are frequently vying for dominance, or if not dominance, they then want to be adored or worshipped, or, in the least, admired or respected. If such wishes are not satisfied, then the man fights for them, argues, disagrees, refuses to be close, and of course, suffers with them.

So although the man finds it difficult to manage humiliation, he does not have very much trouble admitting he is wrong—provided his spouse has the data to support why he's wrong. In that case, he's heard to say, "Oh, look at that, you're right. I didn't see that." Men are taught early on that umpires and referees decide what's right and what's wrong, and that's all there is to it. They get over the right and wrong thing early on. Not so with humiliation. Boys, and then men, are constantly fed the role assignment concerning needing to be victorious, having dignity, keeping one's head up, not permitting insult, not supplicating oneself, and of course, not being dominated.

All of this means that to be humiliated is to be rendered inferior. And men will not be easily rendered inferior. It doesn't sit well. It can't easily be digested and refuses to be metabolized.

Wisdom
For men, humiliation means inferiority, while being proven wrong can be OK.

COMMUNICATION: THE DIFFICULT THEME FOR WOMEN

It is clear that for the most part, women manage humiliation far better than men. Women have been managing small and many humiliations all their lives. Yet, for the most part, women find it hard to be wrong, and this is the overarching theme that women find difficult. In contrast, usually, men have very little trouble admitting when they are wrong. And these are examples of how society and culture differently affect the experiences and typical responses of men and women.

Whereas humiliation can deeply challenge the integrity of the man, similarly, being wrong can have the same deleterious effect for a women. It challenges her integrity and, apparently, her well-being. Many women have a revulsion to being labeled as inferior, and therefore there is a strong need to defend any argument, even if it's sensed that a wrong position is being taken. For example, if a woman argues against the position that $a + b = c$, and then it's proven that in fact, $a + b$ does equal c, the answer is likely to be, "But you haven't considered d, and e, and the moon, and the stars, and the gravitational pull on d and e." Thus the discussion is shifted away from $a + b = c$ to the effect of the moon and the stars on d and e: shifting, shifting, shifting—simply, and not so simply—in order not to be wrong.

This is how many women respond to the possibility of being made to feel inferior—to feel erased. Thus, again, for the most part, for women, managing humiliation is relatively easy, but to be wrong is very difficult. Even when the man feels insulted by someone, his wife will tell him to forget it: "C'mon, honey, it's not important." But he can't forget it. In contrast, men are heard to say to their wives, "C'mon, honey, just admit it. It's no big deal. You know you're wrong about it. Just admit it. Don't make a federal case out of it."

These acculturated role differences are learned, and they reveal just how different gender role assignments really are, and further, they imply that the psychological script men have, and the one women have, are quite different, although both relate to the dread of erasing one's dignity—humiliation for men, wrongness for women.

Wisdom
For women, being wrong means inferiority.
Managing humiliation is easier.

MEN AND WOMEN: OTHER DIFFERENCES

The obvious point here is that because of cultural role assignments, differences between men and women show up in a variety of ways. These ways include all sorts of categories that, by and large, demonstrate such differences—in needs, taste, and categories of focus—all of which can be identified as those things that, for the most part, will interest men more and women less, and that, for the most part, will interest women more and men less. The middle ground consists of preoccupations, interests, and so forth, that people generally—men and women alike—share.

Personality shading with respect to likes and dislikes in movies, television, books, and all other arenas of expression displays areas where these differences become evident. For example, by and large, fast-paced action movies that include violence, heroic bravery, and revenge themes are considered by producers of media as men's movies, television shows, or books. In contrast, love stories, tragedies, or stories with a strong moral point are usually categorized by media producers as material that will interest women. Of course, there is also a large sharing of interest—the middle ground—where the same cultural products are enjoyed by both.

Historically, men acting as hunters in the everyday workforce and women acting as primary caregivers at home has meant that men are out in the ruthless, unforgiving world and therefore become more cynical, even more untrustworthy (needing to always maneuver and to be aware of the maneuverings of others), while women are considered to be more trustworthy and, paradoxically perhaps, therefore more literal, or even naive.

Even sense of humor is frequently different. Men and women often think different things are funny. Women will laugh at things that many men think are passé or just too obvious, while men are more attracted to dissing jokes.

Thus it's not just that themes of humiliation or being wrong have correlations with gender role inclinations. All sorts of other sensibilities are also culture-driven, and this doesn't even include possible genetic contributions to these differences.

Wisdom

Diversity is OK. We can celebrate the sharing, but also acknowledge, and even appreciate, the differences. Yet times change things, and such change is sure to apply here as well.

Men and Women

Remember

Differences can be interesting.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Do I ever initiate things?	☑	❑
Do I have opinions that I share?	☑	❑
Am I helpless to my own habits?	❑	☑
Am I bigger than my pride	☑	❑
Can I ever be wrong?	☑	❑
Can I celebrate the personality of my partner, even though that personality is different from mine?	☑	❑

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The Reality of Marriage

THREE FIRES

With humiliation being an experience that men find hard to take (while women manage it better), and in contrast, with being wrong being as difficult for women to take (while men manage that better), the question is, what should we do when the irrepressible force of finding it difficult to deal with humiliation meets the immovable object of not being able to be wrong?

The answer could be revealed by analyzing three basic fires. The first, a paper fire, is extinguished with water; the second, an electric fire, is extinguished with sand; and the third, an oil fire, can be extinguished with dynamite, thereby cutting off the oxygen supply.

So with either spouse, the issue becomes, what kind of fire is the humiliation producing—paper, electric, or oil? The same applies to being wrong: is the fire paper, electric, or oil? The point is that if it's a paper fire, then putting it out with dynamite, as in shouting, or screaming, or worse, is, to say the least, inappropriate and counterproductive. It's killing a fly with a cannon. In contrast, if it's an oil fire, talking calmly, it seems, will never extinguish the flames; that is, in such a case, removing oneself from the situation, or seeking outside professional intervention, can seem like the only alternatives.

Yet the secret to resolving the joining of the irrepressible force with the immovable object concerns the wisdom to respect the other's feelings but to try to remember that each partner needs to shift out of this singular event and into the process of the relationship. This is usually accomplished by putting the conflict in the historical context of the relationship, and then putting the weight of this history to work, that is, to demonstrate that the difficult present event pales in comparison to the substance of the history of the relationship. If this history is characterized by a culture of conflict resolution, love, and importantly, the experience of feeling understood by the other, then such a history is correspondingly also equipped to reduce the intensity of the sense of attack that each person feels as a result of feeling humiliated or feeling wrong.

Wisdom

Whatever the fire, the irrepressible force and the immovable objects are always susceptible to love, accompanied by understanding.

10-POINT SCALE FOR MARRIAGE

On a 10-point scale, how is your marriage? The essence here is not to be disappointed or unduly worried if you can't rate your marriage as a 9 or a 10. Why? Because on a 10-point scale, the best any marriage can be is an 8. And that's high. Personality differences, needs, feelings, dissatisfactions, inconveniences, and so forth, are always the obvious culprits in any marriage. Therefore most good marriages rate between a 6 and an 8. Don't be worried about the 6, so long as there is a range and shift between the 6 and the 8. The bald fact is that most intact marriages rate as a paltry 5. It is in such relationships that people are not struggling very well.

Thus, 6 to 8 is damn good. It means that you and your spouse are talking, debating, arguing, and working for greater common ground. In addition, any marriage that rates a 6 to 8 is one in which affection and sex, in all likelihood, remain active and important aspects of the relationship.

Differences in personality, gender, maturity, needs, and emotional style cause the perfect 10 rating in a marriage to be only a dream. Only in theory can the 10 rating exist—never in reality. The perfect 10 is actually only a goal to be approximated.

Wisdom

To feel that you have a perfect 10 in a relationship, you need to fool yourself into thinking that you're married to yourself. But of course, that's really a zero. Thus those with 6 to 8 marriages should celebrate.

THE PERFECT IS THE ENEMY OF THE GOOD

People quickly take for granted whatever they have. And frequently, they then want more, better, and greater. On a 10-point scale, then, 7, 8, or 9 is good, but it's not 10—and therefore, with some people, it becomes not good enough. In fact, frequently enough, in the absence of the 10, the 7, 8, or 9 becomes the enemy. *The perfect becomes the enemy of the good.* However, the trick is that it's the 10 that's really the enemy. The perfect 10 becomes the enemy of the good 6, 7, or 8. What you have, then, in your relationship, even if it's reasonably good, becomes the reason for your dissatisfaction, boredom, restlessness, and unfortunately, also anger.

This difference between good and perfect (between the 7, 8, or 9, on one hand, and the 10, on the other) also applies to your relationship. Now just imagine if both you and your spouse suffer with this problem. One of you suffering this way would be quite enough; both is impossible.

We frequently see this problem in people who are perfectionistic and need to dot every *i* and cross every *t*, and then really make it a problem by going back to check it over and over. Yes, it can get to be obsessive and will surely tire you out.

There is no possibility whatsoever that perfection, even if in instances attained, can ever be sustained.

Wisdom

Enjoy the good. The perfect will most often be your enemy.

PERSONAL LIFE AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

Over time, spouses can become estranged from one another. This is true especially among couples in which one partner is involved in a career and in which promotions, achievement, and gaining influence (and affluence) begin to occupy a great

deal of thinking, time, and concern. What this means is that such preoccupation with professional concerns begins to create a sharp distinction between one's professional and personal lives.

It needs to be noted that one's professional life is mostly an individual preoccupation and less a relationship or sharing thing. Yet in a primary relationship, such as a marriage, the seeding and nourishment of the couple's personal life (as distinct from a partner's professional life) becomes crucial to the health of the all-important basic consideration—the marital relationship.

Thus, in all ongoing, good, working marital relationships, the health of the relationship is better nourished when the participants understand the importance of sustaining a distinctly personal life with one another—family and friends included. The danger here is that when the professional life begins to crowd out the personal life, a gradual and ultimate disappearance of the personal life to the presumed benefit of the professional life will invariably lead to estrangement and the increased potential for the demise of the relationship.

Wisdom

You can love the office, but cherish what's at home.

DON'T MAKE IT TWO AGAINST ONE

People have a hard time dealing with accusation and guilt. When they're accused of mistakes or ill-conceived behavior, especially when the accusation is made with vigor and conviction, what frequently happens is that the accused one, almost without wanting to, becomes an ally of the accuser and joins the attack against the self. Then it becomes two against one. It's bad enough to have the other as an enemy; imagine when the enemy is the other, plus you.

In relationships, discussing grievances is not the same as being accused. If your spouse has some grievance and tells you about it, it does not necessarily need to be heard as an attack or accusation that then requires a guilt reaction or a counterattack. And besides, even if the accusation is accurate, it doesn't mean you're guilty of a felony.

And when the accusation or grievance is, in fact, an attack, then it would be good to be able to help transform the attack into a discussion, rather than making it two

against one. In addition, such a discussion should not be an attempt to absolve yourself, nor should it be an attempt to turn the accusation back on your partner.

It should be remembered that accusing or attacking always lacks empathy and conceals, rather thinly, a lot of anger toward your partner.

Wisdom

The emotion of the accusation carries the message. Listen to the content of the message but don't get stampeded by the emotion. Try not to make it two against one.

TWO EQUALS ZERO

In a marriage, the ratio of person to person is one to one. When a partner begins having an affair and the affair becomes a serious matter, the ratio of one to one becomes threatened with a new ratio, which can be expressed as "two equals zero."

It is a common phenomenon in such instances that the person outside the marriage will insist on the philandering partner leaving his or her marriage so that they themselves can then marry. The danger here is twofold. First, something should have been discussed and worked on with the spouse or with a therapist to examine why there is a need for extramarital activity and concealment in the first place. One usually ultimately finds that the acting out of the affair is actually a concealment of the real problem—especially from the self.

Second, and equally or even more important to the philandering partner, should be the knowledge that empirically, what can happen is that this acting out partner will lose both the spouse and the extramarital lover. Thus the entire enterprise of the acting out is a critical high-stakes gamble. This is especially poignant when the philandering partner gets ready to leave or, in fact, leaves the marriage, and it is precisely then that the extramarital friend gets cold feet and the affair ends or remains forever suspended.

Frequently, also, at this precise time, the spouse discovers the affair and decides to end the marriage. So what does this mean? It means that two can frequently turn into zero—a spouse plus an extramarital person is two, and when they both disappear, such a sum adds up to zero. If the extramarital person is also married, then there are further permutations of the problem. For example, both couples may split and

everyone ends up alone. Or, in a minority of cases, the philandering person and the extramarital friend do, in fact, establish an enduring relationship, albeit not without corresponding enduring problems.

It's better to talk about dissatisfaction with your spouse; it's not so good to act out clandestine adventures.

Wisdom

The objective in life is to simplify, not complicate.

The Reality of Marriage

Remember

Ease up. Not everything is life or death.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Am I immovable?	❑	☑
Am I worried that my marriage is not perfect?	❑	☑
Am I obsessed with perfection?	❑	☑
Am I keeping my home life elevated?	☑	❑
Do I always feel guilty?	❑	☑
Am I always complicating things?	❑	☑

6

Dangers and Opportunities in the Relationship

THE ROMANCE OF LIFE

The romance of life does not necessarily, or solely, mean sex. The romance of life means enjoying any number of things. Do you and your spouse ever take a walk together? Do you ever have dinner in a restaurant that is warmly lit—one where the ambience is relaxing, even healing? Do you read books; attend concerts; have long talks; see theater performances, movies, or art; and travel? Are you affectionate? Do you meet with friends and other couples? All of these actions, along with, but not dependent on, sex, define the romance of life.

Doing things together (as well as separately) that are interesting and enjoyable is immeasurably important. We all need down time—time spent on things minus the pressures of life. This romance of life is actually essential for the marriage to grow and remain healthy, and it doesn't depend on whether one is affluent.

The romance of life is different than how much something costs, although such romance of life is also not immune to affluent advantages. Nevertheless, really simple pleasures define this kind of romance. Of course, sharing such experiences ignites, heightens, and sustains the romance. It's very, very important.

Wisdom

Sing, dance, read poems, look at beautiful paintings, take walks: be in a swoon with life.

THAT WHICH INITIALLY ATTRACTS YOU IS THAT WHICH EVENTUALLY KILLS YOU

With respect to attraction, usually, the quality that originally attracted you to your spouse likely will be the same quality about which you will develop a psychological-emotional allergy. A commonplace example concerns the assertive woman who is attracted to the passive man. She originally liked the match because instinctively, she knew that being with him would enable her to say and do whatever she wanted, and that correspondingly, in all probability, he would go along with all her decisions. This would be so because her need would be to lead, and his need would be to be led. Eventually, she becomes furious because he will never initiate anything on his own, and he also becomes furious because of her relentless need to prevail, to be boss. In other words, after a while, neither one can take it.

Thus each of the partners gradually develops a psychological allergy to the other, and especially to that quality that attracted him or her to the other in the first place. When this occurs, it's proof positive that up to this point in the relationship, they had not worked on or struggled with their respective personality problems, thereby negatively affecting the relationship.

Now, the challenge for them is to begin to talk about these allergies, these negative feelings, and to begin to develop a better array of responses to one another. For example, she needs to learn how to lose a bit (and not always to get her way), and he needs to bone up on winning sometimes (thinking about what it is he really wants). In this example, for her, it would be important to get to a point where to be wrong about something is not the end of the world. And for him, to be a first among equals will actually save the day. Struggling better is now their main goal—not easy.

Wisdom

In relationships, it's important to identify what it is that annoys you about your partner and then to talk about it as soon as possible.

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMMUNE SYSTEM

A psychological immune system can be imagined as paralleling the biological immune system. This similarity concerns the principle of grafting. When a person receives a graft, what occurs biologically is that the immune system wants to reject the graft—to reject the stranger in its midst, this new DNA. Essentially, this is the immune system saying, "No."

However, it can be imagined that after the ingestion of drugs that effectively anesthetize the immune system, at least for a while, the stranger now has time to become not such a stranger—to integrate into the new system—so that as the immune system gradually awakens, it no longer identifies the newcomer either as a threat or as a stranger, and the graft will take and not be rejected.

So, too, is it with the imagined psychological immune system. Love, or being in love, is the drug that partials out any serious rejection or significant annoyance with the loved one. Under such a love condition, whatever difficulty may arise in the couple is trumped, or even extinguished by, the prevailing feeling of love. This suppression or denial, or disregard of most annoyances or dissatisfactions with the partner, usually lasts at least long enough for the couple to marry.

Evidence that the psychological immune system has awakened and is preparing to do its rejection job occurs, for example, when you see that your spouse has left the toothpaste cap off the toothpaste tube and you feel suddenly, so to speak, homicidal, signifying a continued absence of the love drug. This identifies the moment at which the purity of the love is somewhat infused with some contamination and thus permits one to feel sufficiently differentiated from the partner. It is akin to saying to oneself, "Who is this other person?" This is the precise moment at which the honeymoon is really over and the work, the struggle in the marriage, begins.

WISDOM
Differentiation is a sign of maturity.
Don't be frightened by it.

CRISIS AND SEX

Couples frequently find it difficult to confront one another because they're afraid to create a crisis in the relationship. The prospect of a crisis is frightening because to

many, it conjures up the very real possibility of breaking up the marriage. The problem is that keeping things quiet (especially dissatisfaction) will generate anger, and this kind of anger in the relationship is usually a far greater danger than is any given confrontation.

The truth is that a crisis doesn't necessarily mean the demise of the relationship. As a matter of fact, after a huge blowout, when the fight was world-class and the partners were insulting one another, screaming, crying, and so forth, and then gradually worked toward some understanding, after the fight (but within the same time frame), the couple could very well make love.

Sex disappears from the relationship when partners feel estranged because of accumulated bad feelings that don't get aired. Sometimes partners can even become ingenious and often engineer a fight; that is, they engineer a crisis to talk, eliminate anger, and therefore happily release affection and libidinous, sexual feelings.

The point is that where there is anger, there is no libido, and vice versa. Therefore an important objective of the relationship is to prevent dissatisfaction from simmering, smoldering, and accumulating. This is extremely important because the everyday pressures of life (raising a family, managing work problems, and so forth) begin to take over so that one's responsibilities begin to elbow out one's sexual life.

As mentioned, sometimes, unconsciously, and even willy-nilly, people feel that the only way to penetrate the dilemma of feeling afraid to raise the issue of dissatisfaction is to create a crisis. In such a case, creating a crisis is reflexive. If creating the crisis is more deliberate—consciously done—then it takes courage as well as a leap of faith in the ability of people to talk through difficulties. Other than creating a crisis, a shortcut to sex itself, and to keeping the sexual relationship viable, is for each partner to be listened to and to feel understood by the other.

Wisdom

A crisis can be an opportunity, and frequently is. Have courage; don't be afraid of a crisis. It's an opportunity both to listen and to feel understood—and this is the aphrodisiac.

Dangers and Opportunities in the Relationship

Remember

Keep things alive and interesting.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Am I enjoying myself?	☑	❑
Am I talking about my dissatisfaction toward my partner?	☑	❑
Am I suddenly feeling estranged toward my partner?	❑	☑
Can I confront and deal with a crisis immediately?	☑	❑

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Part Two

You

PREVIEW

In part two, "You," we will look at specific difficulties you bring to any relationship. We will also suggest what you can do, through your own insight and behavior, to make it better.

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7

Your Main Task in Life

WISHES AND ANGER

To get to the main task in life, we need to talk about wishes and anger. The point is that we are all wish-soaked creatures. We always want things—all the time. This is because wishes are the most immediate representative of what is called the *pleasure principle*. We all always want things to go our way. It's pleasing that way. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, life is constructed with many interferences to our pursuit of satisfying all our wishes, at all times. And if we do get the wish met, frequently, it's not exactly when we wanted it met. And even when it is when we wanted it met, it's usually not met in exactly the way we wanted. And then again, even if it is met sort of the way we wanted, then sometimes it's not met to the fullest measure. And this is what happens with partners in marriage.

The question is, what happens when the wish is only met a little, or heavens, not at all? The answer is, we get angry. And this is what couples deal with—all the time.

Not getting what you want always, always, always produces a sense of disempowerment or helplessness or, at least, frustration. The question now is, why should one be angry when helpless or disempowered? And the obvious yet sometimes elusive answer is that when we feel disempowered and there's nothing we can do about it,

or nothing we can figure out with respect to getting reempowered, then anger is frequently the only way to feel such reempowerment. The point is that anger is explosive. It wants to stand up. It needs to express its nature, its power.

The problem is that most often, people do not distinguish between major wishes and minor ones. Wishes are most often treated as though they're all major. The irony here is that not all problems have the same weight, yet people treat all these problems as though they are equally horrible. Of course, most of these wish frustrations are minor and do not reach the level of what could be called problems. But with couples especially, all wish frustrations are usually experienced as major, and therefore it's always important to distinguish between major and minor wishes to calibrate all the anger—down.

WISDOM

Pleasure to wishes to disappointment to disempowerment to anger: cure that, and you cure neurosis, or if not neurosis, then surely you cure unhappiness in marriage.

WHAT IS THE MAIN TASK OF LIFE?

Because we are all wish-soaked creatures, always wishing for something but not always getting it, or actually getting wishes infrequently, we are usually flirting with being annoyed, or irritated, or aggravated, or simply angry—even enraged or furious. Remember that anger always generates a sense of empowerment, especially when we feel disempowered or helpless because we are not getting what we want.

And so it seems evident that what we all face as the main task of life is to manage our anger—better. The better we manage it, the healthier and more mature our behavior will be. The better we manage anger, the better relationships will be. The better we manage it, the more likely it becomes that ultimately, we will be able to work toward our goals—especially longer-term goals.

Yes, of course, the main task in life is to be a better person, to identify with humanity, to be compassionate, and so forth. This is the overarching and general aim in the spirit of being a good person. What we are discussing here, however, is the detail, the moment, and the person as actor under the microscope, where the wishes—each little one—can be seen with their atomic impulses to get what they

want. In terms of what the wish wants, we can see that the wish is experienced by the person as always major. It takes thinking and perspective to be able, in broad daylight, to distinguish between major and minor wishes and to act accordingly. The better we manage anger, the better we can struggle with all our challenges—those of our relationships and those of our own need systems and personalities.

Wisdom

If an anger management course doesn't include in its curriculum the relationship between wishes, on one hand, and the psychology of empowerment/disempowerment, on the other, then don't take the course.

SYMPTOMS AND CONSCIOUSNESS

Sigmund Freud said that consciousness was curative. He meant that if you're able to have your conflict revealed and made conscious, then you have a chance to dissolve it and solve the problem. What this really means is if you're conscious of the problem, you'll be able to struggle with it, and eventually assign it to the dustbin of your history.

Freud was mostly right. The problem was that he never specified what it is in your unconscious that needs to surface and be made conscious. Therefore the question becomes, is there some particular thing, or some very powerful combination of things, in anyone's unconscious that, if it surfaces, has curative power? The answer is yes, there is something in your unconscious that, if made conscious, can help you. What that something is, though, Freud never told us.

But now we know. The answer is that people feel better when they realize that they're angry, and furthermore, figure out who it was that made them feel angry. As a matter of fact, the only way a psychological-emotional symptom is cured is when a person becomes conscious of his or her suppressed and concealed anger, and then identifies the "who" who was the culprit that blocked the wish that caused the person to be angry in the first place.

Remember that it is the blocked wish that produces feelings of disempowerment and then anger. The problem is that frequently, the "who" who blocked the wish is a spouse or some other significant figure whom you feel you can't confront. In many cases, the anger, along with the who, is suppressed to the point that you don't even

know it's there. This is what repression is. As a direct result of this repression of anger as well as the repression of being conscious of the person who caused it, people begin to display involuntary reactions or symptoms, as, for example, in the appearance of obsessions, or compulsions, or anxiety, or depression, or scary thoughts that intrude on you.

This particular assemblage of emotional symptoms, and not knowing how they started, or what they're about, is usually governed by conflict with some significant other. Could it be your spouse? Look to your relationship, your wishes, and your frustrations, and talk about them.

Wisdom

You can cure your own symptoms. Figure out the wish, the anger, and the "who."

AGGRAVATION VERSUS TROUBLE

Because of their overwhelming responsibilities, demands, needs, feelings, and, mostly, wishes for things to go right, people frequently fail to make any distinction between what, on one hand, constitutes *aggravation,* and what, on the other, defines *trouble.*

Aggravation is frustrating. It tries your patience and makes you work harder to correct something or to redo something that should already probably have been better done; or it costs you money, unnecessarily; or the ineptness or carelessness of others, or of your own making, can make things very inconvenient for you. This is all aggravation.

Trouble, on the other hand, defeats you, depresses you, and makes you feel that fate triumphs and there's nothing you can do about it. Your spouse suddenly declares that he or she is leaving the marriage. Someone in the family has a dreaded disease or dies unexpectedly. These are examples of trouble. Trouble flattens you, while aggravation only annoys you.

Trouble pins your wishes to ground zero and renders you helpless. Aggravation challenges you to get up and triumph over inconveniences. Therefore, when people begin to see the differences between aggravation and trouble more sharply, they report feeling much better when confronting aggravating circumstances.

And this is the crux of the matter in all primary relationships such as marriage. Not everything in marriage is trouble, even though conflicts can be difficult to bear as well as to penetrate. Much of it is pure aggravation that can be readily and effectively dealt with by talking it through.

WISDOM

With aggravation, there is always the possibility of realizing the wish. It will require effort. With trouble, one's hopes and dreams may have to be recast. It, too, will require effort.

Wishes and Anger

Remember

It's important to distinguish between major and minor wishes. Seeing that not every wish is major will free you from a good deal of emotional turmoil.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Do I always insist that my needs be met immediately?	❑	☑
Am I in control of my anger?	☑	❑
Do I realize that I'm at the mercy of forces outside of my control when I don't understand my own anger?	☑	❑
Am I aware that much of my unhappiness is caused by those who block my wish?	☑	❑
Am I aware that aggravation is not the same as trouble?	☑	❑

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8

Rising above Your Resistance

COUNT

When talking, some people can interest everyone present. This *everyone* can be a single person, a classroom of students, a social gathering, or a therapy group. The question is, when you speak, is everyone interested? What needs to be guarded against is not putting people to sleep or having them glaze over whenever you speak.

If you have this problem, then the key here is to count—count how many people are not listening. That is to say, when you speak, you need to see if anyone is not listening. There are those people who, when they speak, can and do hold any audience rapt. These are the people who never need to count. It's only those who, when speaking, have gotten all sorts of feedback (verbal as well as nonverbal) that people are not interested who need to count—who need to become aware that something is wrong. Are people listening to you, or not? It's that simple.

Not creating interest in what you are saying is by way of your own design. You're doing it. What it really means is that you yourself are not interested and/or not in touch with your own needs and your own feelings. As a result, people will see you as weak, boring, and definitely uninteresting. Therefore the question is, are you with it,

or are you not with it? The answer is that if people glaze over when you speak, you're not with it!

So what to do? Well, the answer is that your typical social approach is probably always to be unemotional, sacrificial, deferential, submissive, or indirect, on one hand, and on the other, perhaps you're so not with it that you don't even realize how monumentally self-absorbed you really are. By your less than interesting social style, you're conveying to others that you yourself are just not that important. In this sense, the ability to assess social cues that people give one another is clearly underdeveloped.

Remember that the world follows instructions; convey the message that you're not important, and the world will treat you accordingly.

Wisdom

Get thee to a shrink. For this sort of problem, a shrink can be exceedingly helpful. You need to rise above yourself and feel more entitled.

RETAIN YOUR INDIVIDUALITY

It's not important that everyone love you—especially every moment. You don't have to be a good girl, or a good boy, to a fault. When you register your needs or take a position different from the point of view others take, it's OK—especially when you feel strongly about your point, when you have thought it through, and most important, when the objective of your point is unmalicious. Therefore it's OK to have a different opinion from your spouse as well. The important point is to talk it over.

Another way to say it is that it's even in your best interest *not* to be liked by everyone. It's far better than always homogenizing yourself with everyone else—especially for the sake of remaining loved by everyone or because you don't want to stand out as different. In this sense, it's good for your spouse to know that you have a mind of your own. And this is completely different from being an oppositional type of person so that you come across as always protesting.

Think through what's important to you, and then by expressing it, you will retain your individuality. This sort of value becomes important to keep in mind and to practice—especially for partners in relationships. It's a matter of self-respect.

Wisdom

A homogenized individual, like a chameleon, can't struggle better; in fact, he or she can't struggle at all.

THE LINE

In everyone's life, there exist many challenges. One of these challenges applies to all people; it's whether a person stays behind the Line too much and too long, or just steps behind the Line a few times each day, takes a breath, hangs out a bit, but then steps right back out—in front of the Line.

In front of the Line is a doing place. When someone is in front of the Line, he or she is usually taking care of business and doing what's necessary. Thus to be in front of the Line is to be in a place of reality. In front of the Line, there is no time for repetitive and continual fantasy, or undue rumination, or what-ifs, or daydreaming about what it is you're going to do (but of course, are not doing) or should have done.

This what-if and daydreaming place, where you think of getting even with people who you believe have wronged you, or where you imagine being admired for some heroic act, and so forth, is all behind-the-Line rumination. It leads nowhere and means just that—that you're nowhere. It's a place of withdrawal, behind the Line. Therefore behind the Line is not a place of doing; it's a place of not doing, even though being there can temporarily make you feel better.

It's important that you get out from behind the Line and not stay there too long, because it's there, behind the Line, that your wishes get artificially gratified. In this land of behind the Line, you will never stand a chance because no one will give you what you want when you're asking for it in your mind, or hoping for it, or even expecting it. Behind the Line is a place for wishes to be dreamed of, but never realized.

Therefore get out in front of the Line and get those wishes in play. Work on your responsibilities. In front of the Line is where it's possible to struggle, and struggle better. And in marriage, staying behind the Line is a recipe for disaster. It means you're avoiding the relationship.

Wisdom

As Yoda says, "There is only, do."

TIME

We all know that time flies. And as we get older, we begin to realize that time flies by at almost the speed of light. As a matter of fact, if we think that every 10 years is merely a blink, then what you do within that decade feels like it should count. It almost becomes an imperative for you to fill that time with something productive—something that means a lot to you.

If you're behind the Line, then nothing will happen in that blink of a decade. And then in another two, three, or four blinks, 30 or 40 years or so have elapsed, and you've not done it—whatever the *it* is. The point is that all those blinks will happen whether you do the it or not, so if you really want something, even if you do it ever so gradually, even getting into it will lead to something good and, more importantly, will absorb your interest, time, and energy. When asked, well-known creative people usually agree that the finished product is not as important to them as the process of getting to the finished product. They all love the doing of it.

When you're doing whatever the *it* is, your spouse will respect you for it, and love always pairs with respect. It essentially means that you're not a passive person.

Wisdom

Take that first doing step, even if it means holding your breath, closing your eyes, and taking that leap of faith, and even if it means letting your guts turn over and therefore experiencing the difficulty of it all.

GUTS

Taking that first step to do something you want to do, or need to do, sometimes takes guts. And what this means is that confronting a challenge always places a demand on you to do something that you probably find difficult to confront. An internal demand made on yourself to do it, in the face of the difficulty you feel in doing it, can be akin to the feeling that there's a mountain to climb and that the slope of the mountain is very steep. Even the thought of such a challenge can make you feel weak, tired, lethargic, and passive. It can seduce you into a behind-the-Line position, where you only daydream about the accomplishment and never engage it in reality, as in being in front of the Line, in a doing place. And so some people never begin to attack the mountain.

The same is true in relationships. Some people want to say something to their partner but can't confront the challenge of it. For some, the confrontation feels like an impossibility, and the sufferer knows it would require guts—courage—to say what needs to be said. The same is true for a person who is trying to do something different and better with his or her behavior. But to do so means to be conscious of the issue at all times, to make mistakes and to repair them, and mostly, to live with the discomfort of living this new and better behavior, even when it goes against the grain.

Nevertheless, doing something new and good, but which is difficult, can be a great growth experience. It expands your psyche, your emotional repertoire, and gives you greater ego strength as well as a substantial feeling that you're engaging in exploration and traveling to unchartered territory. It's an adventure, and it takes courage as well as gut-wrenching attempts.

Try it.

WISDOM

Making gut-wrenching attempts to do something valuable for yourself is one of the only dignities. It can lead you to care about others as well.

PROCRASTINATION

The Adages

1. The procrastinator's typical behavior yields the adage, "Never do today what you can do tomorrow."
2. The doer's adage becomes, "Do today instead of tomorrow."
3. The superconscientious person's adage is, "Always do yesterday what, as a procrastinator, you would have done tomorrow."

The main point here is connected to the Line proposition that warns you not to spend too much time behind it in withdrawal and fantasy; rather, occupy yourself in front of the Line, which means you're in a doing place and really functioning—putting into play all kinds of effort to accomplish your goals.

The whole thing depends on whether you're influenced or motivated solely by external signals, or rather, by internal ones. For example, when an assignment is given

in school to turn in an essay, and a deadline date is set, there are some students who cannot approach the problem until a certain point is reached—usually determined by the suddenly approaching absolute date for submission of the assignment. In other words, it's only the deadline that motivates this student. This is what is known as an external signal (the deadline for submission) creating necessary motivation to get the student off his or her you-know-what. Nothing else seems to do it.

On the other hand, there are those who can motivate immediately on getting the assignment. They couldn't care less about the deadline for submission as the sole motivating force that will get the job done. They just get it done—period!

It may be gut-wrenching to begin being a self-starter. However, the habit of just immediately doing everything that comes across your path takes over, and your internal signal to *do* then becomes the only signal necessary.

WISDOM
Procrastinate later.

THE WORLD IS A C–

Keep in mind that you have to be active and responsible to take care of yourself. The world has too many forces or variables acting on each of us, and there is no way to control it all. And we all know that many people work in slipshod ways. Furthermore, bureaucratic and impersonal absences of caring also contribute to the many forces that contribute to making a C– world.

Many people just don't care. Many others are either undereducated or just not bright, or not able. Add to that the social ills that impact us, such as poverty, racism, sexism, regional differences, and wars, and if you combine individual ineptness with all of these social problems and then wish to rate the world—that is, to give it a grade—then at best, you might consider C– as a symbol for the state of the world.

Thus the issue is for you to be on top of your game. If you wait for it to be done for you (whatever the *it* is) and assume that it will work out and be OK, well, it won't be OK. Why? The simple answer is that you'd better be on top of everything you do, or it will be on top of you.

So the question is, are you a C–? Do you take care of business? But don't think it ends there, because even if you do take care of your end, someone at the other end

may, very likely, fall down on the job. So the answer is to have patience and persevere. Keep in mind that because of the state of affairs of this C– world, you're always going to be dealing with aggravation. Those who *do*, and do well, are always in front of the Line. Keep it going, and very importantly, try to keep your relationship, your marriage, away from the C– by not avoiding what needs to be done, or said, or repaired. Do it yourself now, rather than thinking that there is some other person—a so-called modern man, a hero, a lifesaver—who will do it for you.

WISDOM

The quintessential oxymoron is modern man.

Defeating Resistance to Change

Remember

Self-respect will enable you to be more mature.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Do others consider me to be an interesting person?	☑	❑
Can I ever be different from the majority?	☑	❑
Am I a doer, rather than only a maybe person?	☑	❑
Do I squander time?	❑	☑
Can I do the unpleasant things that need to be done?	☑	❑
Do I avoid responsibility?	❑	☑
Do I realize the importance of paying attention to detail?	☑	❑

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9

How and Why People Get Together (or Don't)

MATE SELECTION CRITERIA

What to look for in a mate? Have you chosen wisely? With respect to this issue, there are probably five factors in mate selection (choosing your life partner) that everyone uses—whether knowing it or not:

1. *Mind.* Is what he or she says interesting to you?
2. *Eye.* Does he or she appeal to your eye?
3. *Heart.* Does your heart feel loved?
4. *Stomach.* Does it feel like he or she is trustworthy?
5. *Behavior.* Is his or her behavior good?

We might ask, which of the five factors is the most important so that if that point was missing, the relationship would probably be doomed from the beginning? It's clear that some people are only smitten if the person is brainy, and others if the person pleases and nourishes the eye. Still others are taken solely with being loved by the other so that the heart feels loved. In addition, there are those who need someone who is sincere and trustworthy, and that's all that counts. Finally, for some, the most important quality in choosing a mate is that the person's behavior should be good.

And of course, many people seek more than one of these qualities; and finally, many want all of them.

However, in all likelihood, one of these factors contributes most to the potential viability and longevity of the relationship. And the answer is that realistically, and with respect to what makes a relationship better, number 5, *behavior,* is the key. Remember that character is behavior and vice versa. Without good behavior, the relationship has a poor chance of working. For example, the person could be very bright and very attractive, you could feel loved by the person (and love the person), and you can see that the person means well. But if the person is an alcoholic, for example, then that sort of behavior will undermine the relationship and eventually cause it to end.

No matter what the person says, it's what the behavior is that tells the story.

Wisdom

Behavior, behavior, behavior: the number 1 consideration in mate selection.

RESCUE MISSIONS

There are many people who, when choosing a partner, go on rescue missions. In other words, you meet someone and he or she appears to have a cluster of personality features that together reveal a picture of vulnerability. These traits or features can include the person seeming helpless, weak, emotionally wounded, innocent, or naive. With such persons, you can get the sense that without your help, they will perish in this predatory world. Your sense of their vulnerability then becomes irresistible for you.

So, in addition to appearing vulnerable and thereby calling forth your protective instincts, you may not consciously know it, but your attraction to this person usually also offers a sense of comfort and security, insofar as you may believe that such a person will never be unfaithful or unthankful, and will never compete for dominance; rather, the sense of it is that such a person will make *you* feel dominant.

Basically, your need for assurance that with such a person, your emotional security is guaranteed is usually an unconscious determiner of your decision-making process, and so it's concealed even from yourself. What remains conscious is what you consider to be a compelling love for that person. However, the great secret is that because of

your own needs for security and dominance, that person is rescuing *you,* even though your attraction was an ostensible mission of the opposite form—of you rescuing him or her. In such a case, it actually becomes a reciprocal rescue.

Now for the danger: this sort of rescue operation can be dangerous because such an ostensibly vulnerable person can eventually even be revealed as tyrannical, dominant, stubborn, and frequently, difficult to be with. This is so because such individuals have usually lived a lot in withdrawal, behind the Line, and, correspondingly, demonstrate a certain shyness that conceals a fundamentally angry underpinning. Thus, on top, such a person is basically afraid of others, but beneath, he or she is quite angry (at his or her own sense of helplessness). You will never cure this person. You will regret the rescue.

Wisdom

History tells us that missionaries (who considered themselves rescuers) were boiled in oil. Be careful!

LET EVERYONE HAVE HIS OR HER OWN PROBLEMS

Don't worry about the other person crying. Sound hard-hearted? Well, you can empathize, and feel genuine regret, but you must realize that for the most part, you may not be able to fix it, and therefore it should not control you. Thus don't be reflexively alarmed by the difficulty even before you know what it's about. Your somewhat conscious distance from it doesn't make you a bad person.

In this sense, don't be a reflexive jumper-inner! In contrast, when something is really wrong, it needs to be talked about. Frequently enough, though, when it's not about a genuinely important issue, then refraining from succumbing or capitulating to the drama can cause the drama to cease.

The only exception to the rule of letting everyone have his or her own problems is when a true crisis or catastrophe hits. Then it's sharing time. Otherwise, be careful with dissolving in the face of the other's difficulty. Outside of a real problem, it's better to understand that at times, the other person is reduced to creating a crisis because nothing else seems to work; that is to say, your partner may not be able to get your attention any other way. In such a case, you need to

take a good look at your own problem. Other than this, however, your job is not to be controlled, and yet to be present; not to give up, or in, but rather to insist on determining whether the upset is real or not. If the upset is important, then your job is to jump in with both feet, try to reflect your partner's feelings, and generally be as supportive as possible.

Wisdom

Men and women equally have the right to feel bad.
Outside of a genuine crisis, it's not the end of the world.

MEN MARRY THEIR FATHERS; WOMEN MARRY THEIR MOTHERS

Prevailing folk wisdom has it that men marry their mothers and women their fathers. The truth of it is that most people marry a person who reminds them of the parent with whom they've had the most incomplete relationship. And in many cases, it's the same-gender parent. Thus, in trying to understand the relationship you have with your spouse, try lining up the personality of your spouse with that of your same-gender parent. You may gain a perspective regarding your relationship with your spouse that has eluded you for the time you've been together. This is what is called *transference.*

Why we tend to be attracted to someone who reminds us of the parent with whom we've had the least complete relationship concerns our wish to complete the relationship—to have a second chance at it. The unfortunate reality, however, is that this sort of a hope will never be realized; rather, the same problems you experienced with the parent (about whom your spouse reminds you) will be replayed with your spouse. And the hope and expectation that you can change the other person the way you wanted a change to occur in the relationship with your parent will turn out to be as elusive with your spouse as it was with your parent.

Yet people do accommodate one another—albeit, only somewhat. If the accommodation is successful, 2 or 3 percent is about the extent of the accommodation. And furthermore, this change will never really correspond to your hope about gaining a second chance with your parent; rather, any change in your marital interactions will

reflect only what occurs as a result of the challenges derived solely from the marital relationship.

Thus, when women marry their mothers and men their fathers, each partner ends up with someone who feels problematic. Yet have no fear, because remember that it is personality that makes or breaks relationships, and so, in any event, all relationships are difficult. The only question is, do you work on it?

Wisdom

If you're a woman, you probably will be married to your mother (who is your husband), and if you're a man, you'll probably be married to your father (who is your wife). Thus your father and her mother, or your mother and his father, are now together. Think about that one!

TO GET TOGETHER OR NOT

You're stuck! He or she wants you both to marry, but you can't do it yet, or you simply can't do it, period! Your feet aren't moving in that direction. There are things you like about him or her, and there are other things that make you angry and therefore hesitant. Everything seems to point in the direction of getting married to him or her, but you simply can't do it. This is indicative of *ambivalence,* and in most cases, it's not a good sign and often leads to a permanent separation of the relationship.

The point is that people usually vote with their feet. What this means is that what you really want or don't want to do informs you from your gut—from your intuition, your instinct. It's when your gut says no that your feet won't move. Your feet will tell you more about what you feel (what's in your gut) than will your brain. When you move toward the one you'll make your partner, then your feet are voting yes, and when you can't move toward that relationship (with respect to commitment), then your feet are telling you that your gut is shouting, no!

And no matter how guilty you feel, or how controlled you may feel by your girlfriend's or boyfriend's needs, in the end, it's your feet that will do the voting.

Wisdom

Trust your feet.

How and Why People Get Together

Remember

Both your partner's behavior and yours is the most important consideration when deciding to pair up.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Is each of us trustworthy?	☑	❑
Am I only looking for someone who needs milk and Band-Aids?	❑	☑
Do I know that it's not the end of the world when either I or my partner feel bad?	☑	❑
Am I aware that it's quite likely that my choice of a mate will, in all likelihood, remind me of the personality qualities of my same-sex parent?	☑	❑

10

Managing the Crisis

POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS

Posttraumatic stress as a disorder has surfaced as an identifiable psychological and emotional experience and is now considered a bona fide psychiatric diagnosis. The experience of posttraumatic stress concerns the reliving of a terrible trauma. Most frequently, soldiers who have experienced combat are afflicted with this sort of problem. In addition, rape victims, abused children, and people who have been personally exposed to some catastrophic experience are also candidates for this diagnosis.

The reliving of the trauma can predictably generate nightmares, great tension, panic, depression, generalized anxiety, and a host of other symptoms such as withdrawal from social interaction, memory difficulties, and interference in concentration. A person so afflicted can become dysfunctional both on the job and in personal relationships.

A complication of posttraumatic stress also includes the phenomenon known as *delayed reaction.* This means that the experience of the posttraumatic stress doesn't necessarily occur immediately after the traumatic event. Sometimes the reliving of the experience of the event and the symptoms that accompany it can spontaneously appear after some time has elapsed—months, or even years. And sometimes the

posttraumatic stress occurs only in the experience of the sudden onsets of bad or even terrible moods.

The question is, is posttraumatic stress limited only to those who have had acute catastrophic experiences? The answer may be that because life gives everyone difficult challenges, by which we lose, suffer, obsess over loved ones, and so forth, then it may be true that at some point, all of us experience ongoing bits of posttraumatic stress.

The point is that in any primary relationship, such as a marriage, bits of posttraumatic stress are always playing a role in the wear and tear of the relationship, in the sense of contributing to what may be described as *relationship fatigue.* The importance of recognizing this phenomenon implies that it's essential for each partner in the relationship to help one another with patience and understanding. Patience and understanding ease the effects of the stress, and we all need the stress to be eased.

Wisdom

After the age of about 60, posttraumatic stress is ubiquitous; that is, we all have it.

WITH WHOM DO YOU IDENTIFY?

Same-gender identification is a sure thing: it happens whether we like it or not. Want to know how your prospective husband will eventually be? Observe his father; and the same is true for daughters and mothers. Of course, boys also pick up attitudes and behaviors from their mothers, as do girls from their fathers. Nevertheless, if everything is normal, and goes reasonably well, then the main influence for boys is the father, and for girls, it's the mother.

In view of this, we need to ask the general question, since the sons and daughters will take after their fathers and mothers, respectively, then are the sons and daughters responsible for the sins of the fathers and mothers? The answer is a resounding "Yes"! The sons are definitely responsible for the sins of the father insofar as the sons are responsible not to repeat the sins of the father.

Since identification is axiomatic (self-evident truth), then children will have attitudes, prejudices, and behaviors that resemble the attitudes, proclivities, and

responses of their parents. The point is that each generation needs to grow healthier and respond better, and therefore, if you see that your parents' behaviors or attitudes are such that they shouldn't be emulated, then it becomes your responsibility to make sure you're different. In making such change, you need to be conscious of particular behaviors that are not in your best interest and to try to dilute these behaviors—and then do something different, something better. Work on changing.

In a primary relationship like marriage, it becomes extra important to monitor all of the automatic or reflexive attitudes and behaviors that one brings to the relationship. These were cultivated and nurtured early in life, automatically reflecting parental imitation. During your marital relationship is the time to change them. Otherwise, negative comments are heard from wife to husband, such as "You're just like your father," or from husband to wife, such as "You're just like your mother."

WISDOM

All great literature tells us that we are what we do, not what we think or say. Therefore do better.

EMOTIONS

Most psychologists who study the relationship between emotions and personality agree that there are only a few emotions that are considered primary or basic. The few basic emotions agreed upon by those psychologists who have specialized in this arena of research consist of: anger, fear, joy, sorrow, disgust, and acceptance. To this may be added the premise that each of these primary emotions may also have a fundamental or basic nature—its own DNA, so to speak.

Therefore it can be speculated that each primary emotion containing its own basic nature has one, and only one, intention. That is to say, each primary emotion wants to do something, and this something is not determined by social regulation, social norms, culture, or anything else, except the particular emotion's inherent mandate or instinct. We can even say that each of the primary emotions has a single-minded purpose, or even a single-minded personality, and that this personality, with its single aim, knows no civilization; rather, it only knows what it's hard-wired to do.

In relationships, then, we can surmise that emotional responses can run amok, each following its own distinctive and instinctive aim, and therefore making it

difficult for each partner of the couple to better calibrate his or her part in any misunderstanding or difference. Thus, in a discussion or argument, emotional responses frequently jump out and do what they want to do, almost as if there were four people arguing: each partner plus each partner's particular emotion doing its thing—two against two.

Thus the job of each partner in a relationship is to realize that in addition to the differences the partners are trying to work out, in a sense, their emotions seek to be gratified, and this means, for example, that logic sometimes takes a backseat to emotion.

Wisdom

The mind of your emotion is not the same as the mind of your mind. It's as if we exist with two minds in one being.

THE MINDS OF SPECIFIC EMOTIONS

Wouldn't it be interesting to get a bird's-eye view of what is the basic aim, the basic intention, the mind, the DNA, of each basic emotion? In this way, we could better understand what each emotion wants to do so that the dissensions, arguments, differences, and conflicts of any relationship may be better dealt with.

Here is one rendition of a list of basic emotions. Remember that the DNA-hard-wired aim of each is not determined by the rules of civilized life. The emotion wants to do what the emotion wants to do:

1. *Anger.* Anger wants to attack.
2. *Fear.* Fear wants to flee.
3. *Joy.* Joy wants to be happy.
4. *Sorrow.* Sorrow needs to yearn for whatever was lost (to get it back).
5. *Disgust.* Disgust needs to reject—or eject.
6. *Acceptance.* Acceptance needs to take in—to incorporate.

As far as relationships are concerned, it is the anger emotion that can do the most damage. This is so because when whichever person of the couple feels angry, the impulse will be to attack. This, of course, will cause friction in the relationship, and yet generally, expressing the anger is better than swallowing it. If the anger is expressed,

the couple has a chance to work it out. If swallowed, or suppressed, or repressed, the anger, in its basic function of attacking, will then attack the self, and this will certainly cause symptoms to appear—symptoms, for example, such as obsessions, or compulsions, or intrusive thoughts, or fears.

In light of this revelation regarding the nature of emotions, it becomes vital to air your dissatisfactions to one another and for you both to be willing to talk it through. It must be remembered that dissatisfaction is usually a code word for anger. This is especially important because in addition to trying to handle the attitude and personality differences you may have, you must also confront the extra challenge of handling your emotions—especially anger.

Wisdom

The hidden struggle in a relationship is the one regarding the nature and calibration of emotion—especially anger.

WHINING

Frequently enough, one partner in a relationship is heard to say to the other, "Stop whining—you're always whining!" The question is, what is whining, and how does it sound? The answer is that the whine is a nagging sound that is composed (inside of the whine) of an implicit complaint. The whine, therefore, is essentially a complaint.

Furthermore, since someone who whines usually does it characteristically—to the point where the partner can make an accusation of it happening "all the time"—then we may say that the whining partner, basically, is constantly complaining. But the next question is, complaining about what? Is it that every complaint is different, or is it that every complaint, as expressed through whining, is basically about the same thing?

The answer is that the whining partner is really only complaining about one general thing, even though the concrete complaint is always different, depending on what the subject matter of the conversation happens to be. To be specific, a whine is always saying, "I'm about to ask for something, but even before I ask for it, I expect not to get a yes. On the contrary, I expect to get a no to whatever I want, to whatever I may need, to whatever I ask."

Thus it's important to remember that when you or your partner whines, it may be because the other tends to say no to most requests. Talking over the usual cause of

whining (with this insight in mind) can make a big difference in helping to improve the struggle in the relationship.

Wisdom

It's good to say yes once in a while, so check yourself as to whether you're always saying no. In addition, it's also important to check yourself as to whether you're coming to the relationship always expecting a no.

DEFENSIVENESS

Individuals who feel fragile, or overly sensitive, are frequently very defensive and are known not to be affectionate. These are people who are standoffish, shy, and unusually modest and who tend to minimize most everything. Such people find it difficult to demonstrate their love for their partners and, in addition, usually don't allow their partners to be demonstrative toward them—this in the face of the actual love of and by the partner. Such a person needs to learn more about translating and then displaying love feelings.

In a relationship, a person like this can be both dependent and critical. The dependency behavior of such a person generates a critical attitude because dependency invites a kind of need for closeness, which is precisely what such a person finds hard to tolerate. Hence dependency or affection toward the partner can be followed by what looks like an illogical criticality and anger. This kind of sequence is, among other factors, governed by the psychological rule that dependency will always generate anger.

In the relationship, therefore, when some affection is exchanged, the defensive-dependent one can often display a bit of a negative reaction about some other relatively innocuous occurrence, and the partner will not know what in the world caused such a reaction. What caused such an illogical negative reaction was the preceding warmth and affection, which then needed to be somehow neutralized by a negative response.

"Don't think that I'm going to be all lovey-dovey all of a sudden just because we had a good moment," is the spirit (though not the conscious thought) of this sort of sequence. In such cases, love is certainly not enough. The cure is to do a great deal of talking about the problem, without the slightest hint of making demands to change.

Wisdom

Let yourself be loved. It's OK. Your partner is not attacking you, abandoning you, or scaring you. That stuff is from your childhood. Your partner is not that parent who did those things. Right?

ANSWERING QUESTIONS OR NOT ANSWERING QUESTIONS

Most people are quite law abiding, even obedient and compliant. Even with respect to questions that are directly posed, most people will have the need to immediately provide an answer. This sort of tendency to feel obliged to answer, and furthermore, to feel even that it would be rude not to answer, is what compels people to provide immediate answers to questions posed. This is so, even if the question is intrusive of one's personal life or one's motivation, or awkward with respect to some other personal issue that one may want to resist, rather than answer, but can't and doesn't resist.

To be socially proper has a tremendous hold on people. And so, feeling that it would be improper not to answer, people go ahead and answer against their will, even if the question (and of course, the answer) puts one on the spot.

Fully knowing that people feel compelled to answer directly posed questions, those asking the questions have tremendous advantage. Furthermore, usually, the one asking the question already has a fully developed idea of why he or she is asking it, and also has a sense of what the answer might be. Therefore it's important that you not be squashed by this kind of inquisition—which is what it frequently is.

And here is the bad news: again, it is often the case that asking the question is a way of eliciting the answer to an already fully developed idea that is not yet revealed by the questioner (but is rather concealed as implicit in the question), and furthermore, that is sometimes designed by the questioner to confirm something that will basically be critical of the one questioned.

Therefore what should you do when asked? The answer is simply to say, "Well, what do you have in mind (that prompts the question?)". In other words, rather than answering the question, ask a question in return. This stopping of probable criticism (implied or otherwise, and justified or not) on the part of the questioner will tend to elevate your position. The alternative is to answer obediently, thereby both implicitly

and explicitly joining with the questioner and effectively lowering your position. And make no mistake about it: position is important.

In primary relationships, such as marriage, the same principle applies. In disagreements, try to invite discussion, rather than always answering questions.

WISDOM
Don't always answer; rather, ask for a statement.

MAGICAL THINKING

Some individuals consistently daydream about great accomplishments. Of course, such daydreaming is usually associated with an absence of actually doing something to accomplish these goals. The *principle of daydreaming* promotes engaging in magical thought processes by which one can have, or achieve, anything.

It's usually the people who feel underachieved who are overly engaged in this sort of a behind-the-Line activity—in a withdrawal—consuming much of their time. They do it, of course, because daydreaming is immediately gratifying and acts to give people what is known as a *compensatory lift*. This means that in the face of feelings of underachievement (or feelings of inferiority), or in the face of feeling rejected within a marriage, a person can manufacture satisfaction through the thinking process—a magical, gratifying thinking process.

Essentially, this magical thinking gets you what you want at times when you don't have what you want and are not working toward what you want, and it gives you relief from anxiety and depression because in reality, you don't really have what you want.

In addition, magical thinking contained within a behind-the-Line fantasy life acts as a resting place as well as a place to review events of your life, and then to relieve tension about these events by rationalizing—creating a good reason to neutralize guilt—in order not to feel bad. Thus behind-the-Line magical thinking is an arena in which you gain the ascendancy and deny things you don't like, and is even where the erotic life can be gratified. Magical thinking also gives one a fantasy ego boost, helps defend against depression, and yet keeps one in a self-defeating place—in withdrawal, behind the Line, prancing about, being heroic and grandiose. It is a wish-granting place, but only in fantasy.

In relationships, the less the couple is able to discuss and work on things, the more such magical thinking infects either or both partners.

WISDOM

An excess of magical thinking is a warning sign—the relationship is in trouble.

Crisis Management

Remember

Everyone experiences stress in life—all the time!

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Do I realize when I'm stressed?	☑	❑
Do I realize that I am what I do and not what I think?	☑	❑
Do I know that my emotions may want me to do things I may not want to do?	☑	❑
Do I know that the key to getting along is to be understanding and being able to better calibrate my emotions?	☑	❑
Do I always say no, even before my partner finishes asking the question?	❑	☑
Do I permit myself to be loved?	☑	❑
Am I a robot who just answers any question simply because it's asked?	❑	☑
Am I an inveterate daydreamer, rather than a doer?	❑	☑

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Part Three

Personality Styles

PREVIEW

In part three, "Personality Styles," basic personality types will be enumerated so that what becomes evident are the kinds of set tendencies people bring to relationships.

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Emotionally Controlled Types

THE ABSENCE-OF-WARMTH TYPE

In professional language, this type is generally called *schizoid.* It does not mean schizophrenic; rather, it simply means that the person tries to control the situation by keeping a significant emotional distance between self and other.

This distancing inclination is designed to keep a sense of warmth to a minimum. A schizoid person is cool and aloof in a relationship and, more or less, likes to take care of the self; that is, he or she likes to be self-sufficient. In addition, such a person seeks to engage in specific tasks (task oriented) and looks to do structured things such as marketing, getting the car washed, and so forth. Mostly, however, such a person suppresses feelings and cannot easily participate in spontaneous social interaction.

In a relationship, such a person will be a source of discomfort to a partner, especially if the partner needs responses of encouragement and love. Furthermore, at first, this kind of person can appear to be the strong, silent type, but after a while, it becomes clear that what seemed like an attractive quality was really an inability on the part of the person to be able to participate in the development of conversation and be more present, giving, and loving. Simply, the person can't talk!

Thus, even in a psychotherapy situation, such a person would be hard-pressed to change this need for distancing. This does not mean that this absence-of-warmth type is a bad or malicious person. It simply means that such a type has these specific structures of personality deeply and precisely etched, and in such cases, the need to adhere to this schizoid style is felt by such a person to be life-saving. Thus the resistance to change is maximum.

Wisdom

If you need a lot of spontaneous gestures of affection, then the absence-of-warmth type is not for you.

P.S.: There's a difference between this absence-of-warmth type and one where the person is modest and not given to grand gestures so that even though appearing to be quiet, such a person may be quite able to be warm. It's just that there are people who speak without many extra words, are rather concise, and actually can be quite nice. When you meet this latter type, that's good. When you meet the former type, that's not good.

HOPE: When the former type feels sufficiently comfortable with a partner, engagement in the relationship will take the form of being responsive to anything directed at him or her, although in the absence of being able to initiate contact. If you can take that, then the relationship can work.

Case Study of the Absence-of-Warmth Type (Schizoid)

The first thing to notice in such a personality type is a remote quality to the personality. And this was so for Michael, age 34, who was referred to psychotherapy because his particular personality difficulty caused his wife literally to run out of the house and into the street, screaming. Apparently, she married Michael because he was, as she said, "the tall, strong, and silent type," and she was inexorably attracted to him for that reason alone. In fact, Michael was indeed an attractive, muscular man who didn't really need to do much in the relationship because even from the very beginning,

Carol was exceedingly busy doing everything for both of them. It was she that initially approached him, did all or most of the talking, and set up their first date. He simply went along with it, as he said, because she met his qualifications for "wifedom." He needed someone who would be proactive and do the talking for both of them. She, on the other hand, thought she had found her perfect mate. As it turned out, after a whirlwind two-month courtship, they eloped. It didn't take long for Carol to feel the pit in her stomach. After another two months, it dawned on her more specifically that Michael, as she said, "was a very problemed person," and she suddenly began complaining: "You're not talking to me! Why are you not talking?" Michael answered (which he could do, even though he couldn't initiate conversation) and told her just that: that he always answers her. But Carol wasn't having any of it. She told him that his logic was a defense and that it seemed to her that he didn't ever start saying anything to her even though he could answer her.

Carol confessed to a friend that she was scared, that perhaps she had made a life-defining error and had not realized that Michael, under no circumstances, could ever, it seemed to her, express warmth. Even in their sexual relationship, she said, his behavior was technical.

Michael was tall all right, but his so-called silent-type attractiveness was based on the bald fact that he simply was unable to initiate conversation, and so in sex, it was Carol who, without fail, always initiated contact. Therefore it became obvious to Carol that it didn't matter whether it was in nonverbal behavior or in actual conversation—Michael could not talk on his own. It wasn't that he was mute. Of course, he could talk, and he was, in fact, quite intelligent and also had a college education. But the raw fact was that he simply couldn't initiate any conversation whatsoever. There was one condition under which Michael would make an exception to his noninitiating conversation stance, and that was when he was at a job. In a task-oriented job situation, he then could ask questions and initiate anything that related to the achievement of the goal of the job. But in social situations, where there is no such structure and a person needs to be at least a bit spontaneous, he was lost.

At home, he was good at repairing things—that is, good at tasks—but otherwise, he was aloof. In addition, he had no friends of his own. The social contact they had as a couple consisted only of Carol's friends. Along with this, there were countless things that Michael couldn't or wouldn't do, as, for example, in answering the phone, or especially in making phone calls to others. However, he was always diligent about obeying rules and

regulations, and his health habits were excellent. He had only a passing interest in clothes and how he looked. This was so primarily because his focus was always inwardly directed and so how he looked to the world didn't matter that much to him. This, too, bothered Carol. At her wits end, Carol insisted that Michael seek psychotherapy consultation. He agreed, and so she scheduled his first appointment.

The therapist also needed to initiate all of the conversation by asking question after question, each of which Michael would answer directly and with full information. Michael admitted to all of Carol's complaints and told the therapist that he knew the problem had something to do with how his mother was never talkative and how she would tend to him also in a strictly technical sense, in the absence of any measurable warmth and affection. His father died when he was 11 years old, and he also told the therapist that he had only some scattered memories of this father, who worked as a traveling salesman and who Michael felt was hardly ever home.

Michael remembered always wanting to go to the movies, and in addition, he liked to read action-adventure books. He grew up in a midwestern city and, during his growing-up years, could not name anyone he ever considered a close friend. He said he guessed he "led a real solitary life," but because he was a strikingly handsome boy, and then grown man, girls and women were never a problem for him because before he knew it, "they were always showing up." In a thermostatic sense, his entire emotional experience in life would have to be described as a cool one characterized by remoteness, isolation, and aloofness. His sexual contact before marriage was always punctuated by his escapes. Whenever a partner would express ideas of commitment, Michael would correspondingly suddenly disappear, no longer responding to any phone calls from whoever it was who was interested in him.

More specifically, with respect to emotions, whatever anger he had was terribly suppressed or repressed and would appear only in hostile daydream fantasies. These were never acted upon in real life, but were displaced by other symptoms such as midnight eating binges. In addition, he reported that he had occasional nightmares in which feelings of terror would awaken him, especially with respect to a repetitive nightmare, the story line of which consisted of "crumbling walls of the house where eventually he became visible from behind the wall." This sort of nightmare revealed how important it was for Michael not to be seen, not to be visible, and to stay behind the wall (so to speak), hidden, and therefore safe from what he felt to be the danger of being seen—meaning social interaction.

After several months in psychotherapy consultation, there was not a smidgeon of change in his behavior, and one night, he and Carol sat at the dinner table having their dinner, throughout which Michael did not say a word. Carol reported, "For more than a half hour, we sat and ate, and even though he occasionally looked at me, he didn't say one word. I lost it and started to scream, and ran out of the house—actually screaming in the street."

Both Michael and Carol agreed to end the marriage. She was relieved to be away from what she experienced as "shunning behavior" on his part, and on his part, he reported that he was tremendously relieved to be away from what he considered to be the "tremendous pressure of the marriage."

Michael's absence of warmth was not an absence out of malicious intent, and very probably not out of some genetic birth anomaly; rather, it was most likely a result of an emotional arrest arising from a sense of abandonment that occurs in a child when a parent is not forthcoming with emotional warmth.

The development of this absence-of-warmth schizoid type's personality is coalesced with the need to control emotion and is therefore considered to be an emotion-controlled type.

THE ORDERLY TYPE

In professional language, this type of person is usually referred to as *obsessive-compulsive.* The obsessive element is the tendency to repetitively think of the same thing. The compulsive element is the urgency to do the thing that was obsessed about or to do what the person feels definitely needs to be done, even though the doing may squander time or give to the person the sense that the repetitive doing thing even is a bit odd or strange.

In a relationship, such a person will need to control all situations and to dominate the partner, and such qualities are the basis for identifying such a person as a controlling type. Such a person always needs to get his or her way. And all of it will be insisted on with the person's absolute certainty that he or she is correct and knows better.

What eventually emerges is the person's absolute sense that he or she is the superior one in the relationship. Furthermore, such a person will become stubbornly insistent on doing it (whatever the *it* is) a specific way and then will offer the logic of the choice to validate the decision.

In addition, this kind of person will usually tend to be orderly and highly uncomfortable with disorder. The orderliness is an attempt to screen out imperfections and, correspondingly, to seek perfection. Of course, since the perfect is the enemy of the good, then such a person is rarely satisfied in relationships because the feeling is that usually, things can be better controlled and that perfection can, in fact, mostly be in reach. As such, the spouse can never be counted as an equal or, at least, must fight to be counted as an equal.

Rather than focusing on the substance of the relationship, this type of person will focus more on the trappings of the relationship—its form and persona—how it would look to the outside world. Yet, in a relationship, and with great struggle, this kind of person can make some progress.

In addition to all of the above, the need for perfection and order is really only the top layer of many layers to the obsessive and compulsive complex; that is, there are many variations and degrees of maladjustment to all sorts of manifestations of this kind of personality. Some of these will be pointed out in the following case illustrations.

WISDOM

Be careful about someone always insisting on getting his or her own way. It's the need to control: that's what the need for orderliness is all about.

P.S.: There's a difference, on one hand, between someone who is supercontrolling, a neat freak, and terribly stubborn—always insisting on getting his or her own way because the person always feels that he or she is right—and on the other hand, someone who is conscientious, fastidious, and takes care of business without making any kind of obsessive drama out of everything. This latter type is good, while the former type is problematic.

HOPE: There are some controlling types who, with encouragement and patience, can tolerate some differences in opinion. Even though they, too, suffer with not getting everything they want, nevertheless, in some cases, they can let it pass. With this type of person,

and with considerable effort on the part of the partner, a relationship can be sustained.

Case Studies of the Orderly Type (Obsessive-Compulsive)

Following are some examples of a variety of obsessive and compulsive types separately and examples of some individuals who are both obsessive and compulsive.

Case 1

A professional businessman of 40 who worked night and day in his fabric factory was only home late at night. He had a late-night dinner and went to bed only to awaken early the next morning to start the ritual all over again. His wife had learned not to argue with him about it because it was no use. This man won all their arguments because according to him, he always had a good reason for what he was doing and saying, and in addition, he needed to prevail and control everything. He was a neat freak and usually pointed out where in the house improvements needed to be made. Out of necessity, habit, and experience with him, his wife had become less responsive and even somewhat sad and submissive—figuratively beaten down. He was relentless in his need for order and perfection, and the topper was that whenever his wife, for whatever reason, needed to leave the bed, even in the middle of the night, he would remake the bed so that, once again, it would be neat. In the narrow sense of a single symptom, this is a classic case of a compulsive personality, with a person needing to have his own way all the time. In addition, at the least, he also needed to express a continual fastidiousness and, at the most, a superperfectionistic attitude accompanied by a sense of righteousness.

Case 2

After the unfortunate death of both her parents, who died in a plane crash, a young woman of 18 began a series of compulsive counting rituals. Most of these compulsive countings would take place in the shower, where she needed to count a certain number of times she soaped each arm, each leg, her hair, her front, and her back. As time went on, the counting became longer, so instead of counting to 10 for each limb, she began to double it, and then after more time, to double it again. Each morning shower began to take longer and longer, until she began appearing late to her first morning

college course. Gradually, she noticed that she began to grind her teeth to the hum in her mind to popular songs. The grinding was not with any pressure; rather, it was the gliding of her upper and lower teeth against one another. She added this particular ritual to the one she enacted in the shower each morning, and then added still another by counting the number of women she would pass in the street who she felt were prettier than she as well as the number who she felt were not as pretty as she: counting, counting, counting. This was an example of a singular compulsive ritual that was not triggered by an obsessive thought and that, over time, comprised an entire repertoire of countings. It was thought that this entire compulsive symptom was this young woman's attempt to control her underlying panic about being in the world without her parents. So long as she could concentrate on counting, she couldn't think of anything else. She did well in school because she declared that her homework acted as a focus and didn't allow her to think of anything else. It was also thought that her panic was fundamentally a defense against knowing that she was angry at her parents for leaving her.

Case 3

A boy of 11 began to feel funny feelings in his stomach and instinctively decided that if he placed bottles under the bed, the bad feelings would be cured. And he was right. Whenever he had the bad feeling in his stomach, he would put some bottles under the bed and, sure enough, each time, the bad feeling would disappear. The symptom gradually became worse, and he began obsessing about it, and then proceeded to do his bottle ritual to cure the feelings. The symptom was eventually cured in psychotherapy consultation, when he began to remember a bad argument his parents had somewhat before he noticed that he had those bad feelings in his stomach. During that argument, his father threatened to divorce his mother so that then he, as an only child, was horrified that his family was, as he believed, about to disintegrate. The gist of it all was that he was really angry at his father for making the proclamation of divorce. In describing his compulsive act of placing bottles under the bed, this boy indicated that the bottles would always go under his father's side of the bed. Since the bottles or vials were all related to medicine, then this boy's unconscious fantasy or wish was that the medicine would magically waft up into the mattress and enter his father's corpus so that the medicine would cure his father of wanting to divorce his mother (a threat which this boy took seriously but which, in reality,

had no merit); then his father would not divorce his mother, and his family would remain intact. Putting bottles under the bed when he got the funny feeling in his stomach meant that he was curing his father over and over again, and whenever he did that, the funny feelings would, of course, disappear. So what were those funny feelings in the first place? The funny feelings were anger feelings toward the boy's father. When he cured his father, his father would remain with his mother, and under such favorable circumstances, there would be no need for anger, ergo, the funny feelings would disappear. In this case, the psychotherapy was efficient and extremely helpful. The boy's symptom was cured.

Case 4

A woman, 54 years of age, had recently lost her husband to colon cancer and began to ruminate on thoughts of death. She went around asking everyone whether he or she had ever had such thoughts. It became obsessive, and she eventually needed medication to shake the incessant grip such an obsession had on her. The medication erased the obsessive rumination, but then soon after, members of her family noticed that whenever they phoned her, she told them that she had just taken a bath. Actually, she began taking two or three baths a day. She would think about taking these baths (obsessive thoughts) and then begin to feel a need to actually take them (compulsive act). She proclaimed, "It was urgent!" By *urgent,* she meant that the obsessive thought of the bath transformed itself into behavior, and the irresistible urge to take the bath then followed. Psychoanalysts would interpret this obsessive-compulsive behavior to mean that this woman was angry that her husband died and really wanted to, as the expression goes, kill him for it. Therefore, at first, the obsessive thoughts of death that were erased with medication represented the close association she had with her husband and her loss of him, and the compulsive symptom of the need for bathing represented the badness she felt about her anger toward her husband so that bathing was a compulsive attempt to cleanse the bad feelings.

Case 5

A 32-year-old physician began feeling the need to gaze at corpses. This was an obsessive nagging thought that gradually felt compelling. And it felt compelling because this physician also began actually needing to go to the pathology department of the hospital to actually do the gazing. And that's exactly what began to happen. Toward the end of each day, this physician

would leave his station and end up in the pathology department gazing at corpses. Whenever he accomplished his mission, he felt better and the obsessive thought would leave him. Otherwise, if he didn't act on it (act it out), and couldn't, for any number of reasons, find the time to see the corpses, then his discomfort would increase. This kind of obsessive-compulsive ritual is akin to that of the person who, at bedtime, needs to check the locks of the doors of the house over and over again and ruminates about whether a lock was actually turned in the right direction or whether the lock was actually locked but then unlocked—and this ritual may repeat many times before the person can actually get to sleep. In the case of compulsively needing to gaze at corpses, it was uncovered in a therapy session that this physician was in severe conflict with his supervisor and that he actually hated this supervisor. The act of gazing at corpses, which so gratified him, was really his wish to have one of the corpses turn out to be this supervisor. Therefore the act of gazing itself—just doing it—was symbolically having that wish gratified; that is, in fantasy and unconsciously, one of the corpses—actually all of them—represented the supervisor. This discovery and its interpretation led to the cure of the symptom.

Case 6

A case of collecting and hoarding represented a psychotic compulsion in a man of 60. He began filling his house with old pieces of wood, with various kinds of tools, and with furniture that was either broken or in the process of being built. He lived in a small house with his wife and child, and before long, this collecting and hoarding compulsion began to wash over his entire personality and affect both his wife and daughter. At first, the house was filled with this variety of materials, and every surface was covered, including couches and chairs. Then, after a while, he added a second layer so that there was furniture and wood piled on top of furniture and wood. The house was so loaded with junk that there was no room even to walk from area to area. The house was declared a fire hazard because it was so packed with all this useless material. It was even considered too much of an undertaking to throw everything out, and because the house itself was in profound disrepair, old and even rickety, it was decided to burn the house down. In this case, the only solution for this man's problem was to hospitalize him to get him properly medicated. This was done, and the medication regimen was effective in eliminating his compulsive need to hoard. It was felt that his underlying rage was neutralized.

In all six clinical examples, the separate obsessive or compulsive personality patterns or the obsessive-compulsive pattern combined serve individuals by cohering their needs with respect to controlling emotion.

THE CRITICAL TYPE

This kind of personality is characterized by a highly critical nature. Because of this, the person finds it difficult to accept new things—including others. In professional language, this is a *paranoid* personality, in the nonpsychotic sense.

Such a person has very little or no tolerance for imperfection, always finds something to criticize in others, is suspicious, and is mistrusting. In addition, jealousy is a typical reaction in a person with such a personality.

The underlying psychological meaning of the critical nature of the person is to always find something wrong with everything "out there" in order not to focus on the presumed feelings of inferiority the person unconsciously attributes "in here" to the self. Therefore such a person finds it hard to fall in love.

Presumably, because of a deep sense of inferiority, and a corresponding need to defend against knowing this (by always seeing imperfections and inferiority in others, rather than in the self), such a person is actually, and predictably, also hypersensitive to criticism from others. Other characteristics of the personality include a substantial amount of hostility, sarcasm, and cynicism. In addition, such a person is usually stubborn and argumentative.

Obviously, such a person will seek advantage to gain power and to fend off any implication or designation of inferiority. Thus feeling powerful and strong means there is nothing wrong with the self, and this kind of person is always trying to establish the premise, as well as the certainty, that as far as the self is concerned, all is perfect.

With such a magnitude of focus on the self, it becomes difficult for such a person to construct, or conduct, a good relationship with anyone.

WISDOM

If you're looking to be incessantly criticized,
this is the person for you!

P.S.: There's a difference between a very critical, argumentative person and one who uses his or her intelligence to see the difference between things that are more valuable and things that are less valuable, and who has good judgment, and finally, who is not protesting—meaning arguing—about everything and everyone. As far as relationships are concerned, this latter type is good, while the former, critical type is not so good.

HOPE: If you're the kind of person who has the need to nurse others, to soothe them, to encourage them (provide milk and Band-Aids), and who is thick-skinned enough to not be easily emotionally wounded by criticism, then a relationship with this critical personality type can possibly work.

Case Study of the Critical Type (Paranoid Personality)

A 28-year-old woman was a member of a professional volleyball team. She was tall and strong—in the wiry sense of strong—and the irony was that anyone who knew her felt she was actually wired in the sense of being a tightly controlled person who could only tolerate the world around her by judging everything and by insisting that she was always right. Her problem was that she would inevitably and quickly be on the correct side of the judgment, while others would necessarily come out on the wrong side. She was married to a man who eventually divorced her because of her incessant fault finding as well as her withdrawal from affection generally and her refusal of sexual contact specifically.

This was a woman who was very competitive in virtually every aspect of her life. She compared all outside situations to her own and complained that whatever it was, hers was best. In addition, she was jealous and also angry at any situation in which her husband directed attention to another woman, including a jealousy and resentment of her husband's close relationship with his own sister.

In addition to her volleyball exploits, she was a violinist in a community orchestra and would consistently talk about the importance of accuracy and precision in instrumentalists (especially violinists). Her husband reported that she would begin to lean ever closer to the speaker system whenever the violins were prominent in the musical score, and her focus was always

on the precision of the instrument. And she would apparently narrate as she was listening to the musical piece that was being played: "Good," "not good." It was either that the performers were good or not good, and this was ongoing. Her husband reported that her constant judgment and her referring to exquisite refinements reminded him of someone in a never-ending quest for "knife-sharpening."

Along with her critical nature, she was stubborn and argumentative and would be especially sensitive to any hint of an injustice that she might perceive. But it wasn't enough to complain to her husband about it. She would frequently send letters to the editor of their community newspaper pointing out something that was wrong with this or that, and these complaints were typically fueled by perceived injustices.

This wasn't a paranoid, psychotic, persecutory, delusional system, in which she would feel that the world was out to get her personally. No, this was strictly a nonpsychotic personality disorder in which her complaints were always about noticing the imperfections in the world around her. And the purpose—the defensive purpose—of such criticality toward others was to see imperfection in the world to avoid what must have been an enormous underlying inferiority complex: a sense of profound personal imperfection.

Rather than driving this woman into therapy consultation, their marital difficulty drove the husband into it. He pleaded with her to accompany him to couple counseling sessions, but she refused. And such refusal is not at all unusual for this kind of personality type because after all, the problems are always in the other, and never in the self.

From the beginning of their relationship to the end of it, he gradually noticed that she became colder to him, until there was a complete absence of any display of tender feelings. She also became highly defensive, and this showed in her heightened sensitivity to feeling slighted. Her response was to be ever ready to attack. This was played out in their relationship, and at such times, even though he would try to persuade her that he wasn't being negative, whatever she thought was being said would nevertheless trigger an attacking critical response in her. This was obviously a way of defending herself, even though there was actually nothing to defend.

The husband complained to the therapist that his wife was really an angry person who had the anger camouflaged in a judgmental style toward others, and who monitored everything around her in order (it seemed) "to get them before they got her." When asked whether he thought his wife was crazy in the sense of being psychotically paranoid, the husband explained that she wasn't at all crazy, but that because of her particular personality, that is, her

critical/monitoring-the-world vigilance, she was just impossible to live with. He said he could no longer tolerate her intolerance to everything and everyone and that he could no longer be under her microscope.

Because of his wife's righteous indignation and constant search for validation of her complaints, the husband began to experience fantasies of escaping to some other part of the world without ever telling her where he was. His problem was that he had always been physically very attracted to her. However, at the point that the husband went to see a therapist, he was already just about completely revolted by her very presence, and therefore he was no longer held captive by his own yearnings—now only a memory.

All in all, this woman's critical-paranoid personality enabled her to restrict her emotional range and only to express negative feelings—always, of course, colored by underlying anger or resentment. It was obviously a resentment of her own sense of personal imperfection about which she had absolutely no insight, and because of her need to avoid appreciating the problem, she never developed even the remotest tradition in her personality of introspection.

Emotionally Controlled Types

Remember

The strength and success of a relationship is based on the working balance of personality differences. Similar values can never have the same impact as personality interaction.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Do I withhold affection?	❑	☑
Am I more concerned with neatness and controlling things than I am with expressions of affection?	❑	☑
Am I always being critical?	❑	☑

12

Emotionally Expansive Types

THE FALLING-IN-LOVE-EASILY TYPE

In professional language, this type is generally called *hysteric.* This is so because the most characteristic tendency in this sort of person is high suggestibility. This means that such a person can be persuaded any which way, simply by suggestion. As a matter of fact, it is such a person who can easily be hypnotized, especially because the very vehicle for the hypnotist is the use of suggestion.

Another characteristic of such a person is a strong tendency to deny anything he or she sees or any information he or she gets that doesn't agree with what the person wants. As such, when this type needs something, he or she needs it immediately. In this respect, this kind of style necessarily implies that such a person usually shows poor tolerance for frustration and is impatient.

By and large, such a person is also usually expansive with his or her emotions and typically creates dramatic emotional effects in social situations. In addition, such individuals are usually very sexual—although if also strongly dependent, they can simultaneously be squeamish. Such a person can seem overly easy to get along with, but be careful of an underlying rigid refusal to do anything he or she doesn't want to do. Almost always, a dependent element is also present so that to expend effort

becomes a problem, and the wish of such individuals to have things done for them also reveals a magical wish, along with a passive streak.

The upside here is that in a relationship, this falling-in-love-easily type (minus any strong dependency feature in the personality) is indeed able to relate to the partner, appreciates the presence of the partner, and can be affectionate and warm. Unfortunately, along with this exists a classic self-interest and an apprehension and vigilance focused on a possessive jealousy insofar as the feeling is that the partner might be interested in others. This kind of concern reveals what is known as a projection, that is, that because such a hysteric person requires a great deal of attention (and is usually overflowing with sexual impulse), this sexual motivation also gets projected on or attributed to the motives of the partner.

WISDOM

You'll have fun, but you'll have to indulge him or her.

P.S.: Someone who is more easygoing is a better partner to have than someone whose needs are always urgent. Therefore a partner in a relationship who fits a rather more mature style (not so much magical thinking and suggestibility) is the one to choose in contrast to the highly suggestible, overly expansive one, who needs what he or she needs as soon as he or she needs it. Expressive and warm is good, while over the top is not.

HOPE: If you are someone who feels bland and uninteresting and finds it difficult to engage the environment, then this sort of falling-in-love, hysteric type might be for you because such a person will always be providing stimulation—ever talking, ever doing, ever demanding.

Case Study of the Falling-in-Love-Easily Type (Hysteric)

A married 50-year-old woman was a typical hysterical type who dressed flamboyantly and was drenched in romantic and sexual fantasies. Her husband was extraordinarily attentive and smitten with her, and despite her endless

wishfulness that often depleted the household bankroll, he nevertheless sustained an unflinching and unfailing love for her.

This woman was quite attractive and alluring and exhibited her voluptuous figure to what she considered to be its best advantage. She was a dreamer, a person who, without fail, always sought positive feedback from others, and when she got such feedback, she was always gratified—nay, thrilled. All positive feedback gave her material to talk about and repeat. It also supported her romantic magical hoping.

She also exhibited the typical hysteric pattern of easily falling in love, and even though her husband knew of her innumerable crushes on other men, he would always wait out the storm. These crushes on other men were frequent, and they occupied her considerably crowded fantasy life, composed of romantic and sexual themes in which she became the desired object of the relationship, while the man was her abject servant who was so in love with her that his own life no longer mattered. It was essentially a dominatrix fantasy translated into her wish for these men to adore and love her. These fantasies excited her sexually because they felt empowering, especially in light of her fear of being alone, of her dependency feelings, and of her inability to tolerate frustration. To ensure success in these fantasy encounters (which sometimes were also consummated in actual sexual dalliances), she was usually sexually seductive and would make it clear to the men she targeted, or who targeted her, that she was available for sex and love. To her, all it meant was that she was desired. That was the most important part of her ever present drama. It made her feel powerful and secure. All her dramatic, colorful dressing up, either with tight-fitting sweaters or low-cut or sheer blouses, and all of her sexual seductions and ever present wishes really only served the sole purpose of validating what she wanted to assure herself of: a superior self-worth.

The interesting issue is that this woman (as is the case with most hysteric, easily-falling-in-love types) was also, as mentioned, a highly dependent person, and it was her husband who she expected would be the constant figure in her life. It was he that would not only care for her, but would also take care of the everyday life chores: cooking, cleaning, marketing, working, and so on. And despite this woman's incessant fantasizing about love and sex and romance, her sexual life with her husband was nonexistent. She claimed she had "zero sexual interest in him." She loved him and, in addition, knew that she could depend on him for everything. Yes, his father role with her neutralized any libidinous attachment to him. In addition, she had already conquered him, so it was no longer necessary to accomplish that

feat. And so she was only interested in other men—subjects to conquer to keep the fiction alive that she was constantly in the power position—and apparently, her husband never complained about their impoverished sex life. It was later discovered that he was occasionally having extramarital sex with prostitutes and in this way satisfied his needs. But he retained his marriage to the woman he truly loved: his wife, a falling-in-love-easily type.

The husband said that she brought color to his life and that he himself was basically a "dud." That's the expression he used for himself—a dud! He explained that he was never experimental enough to know where to go, what to do with himself, and how to meet people. And he was smitten with his wife because in addition to her beauty and gorgeous body, she always knew where to go, what to do, and had millions of friends and acquaintances. Therefore, as far as he was concerned, his indulgence of her was a fair trade off for the vitality and richness that he felt she brought to his life.

Along with all these hysteric characteristics, this woman was also easily disappointed when her wishes were not met, and she frequently complained of tiredness, weakness, and general fatigue, along with vague expressions of physical or somatic aches—experiences not uncommon to the hysteric personality.

It is quite usual for someone who is excessively wish soaked to be frequently disappointed because, of course, life is constructed with so many variables that it becomes impossible to control it all, and so wishes are only infrequently met, or hardly ever fully met, or hardly ever met exactly when we want them met. And therefore a person with many intense wishes will be frequently disappointed. With this woman, her fantasies were able to supply plenty of gratification, even in the absence of tangible, real wish gratification, and in addition, her attractiveness and seductive appetite actually did invite men to look at her, approach her, and so forth. And this was enough nourishment for her need system so that even the disappointments of wishes unfulfilled usually did not get the best of her. Thus her severe sense of impatience would only be challenged to a minimal degree.

She also operated with classic hysteric defense mechanisms that she brought to bear on her problems. First of all, she used a great deal of denial, and in such a case, she tried only to see what she wanted to see, and she also frequently and successfully screened out that which she didn't want to see. It was an exercise in inviting in and selecting only that which satisfied her wishes and rejecting out of hand that which would thwart her wishes. This accounted for her success in constantly falling in love, and in addition, such a defense enabled her to fuel her romantic fantasy life. She

also utilized the defense identified as compensation. This compensatory defense is often used by people to ward off sad or depressing feelings and to reinforce a sense of elevation to the ego so that the person's wishes can be sustained for longer periods. In this case, such a compensatory defense, in concert with her major defense of denial, enabled her to have long stretches of these satisfactory romantic fantasies.

Her spending habits were flagrantly wasteful because she also had that classic hysteric personality characteristic called *suggestibility.* What this means is that she would be taken in by many television commercials that promoted any number of products. Thus, because of her high suggestibility quotient, the apartment became what could be considered a post office drop-off point. Packages were always coming in because of purchases she made of varieties of products barking out to her on TV commercials and convincing her to try this or that. This high susceptibility to suggestion is in itself usually enough of a clinical sign to enable the hysteric diagnosis to be made.

Overall, this woman's compelling need for attention and adoration was the main thematic strand of her personality around which everything else coalesced—including a marked dependency and immaturity. This is an example of an emotionally expansive type of person who is flamboyantly emotional as a way of keeping negative feelings at bay so that self-esteem remains intact.

THE SELF-LOVE TYPE

Here is a person who is typically self-absorbed. The cliché "it's always all about you" is aptly applied here because such a person is focused entirely on the self. In professional terminology, such a person is called *narcissistic.*

In such a person, the need for acknowledgment or adoration is a primary need as well as a primary prize and is pursued effortlessly, with automatic and single-minded purpose. Ah—to be adored, idolized, and worshipped! And if the person cannot manage to engineer a world where such adoration is forthcoming, then the person's fantasy life goes into overdrive. In this overdrive, the person begins to generate compensatory fantasies, that is, big-shot fantasies in which he or she is recognized for some heroic act or, at least, begins to generate images of behavior in a manner that displays his or her coolness and savoir faire to the best advantage. Thus achievement is overvalued and wrapped in a theme of power; that is, empowerment becomes the sole reward for achievement.

In this sense, self-aggrandizement usually wins the day, even though—and here's the rub—such a person also lives with great self-doubt and can become furious when he or she feels that his or her importance has been overlooked. When such experiences of defeat occur, such a person can feel shamed and humiliated. Yet, gradually, an overblown sense of self-entitlement usually reasserts itself.

In a relationship, such a person can love you and be dependent on your presence for sustenance and love but will never really be reflexively considerate of your feelings as part of the natural concern that one partner should have for the other. This is true, especially because a decent sense of empathy for others never quite reaches a position of primary importance. Otherwise, this narcissistic type can be terribly envious of others and can feel diminished if criticized or slighted.

WISDOM

Narcissism is a one-player game. The problem is that a relationship requires two.

P.S.: Remember that your partner should be someone who is self-respecting but certainly not someone who is in a constant state of self-love. Behavior counts!

HOPE: There are those who are entirely self-absorbed but who basically wish for reward for good efforts. Although such types are grandiose, their first choice would be to do something good and then receive adulation for it. If you are a person who detects this desire to do good in such a person, then it may be possible to give him or her the benefit of the doubt and therefore to sustain the relationship—provided you don't get too angry at most of such a person's puffed-up nature.

Case Study of the Self-Love Type (Narcissistic)

A 45-year-old part-time male community college business instructor was denied a full-time teaching position and became exceedingly dispirited. He was in a minor depression about it, but the worst of it was that he

experienced this disappointment as a *narcissistic injury.* This means that in this self-love personality type exists a mandate to be on a constant life's search for acquiring adoration, admiration, respect, and love from others. It also means that attaining positions of respect and power in this man would reflect implicit testimony about his importance. Explicitly, it means that when asked, he would be able to talk about any achievement such as the appointment to teach full time (which was denied him). He'd be able to talk about such an accomplishment with a kind of disregard as though to say that such things were not really very important to him. However, of course, such things were always of great importance to him.

Like the hysteric, dramatic displays are part of such a person's behavioral repertoire, and they are designed to keep the person front and center. As such, this kind of person's fantasy life is a fully compensatory fantasy life characterized by heroic deeds. Our part-time community college instructor was radiated with such fantasies, and these included winning the lottery and becoming stunningly rich. In this case, the fantasy centered around his having homes all over the place, but especially in East Hampton, Palm Springs, Palm Beach, and places in Europe, especially in Monte Carlo. These, together with other such fantasies, identified his compensatory fantasy life as one reflecting a fixed development largely arrested at the adolescent level.

His grandiosity knew no bounds, and at times, it would get him into trouble because it interfered with reasonable judgment. He was characteristically exhibitionistic, and such dramatic displays would make him feel like the grand person he considered himself to be. He would often, for example, try to jump the line at movie theatres or make some fuss if he was required to wait anywhere in any line. He had this enormously overblown sense of his own entitlement and importance. This sort of puffed-up exaggerated self-image was the central part of his personality and it had derivative and corresponding behaviors associated with it. For example, such a need for an elevated stature in life would create situations in which he would even sacrifice himself with respect to time and money. He would occasionally volunteer to loan money to someone who he knew was in financial straits but then continue to regale friends about his largesse and his ability and willingness to change into his cape, like some superhero, to then go ahead and do his rescue. This became his typical rescue act, which revealed his technique: it was a technique to gain self-aggrandizement with the expectation that such special qualities of generosity would exact from others unique treatment and deference and that such homage from others would, by assumption as well as by definition, identify him as this uniquely one-of-a-kind person.

Of course, underneath it all, he was terribly afraid that his own self-doubt would show and that others might somehow see that he usually felt terribly underachieved and inadequate. He even minimized those achievements he actually made by pointing to little shortcuts he took or how he understood and beat the system. Acknowledging that this sort of admission was difficult for him, nevertheless, he talked about it in a way that tailored it so that it could be used as evidence of his courage to talk about himself even with respect to negative qualities.

This man knew how to distract himself from his disappointment in not being hired as a full-time instructor. He knew how to distract himself and to defend against these negative thoughts and dispiriting feelings. In such cases, he would shift into those heroic standard fantasies of his. And even though he was an adult man of 45, nevertheless, he retained focused memories of his basketball-playing days as an adolescent. Apparently, he was a very good athlete and was one of the stars on his high school basketball team. He reported that it was this sort of adulation as a basketball star that won him a college scholarship and that enabled him to slip through most of his courses. He claimed that his degree "was a simple education degree," which he "breezed" through. Yet again, in discussing these past achievements, he minimized them in such a way that he was able to transform them into evidence for his superior intelligence; that is, his ability to cheat the system was a testament to his cleverness and clear evidence of how he was smarter than everyone around him—even without really trying.

Despite his moment-to-moment superior attitude, his sensitivity to feeling humiliated or shamed was a terribly fragile one. It's technically called a *thin stimulus barrier,* which means that he was thin-skinned and could be easily hurt either by circumstances that conspired against him (no full-time teaching) or by someone who might call his bluff, or even by a down stock market, in which, instead of being able to boast about how much money he was making in the stock market, he would be forced by circumstances to think about how much he was losing. In such a case, he would respond to disappointment with feelings of anger, emptiness, and depression. In addition, from time to time, when someone confronted him about his posturing, his front of a tough exterior crumbled, and his humiliation would entirely demoralize him. And this did happen. Of course, he would come out of it because his unending impulse to generate heroic fantasies would begin again to coalesce, and this would bring him out of his despair.

This man was a first-rate rationalizer. He could explain away anything that didn't correspond to his need for adoration. He was also quite critical, and this included a terrible and frequent lapse in empathy toward others, despite his occasional display of charity. His need to have it all his own way and his emotional and psychological investments solely directed to his own needs contributed to his frequent absence of understanding of what was socially required to retain bonds with loved ones.

This man's personal agony, generated as a result of his narcissistic stance, was the conflict between overidealizing himself, on one hand, and devaluing himself, on the other. And he would try to keep the devaluation part to a low roar by constantly being emotionally expansive—by posturing, boasting, and trying always to be center stage.

THE HIGH-AS-A-KITE TYPE

The mood of such a person can be implied when friends are heard to say, "He was so high I could've peeled him off the ceiling." In professional language, this is called a *manic* or *hypomanic* personality. This means that such a person is energized to the hilt, or, in the hypomanic state, almost always energized, almost all the time, almost to the hilt—but not quite. Thus hypomanic is just below manic.

Along with boundless energy, this person's mood is always elevated, and such a person is ever optimistic. This can even be called a fatal optimism because uninterrupted optimism, especially in the face of contradictory evidence, makes for poor judgment. The hypomanic person can also be a storyteller, who tells each and every narration with bursts of laughter acting as punctuation that implies the assumption that everyone listening is on board. Furthermore, there is no distinction made between more important and less important stories—they're all important.

Such a person can appear to be irritable, having little patience with others. A conviction of certainty accompanies the manic state, and even though proven wrong (so that such certainty is shown to be silly), the person will simply disregard the contradictory evidence and go on as though nothing has happened—sometimes quipping or joking all the way.

Symptoms usually consist of compulsive talking, some agitation, and an expansive presentation of emotion. A common symptom consists of the presence of many ongoing projects that have been undertaken simultaneously. What this

produces is a situation in which eventually, only partial attention can be applied to any one project. The motive here is to fill up the space with as much material as possible.

In a relationship, the partner will need to be aware that eventual spending sprees will occur and will be just another compulsive, impulsive, expansive, fast-paced, poorly judged activity, in fact, frequently designed to ward off depression. When depression follows the manic phase, then the diagnosis sometimes refers to a psychotic condition. In such cases, the depression is as severe as the manic spree.

WISDOM

A relationship with a manic person is a big job. You will need to be well rested.

P.S.: There's a difference between someone who is hyper and someone who is a productive person and gets things done. Go for the productive one, not the manic one.

HOPE: With the true manic, a relationship is almost impossible because the person will be entirely self-absorbed with impulsively experienced needs. However, if the person is only hypomanic (only almost always involved, only almost always talking, only almost always tense), then when reminded, such a person can usually modify, or even take a rest from, such incessant activity. In addition, if the other partner is somewhat passive, or even submissive, the relationship can work.

Case Study of the High-as-a-Kite Type (Manic or Hypomanic)

A 39-year-old female social worker was an inveterate conversationalist. She worked in a state mental institution and was occupied with convalescent care studies of patients who were monitored after they were discharged from the hospital. In addition, she was a therapist to inpatients, attended conferences, wrote and published clinical papers in professional journals, and conducted a small private psychotherapy practice. In her own

psychotherapy with her therapist, she had been reviewing what she considered to be the thing that people always said about her: that she was tense and talkative.

In fact, this woman, despite her insight and understanding of her mood condition, could not prevent herself from a kind of garrulous compulsive need to tell stories and, in addition, to embellish them, crafting them for ostensible maximum interest to the listener(s). In fact, she was excessively talkative, frequently spending time telling stories that were actually trivial. In a similar vein, she never made distinctions between what was important and what wasn't. She considered everything to be important because it all served the purpose of composing material that she could talk about.

Because of her need to hold forth in any social situation, it was also clear to her that she had a laughing tic; that is, she would punctuate what she was saying with periodic laughter, as though to invite the listener in on the assumption that what she was saying was really important or interesting. The more the listener was suggestible or timid, or even somewhat withdrawn, the more such a listener would laugh along with her, and this was a signal that told her "it was working." She told her therapist that when that happened, she felt relieved that her need to talk would not be thwarted and that with such people, she could keep talking uninterrupted for as long as she needed to talk. She also knew that her concern with all of it reflected that there was a good deal of tension harbored within—both with respect to her hope that she could continue to talk and with respect to her concern with her raw compulsive need to do it.

Without any malicious intent, and in a descriptive sense, this talk syndrome had the net effect of being a manipulative exercise because it kept her audience captive. Her genius was that most of this audience was taken in by her laughing punctuation, which had the effect of validating what she was saying and that she was saying it.

Thus this hypomanic woman was always energized, highly ambitious, and usually simultaneously engaged in a spate of projects. Each day, there appeared (in writing) a specific agenda loaded with items to do that day that were actually interesting and that led to a productive day. Her husband was a percussionist, a drummer with a jazz band, and he seemed to like her constant beat and, in addition, didn't care a bit about his wife's extravagant emotional style and her need to, so to speak, lead the band. In addition, his passivity didn't offer his wife's permeating tension any significant counterpoint.

From a strictly emotional vantage point, this woman was also quite susceptible to, shall we say, crying on a dime. To the naked eye, her vulnerability was difficult to detect. However, to the tutored eye, one could almost see her vibrating with tension. Her tension would be more visible when she wasn't talking or wasn't the center of attention. It was when she began to talk that her tension, more or less, subsided. And when she was in her talking streak—her stream of consciousness—there was great certitude in the optimism that always accompanied her energized mood and her compulsive storytelling.

With such hypomania, and in other true manic states, the person exhibiting such behavior usually demonstrates poor judgment because such a person can get lost in his or her words and cannot measure the interest that other people might be losing while listening to what is sometimes, at best, a long story, and perhaps, at the worst, a polemical, or even a fulminating, one. In addition, in the true manic phase, the contamination of judgment is quite visible, especially when spending sprees occur. This particular woman would never engage in spending sprees because that kind of impulse would be, rather, directed toward fulfilling her daily agenda along with meeting her completely full social calendar obligations.

The prevailing clinical wisdom regarding the psychodynamics of such a person is that the purpose of the manic or hypomanic compulsive project doing and talking is fundamentally designed to ward off depression, which is considered to be the underlying culprit in all of this. In addition, a collateral difficulty here is that usually, the children of such a parent end up feeling hostile and/or confused and find themselves on the margins of life, rather than in the mainstream. They are also frequently seen to be underachievers, the cause of which is hypothetically attributed to the palpable tension of such a parent, which apparently, or at least probably, permeates the culture of the family and, as a transmitted concern, begins to envelop the children with a selfsame tension. As a result, and without knowing why, the children get angry about the tension, and this anger interferes with all sorts of sublimated activity, ambitions, and focuses in life.

Again, this emotionally expansive style is one designed to mask and control impulse and to keep the person on the move to avoid the effects of the tension, were it to prevail. Of course, with cases of manic or hypomanic states, the tension concerns underlying fears of depressive reactions, and the manic energy is devoted to warding off such depressive, lurking reactions.

Emotionally Expansive Types

Remember

Jumping out of your skin is not so good.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Am I always falling in love?	❑	☑
Am I overly self-absorbed in triumphant fantasies?	❑	☑
Am I always involved in endless projects, most of which I never finish?	❑	☑

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Emotionally Antagonistic Types

VARIETIES OF THE ANGRY TYPE

There are a number of varieties of angry-type personalities. In each type, the central dynamic concerns the way in which anger is expressed; that is, is the anger expressed through passive maneuvers, or through direct aggressive reactions, or through direct hostility, or even through dependent behavior? These are considered to be passive-aggressive personalities.

1. *The aggressive type.* Here anger is a typical reaction that appears in the form of impatience, impulsivity, annoyance, irritability, rudeness, and stubbornness, without any concern toward the other—meaning the anger will go toward anyone within range.
2. *The hostile type.* Here the person's anger is designed specifically to express hostility. Hatred and revenge motives are insinuated in facetious and sarcastic remarks, and gratification is gotten when the person feels successful in the expression of the hostility.
3. *Passive-aggressive/passive type.* Here the expression of anger is designed less to express frustration or impatience and more to simply make the other person

angry. It is a way to get the anger expressed through procrastination and simultaneously avoid punishment by assuming an accommodating facade.

4. *Passive-aggressive/aggressive type.* People who will protest anything for the sake of the protest define this kind of a person, who is also argumentative and defiant. Here there is direct anger intent toward the other.
5. *Passive-aggressive/dependent type.* This is the kind of person who will kill you with kindness and is irritatingly cloying—also getting you angry.

In a relationship, the objective for the partner is to identify the angry motive and then not to be drawn into a like-minded, angry, tit-for-tat interaction.

WISDOM

If you're smart and don't get drawn into the anger cycle, then generally, these types can be worked with.

P.S.: Generally speaking, however, even if these types can be worked with, why opt for someone who is always dealing with anger? Make sure the potential partner is someone who can learn and is willing to at least talk about making changes.

HOPE: These are people who usually anticipate that their wishes will be frustrated so that as a result, they feel they will not get what they want. Thus they're usually trying to get even with those who are close to them because it is felt that the partner is the one who will block the wish. Once you know this, it becomes more possible to help such a person, or at least to know that you're dealing with a person who imagines such deprivations and depredations and then behaves as though they're always really happening—which they're not!

Case Studies of the Angry Type (Passive-Aggressive Personality)

Case 1: The Aggressive Type

A 26-year-old man who happened to be homosexual was always on a hair trigger. He didn't ever care whose feelings he hurt with his outbursts or

rude behavior. He was impatient and irritable most of the time and could not bear to be frustrated. He was always on the attack. As it turned out, a friend was able to land him a job as an assistant administrator for a dance troupe. There he proceeded to alienate anyone who wouldn't take his instruction or, for whatever reason, didn't listen to him the first time he said something. This was also true for patrons who called for tickets to dance performances. On the phone, he was abrupt and couldn't tolerate too many questions or too much confusion or ambivalences on the part of these ticket purchasers, and he was especially curt with those who kept asking for more information and who tried to ascertain where the better seats might be. His modus operandi was that of the most caricatured royalty, and he actually seemed to want all to genuflect. He was obviously highly immature for his age (or any age), and in short order, he was summarily dismissed. At his exit interview, he acknowledged the problem but insisted that his was the proper and efficient way to do things. He got up out of his chair and, without a word, turned and exited. As is typical with this aggressive-type personality, the main problem will almost always appear to be rudeness and stubbornness, with little concern for the feelings of others. In this particular illustration, his aggressive hair-trigger reaction was in all likelihood a function of a deeper and more severe diagnosis, most probably that of the borderline type characterized by extreme susceptibility to expostulating anger at the slightest provocation or imagined provocation. In such a person, a very thin ego causes an inability to be able to tolerate frustration. Nevertheless, in this case, even though the borderline diagnosis is almost certainly the diagnosis of choice, the behavior of this man clearly demonstrated also the various behavioral facets of the aggressive personality. Other than this particular person, most aggressive personality types simply want to fight—even physically.

Case 2: The Hostile Type

A 48-year-old man in a partnership business of distributing combination safes split with his partner, who was actually an old friend. They had been in business for almost two decades, but the partner could no longer abide this man's sarcasm and sadistic approach to people. This man could only see what he considered to be the underbelly of humanity, and he railed against anyone who he thought mistreated him. He was obsessed with revenge feelings and thoughts, and he was so twisted by his anger that it frequently interfered with good judgment and reality testing. After his final

split with his partner, and after the business was sold, he sought other employment but was never able to conceal his hostility so that even in employment interviews, he was compelled to express his sarcasm and his sense that the world was an evil place. At this time, he became more vengeful and actually began to harass his partner's wife with phone calls, in which he made ridiculous innuendos about her husband, his ex-partner and friend. His partner called him and warned him that such behavior constituted stalking and that if it didn't stop, the partner would report it to the authorities. His behavior didn't stop, it was reported, and a case was started. He was forced to attend therapy sessions, and it was there that he began to talk about his hostility and revenge fantasies. It was only then that he calmed down, eventually landing a job as salesman in a hardware store. In the therapy, it was determined that his sense of abandonment by indifferent parents generated deep hatred in him. Apparently, fantasies of the death of his parents by violent means pervaded his fantasy life even when he was a child, and so his current hostility in the world took on a paranoid cast and constituted a highly developed critical stance toward the world, which in turn was a transference reaction, a general displacement from his parents to the world, and a specific displacement from his parents to a significant other.

Case 3: Passive-Aggressive/Passive Type

The aim of such a person is not to express anger toward others; rather, the aim is to engender anger in others—to make them angry. Many people experience this effect of the passive-aggressive person's passive strategy when interfacing with someone who is in a service capacity, as, for example, when trying to get a waiter's attention in a restaurant and the waiter doesn't seem to see your signal. The problem begins when the waiter takes your order and then disappears or proceeds to do his job but never looks in your direction. It's usually the case that someone at the table who had ordered has a second thought about the order, or needs to change something on the order, or needs something else entirely and continues to try to flag the waiter's gaze—of course, to no avail. After a while, the frustrated patron begins to be angry, and actually begins to seethe. At this point of feeling frustrated and correspondingly furious, the waiter's passive-aggressive/passive type personality aim has been successfully achieved—to make you homicidal! If you only get a little annoyed, then the passive-aggressive/passive style strategy has only worked a little. But if you become visibly infuriated or bursting

inwardly, then the strategy has been fully accomplished. In this sense, typical characteristics of such a person involve inclinations to procrastinate and to be oppositional, stubborn, and withholding. Another example of this sort of passive-aggressive/passive-type effect occurs with psychologists who, in the process of asking patients to respond to items on a psychological test, find themselves waiting for an answer to the test questions, while the person taking the test considers his or her answer by splitting hairs and by looking at the problem from every possible angle, while the psychologist begins to feel angry. At that point, the psychologist definitely knows that although the diagnosis contains obsessional elements, it's mostly behavior that is passive-aggressive. Another example is the child who is instructed to drink his milk but doesn't want to, but in turn is afraid not to. So accidentally, while trying to reach for something on the table, he knocks over the glass of milk with his elbow. This is passive-aggressive/passive all the way because the parent will usually feel and express anger; however, it was an accident, so the child really can't be blamed. The anger was displaced onto the parent. Aim accomplished!

Case 4: Passive-Aggressive/Aggressive Type

This kind of person is directly confrontational. His anger spills over without the slightest remorse or regret. Such behavior was evident in a 15-year-old boy who would argue with anyone at the drop of a hat. He was constantly protesting and was defiant. In high school, he was always at odds with his teachers and considered himself brighter than they and able to be more logical. What he couldn't understand was why most people were not catering to him and, as he felt it, not recognizing his higher intelligence. When, finally, he got to a therapist, it was decided that his protest behavior was an attempt on his part to remain independent and not reliant on anyone. The therapist suggested that this need of his to support his autonomy by polarizing everyone represented an underlying fear concerning his doubt as to whether he, in fact, could really be independent. It was Shakespearean insofar as he protesteth too much, and this excessive protest revealed its opposite concern, which related to an apparent abundance of self-doubt. Therefore he could never be concerned about his rudeness or feel any regret about it because if he did, his sense of going it alone would be compromised, and this he could not tolerate. What this boy needed was a good role model, and the therapist, a man who was not confrontational or unnecessarily argumentative, fit the bill perfectly.

Case 5: Passive-Aggressive/Dependent Type

In this type of passive-aggressive personality, strong dependency features characterize such a person's personality trait pattern. This means that even though such a person is uniquely sacrificial to another primary person, such as, for example, a spouse, the presence of the other person becomes crucial to the dependent one's sense of security and tranquility. The passive-aggressive/dependent type will do extra work for you but, in the end, will be rejected. And this occurred precisely as expected in a man who was in graduate school, going for his master's degree in psychology, and working as an assistant for one of the professors in the psychology department. He actually sacrificed his studies to do extra work for this professor and, in the end, severely compromised his future by withdrawing from several courses he was taking. The point was that his sacrificial acts destroyed any way in which he could apportion time to do his own work, and he fell terribly behind in his studies. Hence he needed to withdraw from the semester's requirements and postpone his education—all in the service of assisting this professor, whom he hoped would admire him in return for his loyalty and sacrifice. However, in the end, the professor never asked him to do extra work and, after a while, experienced this kind of sacrificial behavior as cloying, irritating, and even completely unnecessary. It was this dependent, passive-aggressive person's style to kill them with kindness that governed his behavior. The problem here was that, as is usually the case with such passive-aggressive/dependent personality types, he ended up fired from the job, and fired by the man for whom he made the sacrifice. The tragedy on top of the irony was that this student had been fired from jobs before and for the same reason, and was divorced by his wife, also, for such sacrificial cloying as well as dependent behavior. He always engendered hostility in the same people for whom he was working and sacrificing: passive-aggressive personality, dependent style, all the way.

THE MANIPULATOR TYPE

When a person is manipulative, he or she is full of impulsive behavior and shows poor judgment, poor planning ability, and a poor attention span; he or she can easily get into legal trouble and gives you the feeling that he or she can't be trusted. Such a person is, in professional language, considered to be *psychopathic* or *sociopathic.* Such

people march to their own drummer in a way that frequently leads to trouble, rather than to any creative result.

In addition, this kind of person will be consistently provocative because he or she needs endless external stimulation—noise and excitement. Thus a key psychological insight of such a person's psyche (expressed in behavior) is that this person finds it difficult to be quiet because of a sense of a deadened inner life—it's too still inside.

Such people try to erase this silence and go about exciting everything around them—making a tumult, generating drama, and so forth. They differ from compulsive talkers insofar as compulsive talkers are not antisocial, do not necessarily have dangerously poor judgment, are not usually manipulative, and are not liars.

In contrast, characteristics of manipulative people include a tendency to be aggressive to the point of having physical confrontations, acting with impatience and irritability, displaying immaturity in behavior, and engaging in a habitual pattern of lying. In addition, such individuals show a limited conscience and a corresponding absence of guilt or remorse and are even given to cruelty. During schooling years, such people are often caught cheating, have truancy problems and, later on, employment problems.

The psychology of this sort of personality can be understood with respect to one central characteristic: it is the inclination to act out. This means that the person does things (in behavior) that are symbolic of an underlying problem—and he or she does so in order not to know what that problem is, all designed to keep the problem out of awareness.

Wisdom

No relationship can survive this kind of partner.

P.S.: When you meet someone who likes to plan things, who can be assertive, and who can pursue aims, don't mistake such energy, tendency for direct action, and ambition for manipulation and deceit. An assertive, ambitious, planning person is good—especially one who will not sacrifice the relationship

for self-interest. Of course, such a person is very different (almost the exact opposite) of the manipulative type.

HOPE: Sorry!

Case Study of the Manipulator Type (Psychopathic)

A 49-year-old man who had no occupation but who went from job to job was referred for psychotherapy consultation because he had knocked his wife down with a blow to the body. Her arm was broken by the fall, and because this was not the first time he had physically attacked her, to try to save the marriage, the wife and their two daughters insisted he seek help. He agreed, but only under duress—not out of regret or guilt. He eventually told his therapist that he needed to have his family because "it looked good—no more, no less." It was his need to convey an image of the "gunslinger" (silly though that it is) that could allow him to elevate what he considered to be some vague notion of the romantic swashbuckler. In a sense, this man had an underdeveloped conscience, a callous disregard for people, and limited development in the ability to feel remorse.

To boot, he was also a braggart, and his loquaciousness helped him manipulate people. And so even with the therapist, he took the opportunity to describe and embellish his exploits. He told the therapist that he was a gambler who had made and lost fortunes in both legal and nonlegal gambling venues and confessed that his wife was never told about the losses—only about the winnings. She had become accustomed to living a reasonably comfortable lifestyle, and so she was taken in and naive about his activities, and he seemed always to have money. He confessed, however, that he would borrow money but never pay the debt, which is why he seemed always to have money on hand. She also didn't know, and apparently didn't suspect, that he was a consistent philanderer.

His history revealed that as a child, and even through high school and college (which he only attended for one semester), he cheated in school and was caught stealing money from his mother's purse. However, he had stolen many times but was only caught once. He also regaled the therapist with stories of several fistfights he had had as a child and stated that he was never afraid of a fight. Later, as a young adult, he tried working at different jobs but would usually be fired, or if not fired, he had the tendency to want to quit. His typical job-quitting routine involved a slew of rationalizations that

enabled him always to try to figure out any possible shortcut to his ends. Of course, these shortcuts were almost always problematic and could, and would, from time to time, get him into trouble.

He had many girlfriends but was only able to establish a long-term relationship with his wife, who he described as an honest but gullible person. The therapist said that his excuse making and his glibness were really substitutes for what could have been better planning, along with the ability to postpone immediate needs for gratification in the service of more important, longer-range goals. It was this latter value that this man couldn't grasp.

His driving was impulsive, impetuous, and even reckless, and he was in a number of collisions—some of which were never reported. He also told the therapist that he was always seeking excitement and that his gambling was a way to feel the excitement. He would only get four or five hours of sleep each night, and rather than simply lying in bed waiting for sleep, he would watch television and usually fall asleep sitting up.

The therapist indicated that this man needed to create endless external stimulation because he was really afraid of what is referred to professionally as a deadened inner life. Hence his delinquency, his manipulative behaviors, his scattered job history, and even his difficulty in marriage were all a function of his need to keep moving. To be stopped was, for him, equivalent death.

In the sense of such a motoric need (to keep moving and to avoid the sense of stopping), this man utilized a series of defenses known as *compensation* (as in the use of compensatory techniques such as the belief that he is something special and therefore superior) as well as the defense of *regression* (which assured him the ability to keep moving—similar to a child's need to move), both of which supported his immature stance in life—a stance of magical thinking in which all he had to do was want something and it would happen. This is an example of the elevation of emotion and needs over reflection and thinking.

He described two nightmares to the therapist. In one, he was being chased by a knife-wielding attacker but felt paralyzed and couldn't run or escape. The second nightmare was one in which he was underwater and drowning. In the understanding of these nightmares, it became apparent to the therapist that the theme of ultimate paralysis in both dreams is what turned them into nightmares; that is, when he is stopped, his regressive need is stopped, and therefore he needs to face what he hates to face—who he really is! Of course, the therapist also knew that this man's requirement to be in therapy consultation represented a threat to his whole need

to keep moving and his defense against knowing that he was really afraid of the content (or absence of content) of his deepest and innermost mind. In addition, the therapist knew that also, on a deep unconscious level, this man saw the therapist as the knife-wielding attacker in the dream because it was this selfsame therapist who threatened all of this man's defenses and manipulations. In addition, the therapist was the one person in the world who would begin a dialogue regarding this man's usual antisocial and provocative behavior appearing in the form of endless acting out and, more specifically, the therapist would be the one to engage a discussion regarding this man's cruelty based on his disregard for the feelings of others.

THE MEAN/CRUEL TYPE

This cruel or mean kind of person is here meant to be considered as *sadistic.* Such a person takes great pleasure—perverse pleasure—in a display of power and dominance. And the pursuit of such perverse pleasure in achieving dominance and power occurs without even a trace of conscience or empathy.

In such cases, this sort of person derives pleasure, also, from small victories. Anything that can disadvantage the other (the victim) becomes a source of pleasure. Such behavior runs the gamut of relatively inconsequential sadism to the ultimate extreme sadism, as in threat to life and limb—from serious humiliation toward the other to torture, extreme violence, or worse.

Thus, in relationships, overtly sadistic behavior will surely and eventually shatter the relationship. Yet sadistic individuals, with such a repertoire of inherent meanness (as expressed in passive-aggressive sadism, in which the hostility is delivered in an unrelenting string of minor or low-level sadistic acts) can, with great virtuosity, act to keep the relationship going indefinitely, with the partner kept in a state of frustration and never-ending emotional deprivation.

WISDOM
Don't do it.

P.S.: Repeat, don't do it.

HOPE: Are you kidding?

Case Study of the Mean/Cruel Type (Sadistic)

A 30-year-old male physician was a doting father to his two daughters and son and a somewhat weak husband in his relationship with his wife. However, at the hospital, where he was a resident and should have been someone whose mission in life was to help people, he had different ideas. At the hospital, he was reasonably good with his patients but very jealous and false with his colleagues. He was also someone who, despite his achievements in life, never felt really accomplished or as though he was doing something special or valuable. When an acquaintance would compliment him on being a doctor, he would assume a modest pose, even though he loved the compliment. However, he just about never complimented anyone else for something he or she might have done that was valuable and good.

This man's sadistic behavior was actually quite subtle. For example, he would never come to the aid of someone who was in apparent trouble; rather, he would wait it out and take pleasure in the fact that the troubled person was suffering. And he was able to accomplish this sort of subtle cruelty in an artful manner. It was never obvious that he was slowing down or avoiding noticing the problem. But the truth was that whenever he was actually noticing such a problem, he would feel dominant and even powerful, and in a sense, this represented the inexorable and continuous comparisons he made between himself and anyone else. And he couldn't stop doing it. He was always comparing himself to others whom he considered to be intelligent or accomplished.

The only exception to this particular disgusting neurosis of his was that he spared his children this tactic of disadvantaging the other person with as much discomfort or pain as possible. In addition, apparently, he never actually did anything physically painful to a patient; that is, he was not a serial-killer doctor who might poison someone. Rather, his technique was to be passive-aggressive in his cruelty, and he took this kind of passive-aggressive behavior to its exquisite limit. Probably his only pleasure was in being powerful and dominant, and he did this by way of winning fantasy competitions with others. Because he was operating with a severe inadequacy or inferiority complex, then everything he did that was sadistic was ultimately in the service of simply providing evidence that he was, in fact, more dominant or powerful than the other or the sufferer, or conversely, that the sufferer was weaker, and the evidence for this weakness was that this doctor was able to calibrate the sufferer's discomfort; that is, he could prolong the suffering.

It was therefore necessary to keep the sufferer in an ever sustained position of frustration and deprivation—for as long as possible, but without it being apparent to anyone else. And in this respect, even patients were not spared the effect of his neurotic power needs.

He was never able to really humiliate anyone face to face, but he fantasized about doing it; rather, his pleasure with respect to humiliating anyone was gratified when he would see it happening to someone while he was the observer, although not the actual perpetrator, of the humiliating act.

In a nutshell, this particular case example contains most of the characteristics of the sadistic person insofar as an absence of empathy will lead to a dehumanization of the other, and yet in this case, the pattern of cruelty was on the low end of the sadism scale. This man was sadistic, but his sadism was based on extreme competitive strivings, which, in turn, were born from deeper feelings of inadequacy. His inability to gain power from what he would consider solid and great achievement caused him, rather, to attain an elevated presence in a distorted manner by being better than those who were in actual trouble.

Emotionally Antagonistic Types

Remember

The aim of such types is to reject the other person.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Do I want someone who is always expressing hostility?	❑	☑
Do I want someone who is always trying to outmaneuver everyone?	❑	☑
Do I want someone who is cruel?	❑	☑

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Emotionally Vulnerable Types

THE CLINGING TYPE

In professional language, this type is called *dependent.* This is the kind of person who needs uninterrupted direction and leadership from his or her partner. Therefore it becomes very clear to the partner that such a dependent, clinging type cannot, and will not, really initiate anything. The ongoing and constant apprehension such a dependent clinging type has reflects the person's ever present concern about a possible separation from the partner. In such persons, separation will ignite anxious and depressive reactions as well as other possible symptoms.

This kind of separation tension or anxiety, along with immature behavior and strong feelings of inadequacy, is a typical amalgam of characteristics of such a clinging dependent personality. This kind of person is also compliant, and even helpful (as an assistant would be), and feels more at ease in seeking out situations where there is an authority figure on whom to depend. In this sense, the person is also passive and submissive and, of course, tends to avoid responsibility.

In a relationship, and as a partner, such a person is experienced by the other as burdensome, and the other may feel like he or she is caring for a child. Examples are the clinging person's need for constant reassurance, a typical excessive sensitivity to

disapproval, and needing bolstering in all endeavors as well as in whatever challenges are faced.

WISDOM

An abundance of milk and Band-Aids is required here.

P.S.: In contrast to this milk-and-Band-Aid type is the person who is quite attentive and not always completely dependent on your decisions. And this person, although usually totally devoted, is also able to be assertive and sometimes say, "No!" Rather than solely dependent on you, such a person is interdependent—dependent on you as you are dependent in return. This latter kind of person is a good bet.

HOPE: If both partners are really dependent types, the relationship can work, although a thematic strand of ineptitude will creep through everything in their lives.

Case Study of the Clinging Type (Dependent)

An 18-year-old young man abruptly left his first semester of college after only three weeks. He said he felt the atmosphere to be cold and unfriendly, and he became anxious and despondent. He was accompanied to his first therapy session by both parents, and it became clear that his limited college experience generated in him what is generally clinically defined as *separation-anxiety.*

This man's history revealed him to be someone who always and urgently needed safety and security, and this is exactly what his home environment provided. It is therefore understandable that separation fears occupied an important place in his psyche. In his psychotherapy sessions, he described his first experience with separation reactions. It was his first day of kindergarten and his mother accompanied him. He was then five years old. He immediately began to whimper because he knew she was going to leave him there. The whimpering turned to sobbing when his mother finally was, in fact, leaving the room. The upshot of this event was that his mother needed to stay in the room for several days before he agreed that she could go.

Similarly, during his grammar school years as well as into high school, both mother and father would help him with homework as well as quiz him before exams. All discussions and memories of his childhood indicated that this man had always functioned at a lower maturity level than others his age. Essentially, his entire functioning was age-inappropriate, although he was not in any way either socially unknowing or seemingly unintelligent. Nevertheless, because of his sense of inadequacy, he would assume an inferior position in any social interaction. He was simply a classic dependent personality.

He stated that he always felt deeply gratified when he was in his family home, but outside of the family home, and especially with respect to dating, he would anticipate rejection, and so to say the least, he was quite risk averse. He typically sought advice and reassurance from his parents.

This man's self-esteem suffered from a lack of sufficient exposure to normative, everyday social interaction, and therefore he was not at all spontaneous and didn't initiate activity. Ultimately, it was difficult for him to tolerate solitude, and he needed to avoid situations that could potentially produce turbulent experiences. He needed to be sure that his emotions were never scattered or provoked into chaos, and his passivity also developed to support his deferential attitude toward his parents or other individuals in authority.

An interesting event that occurred involved the job he got, instead of attending college. He had developed the hobby of shortwave radio transmission, and since the age of 12 or 13, he dabbled in this activity, until he became well versed in its use and in all of its associated links. He knew all about various brands and parts and how to set it all up, and he virtually inhaled everything he could read regarding shortwave radio. It was the only thing that could arrest his attention without needing to invite supervision from his parents, and it served the additional purpose of keeping him insular—away from concrete, person-to-person and face-to-face contact with others. He set up his station in the basement of the private home he shared with his parents. With his shortwave system, he would communicate with people at far distances, and it probably was really the only way he could feel mature.

The job he got was as an assistant producer at a local radio station. His father was a friend of the station manager, and as luck would have it, the job was perfect for him. He wasn't afraid of that particular environment, loved the radio station, and ultimately did quite well there. During the fifth year of his employment, he was offered the job of technical manager. This entailed

keeping the equipment in order and generally being in charge of all technical aspects of the physical plant. He gladly accepted the offer, and it was a boon to his existence because it gave him his only arena in which he could be mature and have expertise and mastery in his work—in his life. However, he remained living in his parents' home, and his only excursion away from home was his trip to work and then back home.

It is clear in this case that separation fears, a clinging need, feelings of inadequacy, and an immature level of functioning can be seen as a diagnostic cluster of characteristics that reveals the presence of a dependent personality.

THE CAN'T-DO-ANYTHING TYPE

This person is really inept in all spheres of life and fails at all challenges in life; leaves things incomplete and therefore has no sense of follow-through; and to top it off, is also (as would be expected) exceedingly dependent. In professional language, this sort of personality profile is labeled as *inadequate personality.*

Such a person usually feels socially awkward and can be socially withdrawn. In addition, the ineptitude reveals itself also in the person's inability to gain steady employment. This, despite the fact that such a person's intelligence level actually can be quite good. Nevertheless, this kind of person continues to underrespond, underperform, and consistently underachieve.

Since such a person seeks a protective environment, deferring to authority becomes a natural and typical response. In addition, because performance is inadequate, this kind of person is overly sensitive to criticism.

One should be wary and not fooled by any sort of sacrificial attempts that the person makes to help because the work will never get done correctly, and certainly not efficiently. This is a can't-do-anything person, and it would be difficult to live with such a person, unless the partner is, correspondingly, also inept.

The interesting thing, however, is that in many cases, despite all the inadequacy, many such individuals can be loving, warm, and appreciative. Thus this kind of personality profile reveals a strong contrast between behavior, on one hand, and emotion, on the other. The inadequate behavior reflects great self-doubt as well as anticipation of failure; emotionally, though, strong caring qualities can be evident.

WISDOM
Such a person cannot be a breadwinner.

P.S.: If it's the man, we could be dealing with Mr. Mom. If it's a woman, you'll need to retain a nanny and housekeeper, each on a full-time basis. And even if the person is a more adequate than type, he or she will be dropping things, breaking things, not placing things in their rightful position, and so forth.

HOPE: Living with a partner who is a dependent personality but who shows aptitude in one or two areas might work.

Case Study of the Can't-Do-Anything Type (Inadequate Personality)

This is the case of a 69-year-old man who, in part, has spent his life behaving as though he was a big shot but actually could never hold a job. In addition, he would always talk about the next big thing that he was going to do, but of course, that next big thing he promised never panned out. What is usual in such inadequate personality types is that they are typically quiet and try not to draw attention to themselves. In this case, however, the compensatory need in this senior citizen (his need to be seen as an important person, one to be admired) was so immense that it prevailed over all other considerations of even good judgment or simple appropriateness.

This man never married. Instead, he lived in the original family apartment in which he grew up. His older spinster sister still lived in the apartment, and their mother also always lived with them. She died at the age of 96. His main problem was with his sister. She was the one who constantly pricked his puffed-up boasting nature by pointing out that nothing he ever said turned out to be true or was ever accomplished. Over the years, it was their mother who was the emulsifying agent between them. She mollified him whenever his sister attacked his veracity and his boasting.

However, during his childhood years, it was this selfsame mother of his that was ever critical and was the model that the sister emulated with respect to the critical and humiliating confrontations that the mother imposed on her young son. His mother actually mocked him for being friendless, for being shy socially, and for failing at virtually everything he did. The fascinating

aspect to this relationship was that the mother had the perfect opportunity to praise him because even though he was inept at almost everything he tried, nevertheless, he always did things himself and never needed to ask his mother or his sister for help. He was actually able to initiate activity, even though his follow-through was severely lacking.

He had a profoundly impoverished social life, and therefore, over the years, his social experience was meager. Because of this, instead of seeking social outlets (he felt unequal to the task of developing relationships), he plowed into work projects, only to then end up unable to achieve success in any of them. He just couldn't meet obvious standards of work, despite the fact that he was actually quite bright. In fact, his only talent was his unique ability to work on crossword puzzles. He was a whiz at them, and this was because he was always focused on fact gathering and was essentially what we could call an information junkie. He knew that social engagements did not play to his strengths, so over the years, he simply acquired knowledge, and because of this, he actually knew things. Even though he was so expert at crossword puzzles, he reported that no one in his family ever—not even once—complimented him on this one thing at which he not only did well, but excelled. Of course, in doing crosswords, he didn't need to confront the challenge of meeting people or engaging in conversation. In social situations, he would feel tired and lethargic, almost as though he needed to sleep. In fact, his ability to put only minimal effort into tasks accounted for a college grade point average equivalent to a straight C. This, despite the fact that he was intelligent.

In school, he was always on the periphery of peer group activity, and his typical response to teachers and to other students who were his own age was as child to parent; that is, he seemed deferent to everyone, but oddly reported that he hardly ever felt angry—except palpable anger at his sister (and probably his mother). It was thought that it was too difficult for him to be conscious of his anger because what he probably was conscious of was the fact that if he expressed anger, he wouldn't know how to talk about it or how to back it up with decent arguments and reason, and generally, he felt that the entire social arena was a mystery. And if this was not a conscious thought of his, it was almost certainly a feeling, an uncrystallized intuition.

As a young adult, and to pacify his sister's ever ready critical stance toward him, he began to announce that he was about to do something important but would not say what that was. At first, it worked, but his sister waited a while, and at the point that he forgot even what he was contemplating or promising,

she would ask him about the "big thing" that was ostensibly in the works. Again, he would be confronted and had nothing to show for his compensatory stance. However, over the years, this sort of bragging, announcing, and promising became habituated. This was so because even though it led to embarrassing consequences with his sister, nevertheless, at the time he would make such pronouncements, they felt good to him—almost as though they were real.

It was such compensatory habits of his that enabled him to ward off anxiety and depression regarding his failed life. In more sober moments, that's what he called it—"my failed life." Along with his compensatory defense, he also utilized defenses of denial and, especially, rationalization. It was his reliance on an abundance of rationalizations that fueled his insistence on promising the next "big thing."

When he was in his forties, he discovered that he could do rote jobs that didn't require a supervisor to stand over him and didn't lead to judgment by others. He found such employment, and that's how he forevermore made his living. In addition, he became focused on getting bargains and on seeking things that would give him any advantage. He essentially became the king of the small. This represented an elevation of the slightest compensatory advantage. As an example, he would scavenge discarded materials—things people threw out—wherever he could find them.

His profile was of one who underperforms, underresponds, seeks compensatory advantage, never follows through effectively, rationalizes, and is dependent and deferent, sensitive to criticism, socially underdeveloped, and essentially inept in all spheres—but he did crossword puzzles well! Such would be an accurate summary of this man with a diagnosis of inadequate personality.

THE DOWN-IN-THE-DUMPS TYPE

Here we have almost the opposite of the manic person. In professional language, this type of person is considered to be depressed. At best, such a person is modest and shy and will identify with objects of pity, as, for example, in feeling for wounded animals. Such a person is usually self-absorbed and suffers with low self-esteem. Thus we are considering here a person who suffers with chronic or consistent depressive feelings, and not someone who has gotten depressed due to some recent event and who, with time, will surely come out of it.

An important characteristic of the consistently depressed person is a fear of abandonment. Yet this apprehension regarding possible abandonment stands in stark contrast to the very real problem such a person has of not being able to offer his or her partner significant and continuing affection. The not-giving, or nonaffection, condition is almost as much a result of a depletion of energy—consistently seen in the person who is down in mood—as it is a function of the underlying cause of the depression itself.

Because of self-absorption and a restrained ability to participate in a reciprocal affectionate relationship, any person with this sort of persistent character trait will find it difficult to hold up his or her end of the relationship. Characteristics of pessimism, loss of interest, poor attention span, loss of appetite, sleep problems, and a variety of other symptoms will make it very difficult for such a person to be an active and viable partner in the relationship.

But there is good news. The good news is that in a short-term depression, psychotherapy can be enormously helpful. For a deeply chronic psychotic depression, only medication will be able to help the person be reasonably free of the most debilitating effects of the depression. For a consistently down-in-the-dumps condition, both psychotherapy and medication together can produce a positive outcome.

WISDOM

Psychotherapy and/or medication can do it;
otherwise, the depression wins.

P.S.: When a person is only somewhat down in the dumps, don't count him or her out. It could possibly work. There are some who can be at least intermittently affectionate, but probably not in public—only in private. They're too shy to be publicly expressive.

HOPE: This sort of person can also be quite talented and bright and may be able to respond to encouraging comments so that if the partner is able to withstand only minimal to moderate affection, then the relationship can work.

Case Study of the Down-in-the-Dumps Type (Depressed)

At the age of 37, this woman, who was a music teacher in a public high school, married for the first time. She was an attractive, intelligent woman who played the flute. In school, she taught music appreciation and, in addition, led the school orchestra. And she was also very well appreciated by students and other teachers alike. Her new husband was a partner in an accounting firm. They both had come as a couple to seek some help through premarital counseling. The problem was that he was smitten with her and really loved her, and she, although also fond of him (perhaps loving him, too), found it difficult to express warmth and loving feelings. She claimed that despite her ability to show warmth and understanding to her students, and friendliness to her colleagues, she knew that it was all a ruse; that is, her warmth toward these others was real but she was able to express it only because it wasn't personal and it wasn't a one-to-one situation. She actually said, "I'm frequently down in the dumps."

Basically, this woman was shy and modest and quite self-absorbed. She was a person who was concerned with those others who were oppressed or wounded, and she volunteered at a homeless shelter on a one-day-a-week basis. In addition, on the weekends and on weekday evenings, she had the habit of practicing her flute nonstop. At first, her husband didn't want her to be at the homeless shelter because he was afraid that she would be unsafe there. The truth of it was that she was actually terrified to be there, but she decided to conquer her fear by moving into the fear. In clinical terms, this is referred to as a *counterphobic act;* you move into the stimulus that frightens you, instead of moving away from it.

In addition, even though, at first, her husband loved her focus on music and her daily marathon flute practicing, when the sexual activity between them ceased, he correspondingly began to develop a psychological allergy to her incessant practicing. He was really getting angry at her, but because he wanted to avoid a breach in the relationship, he began to hate the flute instead.

Now, why did the sexual interaction between them cease? For the possible answer to that question, we will need to understand this woman's psychological dynamics. First of all, she confessed that she had been quite promiscuous starting when she turned 17 and had her first boyfriend. She found sex to be liberating. The question is, liberating from what? And the answer is that this woman was so fragile, and in certain ways, dysfunctional,

that the fact of giving herself to her boyfriends and others at the point at which she felt safe with them enabled her also to feel more mature and free of the fetters of fears of abandonment.

As it turned out, this woman was most likely suffering from what is known as *annihilation anxiety.* This means that in all likelihood, she had a thin ego and would feel threatened by any number of interpersonal events—especially when these were first-time events. Basically, she was afraid of collisions of all sorts, and before she would commit to a boyfriend-girlfriend relationship, she needed to make sure that the man was not a violent type. Because of such fears, she became especially agreeable and accepting of others, and others could see her good nature. This was her technique of ingratiating herself to others. It wasn't as if she couldn't get angry. She could get angry, but only at her husband. And this was so because with him, she felt safe and was never fearful that he might attack her. Thus, with him, she could let go of all of her inhibitions, and such inhibitions consisted of what she was suppressing: her anger.

Therefore her anger would emerge toward him whenever he intruded on her privacy, and these occurrences were, by definition, uninvited ones. In this respect, sexuality became something in the service of the need for acceptance and was just as easily extinguished once the acceptance had been achieved—and was perceived to be immutably achieved. And this is exactly what happened between them.

Now, what about her depressive personality? Her husband was the only one who would see this underlying chronic depressive mood in her. She found it difficult to have conversations in the morning, as though awakening out of sleep required her to rebalance, and even recohere. And so her mood in the mornings was dark, and she would snap at him even at the slightest almost-provocation. Theory has it that in a chronic depressive and nonpsychotic underlay (such as this), the depressive mood and all of its eventual vicissitudes is probably a result of early family dysfunction, in which the primary caregiver (usually the mother) is somewhat cruel toward the child by suddenly, and with malice, barking at the child as though the child did something wrong. In such cases, it is thought that the wrongness is the mother's idiosyncratic nonsense and that the child didn't do anything at all that was wrong. It's thought that this sort of mother doesn't meet the child's needs appropriately so that the child is imprinted with a sense that abandonment can be real unless one is obedient, deferent, agreeable, and conscientious. And our woman here was all those things. But more important, she always felt worried and sad, modest and shy, and could not at all take center stage

in any endeavor. It was really a miracle that she could lead the high school orchestra. However, she claimed this was an easy task for her because she knew all the students, and the music was entirely familiar to her. In a word, she was an expert at it, and there was no one there to challenge her, which to her would have been equivalent to an unwanted collision.

One would not be able to discern her low self-esteem because she had it all wrapped in a camouflage that included a very productive professional life with mastery in her work. Yet, because of this underlying fear of doing something wrong, of possibly being rejected and abandoned, she had become emotionally inhibited and, in addition, had a raft of depressive symptoms that included poor sleep, no appetite, a pessimistic attitude, an inability to be affectionate, a tendency toward self-absorption, and even a sense of depletion of energy. For example, when not practicing her flute at home, she would try to sleep.

This woman, in her sensitivity to criticism, was predictably subject to being easily emotionally deflated, and her concerns about such things monopolized her inner world to the extent that these were really narcissistic concerns and they trumped any normal emotional and sexual interpersonal response. Hence her sex life with her husband was quite intermittent and just another job—without libido, or interest, or feeling.

The question is, can such a depressive, down-in-the-dumps person get better? The answer is, yes, moderately.

THE VICTIM TYPE

The victimized person who finds himself or herself in continuous self-defeating situations of failure as well as in exploited positions, where self-sacrifice and bringing pain and suffering to the self is a typical sought-after experience, is commonly called *masochistic.* This sort of person is not accidentally sacrificial; rather, such a person is overly and evenly determinedly sacrificial. The mind-boggling phenomenon here is that in addition to this kind of self-sacrifice, such a person needs to almost always sabotage situations in which he or she functions, specifically and actually, to invite humiliation and shame.

The self-sacrifice also is frequently contained in the personality within a passive orientation so that in the extreme case, the masochistic person will seek dominant partners to gain pleasure by passively following instructions and by being blamed for

tardiness. Such individuals will put themselves in situations in which they are then called on to accomplish prodigious amounts of work for the other person. They will then go ahead and, in their characteristic self-defeating and painful manner, proceed to do the job for the other—albeit, usually not well.

This is plainly the sacrificial victim's fate: to carry burdens. In extreme cases, when associating with a truly sadistic person, the masochist—the victim—will then be put in a continuously suffering position.

The interesting theory is that masochistic people are basically playing out an act of penance for unconscious thoughts that they themselves consider to be unforgivable. In this sense, it is theorized that in the least, they court continuous low-level suffering, and in the most extreme sense, infliction of self-punishment.

WISDOM

This kind of person can improve with psychotherapy—but it takes a lot of doing, a lot of motivation, and the perennial question is, is the person willing?

P.S.: Best advice—probably stay away.

HOPE: If the partner is not an inveterate exploitative type and, in addition, can resist the cloying nature of this masochistic sacrificial one, then even though the self-sacrifice of such a masochistic person will characterize his or her behavior, if the partner will be able to utilize the help and express gratitude, the relationship can work.

Case Study of the Victim Type (Masochistic)

"The typing fiend" is what his wife called him. Charlie was a 29-year-old man who had a history of taking on massive projects and getting into trouble about it because his vision of the work never matched how much effort it would really take to accomplish all that he put in front of himself. His wife was a doctoral student in the field of ethological research (the study of animals in their natural habitats), and he had just withdrawn from a master of science program in education. It was the second time he'd dropped out of

school. The first time was when he decided to become premed in his sophomore year. He had previously wanted to become a doctor, but wanting and doing are two different things. Finally, in his junior year, he decided to take math, physics, chemistry, biology, and an elective class in the philosophy of science, in which the professor required his students to search for original library sources for their final papers. Several of his friends warned him not to do it. It would be taxing and challenging for even the most durable, conscientious, and strongly motivated genius to do well in all those courses, all at once.

Charlie's friends knew that his work ethic was terrible but that his fantasy life, in all its denial and grandiosity, was great. But this was an example of Charlie at his best—at his masochistic best. And of course, by the time he decided to withdraw from the semester because still, after a month, he hadn't done his readings, hadn't handed in his papers, and only attended classes intermittently, it was too late. So instead, he claimed he was ill and so needed to interrupt his semester. He applied for incompletes in all five of these courses, and he got them. He never returned to that college. In addition, and in the present, he insisted on typing all his wife's papers, keeping their checkbook in order, and paying all the bills.

So this was Charlie. He was a suffering soul who believed in all of his sacrificial attempts to be helpful to others as well as having excellent visions for his own future. The problem was that even when he was truly sacrificial, even then, those toward whom he was sacrificing almost never responded in kind, and Charlie frequently found himself considering the possibility that people are really selfish and ungrateful.

In therapy sessions, it was hypothesized that Charlie did all these things partly to ingratiate himself as well as to make himself indispensable to others, and in this way, he felt (perhaps unconsciously) that he would be considered important. On a deeper level, it was suggested that more basically, Charlie was engaged in masochistic-like behavior, the purpose of which was really to bring on shame, humiliation, and failure. The gist of this interpretation was the standard Freudian understanding that can define masochistic behavior; that is, at an early time, when he was a child, he was angry at his mother but afraid that she would see this, so to conceal such feelings, he automatically repressed the anger. Yet when something like that is repressed, it begins to radiate a sense that something is wrong. This feeling of wrongness is then understood by the subject to be one of guilt. Furthermore, to assuage the guilt and to do penance for it means that the subject, the person, needs to suffer, to do things that are painful and that make up

for the misdeed that is felt to certainly represent the feeling of wrongness that is forever lurking.

In Charlie's case, this interpretation might have had validity. When he was a child, his mother decided that he should play the violin. Charlie was a really big kid. He was tall and stout, and he was an athlete, and he didn't want to play the violin. He felt it didn't complement his physical stature or the way he liked to see himself. But his mother was a domineering type, and she insisted he take violin lessons and that he practice each and every day. Charlie complied with her wishes and didn't express any anger about this usurpation of his will. But one day, in a moment when he was practicing his violin (which he hated), Charlie took the violin by its neck and smashed it against the wall. He was upset that he did that, even though the act of smashing it was pleasurable. He thought that that would take care of violin lessons, but to his surprise, his mother blithely ignored the violence to the violin and bought him another one. Charlie never played it, even though his mother kept it out of the case and always visible to him and everyone else.

Not so surprisingly, and in keeping with a psychoanalytic understanding, Charlie was forever making relationships with people who were always in more dominant positions than he. This was true of his girlfriends and of his best male friends. Everyone was more achieved and way ahead of him as far as vocational and professional pursuits were concerned. And even though he liked all his friends, nevertheless, he was pervaded with jealousy and envy. And in spite of this, and in the face of such jealousy and envy, he continued to be sacrificial.

All in all, Charlie was a victim-type personality with a distinct masochistic style in which he inflicted such workloads on himself that it was all really in the service of self-punishment. And part of this self-punishment was accomplished when he was ready to receive gratitude and credit for his work but instead either got a modest thank-you or even, occasionally, no response at all. He also, in the throes of his working frenzy, got fired from the job.

In the sexual arena, he was never involved in sadomasochistic acts; that was not where his masochism was defined. His was the kind of masochism that pervaded his life, and in his marriage, his sacrifice became characteristic of his contribution to what was waiting for him down the line—either appreciation from his wife, or perhaps a divorce based on his cloying and incessant insistence on taking on that workload. Time would tell.

THE WORRIED TYPE

In professional as well as in everyday language, this kind of person is called an *anxiety* type. In such cases, a so-called free-floating anxiety exists. This kind of anxiety is mysterious because the sufferer usually can't pin it on something that has happened—an actual pivotal event that usually would be able to be identified as the source of some tension. Thus, when asked what the anxiety is about, the person doesn't really know. More or less, a free-floating type of anxiety is just that—it pervades the personality and just floats there all the time.

Such persons can experience physical reactions such as quivering, sweaty palms, and a racing heart. In some cases, these sorts of physical reactions are also symptoms of a panic reaction. Panic is an extreme form of anxiety and will frighten the person far more that mere general anxiety. In fact, the difference is that panic is entirely disabling, while anxiety, although uncomfortable—even very uncomfortable—is not necessarily absolutely disabling. Anxiety is also seen in posttraumatic stress, in which the person's tension is triggered by memories or feelings of past harrowing experiences.

This sort of anxious person can also have sleep problems such as insomnia, can be easily startled, and feels vulnerable. Physically, others can usually tell that such a person is tense because the anxious attitude is unfailingly noticed in facial expressions and conversation. Of course, this kind of generalized anxiety is, in fact, traceable, but because it conceals an underlying emotional condition, it seems to be undecipherable.

Thus no amount of detective work will be able to decipher the meaning of the anxiety, unless it becomes understood that the person's anxiety started with a wish that was blocked by a particular person so that the anger toward that person was repressed—put out of awareness. In a relationship, this unconscious anger, expressed as anxiety, will spill over and be directed toward the partner in any number of ways.

WISDOM

If you're anxious, it's a good bet you're angry at a specific someone: a who.

P.S.: An anxious person is usually a wish-soaked person who is always tense about such wishes. It is this tension that is the code for anger.

HOPE: It's almost impossible to live with a person who is always spilling anxiety. The best that can be hoped for with such a type is if he or she operates with a more moderated anxiety—perhaps a low-level alarm reaction. With a low-level alarm tendency, such a person will be able to be a candidate for a relationship.

Case Study of the Worried Type (Anxiety Reaction)

A 55-year-old woman who was divorced made her living by renting space at flea markets and selling various and sundry secondhand items. Her specialty was dishware and cutlery and various sorts of other kitchen items. She would go from flea market to flea market transporting her wares in her panel truck, and she would do this kind of work all year around. She was divorced by her husband about 10 years after they married because, as he put it, "She was nuts!" By this, he meant that she was always nervous about something and seemed "wired." He originally married her because he enjoyed her energy and intelligence, and in addition, their sexual life was quite active and successful. As a result of this interest in her, he disregarded what he considered to be her anxiety and her continual concern about this or that. But even from the beginning, he would be annoyed with her quivering voice. It was this kind of voice that indicated that she was anxious, and her husband couldn't understand why she should be so tense, especially when their relationship was so good. Of course, he didn't understand, nor did she, that she was suffering with a generalized, free-floating anxiety.

However, it eventually got to him. His wife didn't object to the separation and divorce because she said he was right. She knew she was impossible to live with because of her permeating tension and anxiety. She even tried to avoid seeing her own image in a mirror because she thought her facial expression was always tight and tense—and she was right. Her face was usually taut and tight and tense.

The anxiety disorder is usually characterized by a free-floating tension, which is exactly what this woman was experiencing. She reported that she worried about whether her truck would break down, whether she would get a good table at the flea market, and whether the table would be located well so that her wares would be seen by the maximum number of patrons. And in whatever arena of interest she focused, she was always riddled with anxiety with respect to just about any aspect of the situation.

When her children were older, they pleaded with her to get some anti-anxiety medication, but she wouldn't comply because she was opposed to any kind of medication, and she also worried about the possible side effects of such medication. Eventually, when her children left for good, they admitted that they were glad to get away from her anxious spillover, which they could tangibly feel and which made them angry.

When she was married, her husband also complained about her panics. They had a small apartment, so whenever she felt overly anxious, there was no place to go and be alone, and therefore everyone in the apartment was affected by her pacing, her inability to sleep, and her complaints of a racing heart and continual sighing. Of course, her sighing was a function of her shallow, hyperventilating breathing, about which she seemed unconscious; that is, she couldn't understand why she was always sighing, but she knew intuitively that it had to be connected to her tension and anxiety. She knew that she was always sensing a kind of dread, a kind of anticipated calamity, and she would ruminate about it.

Other symptoms that were intermittently experienced included some distractibility, a reduced concentration, an irritability, and a general edginess. She would fidget, and her facial strain was also correlated to what is known as a *startle response*. What this means is that she was so absorbed with her own anxiety and so fixed on it that whenever she was confronted with something that was unexpected, she would feel startled by it, and the experience of being startled generated more intense anxiety, expressed as a feeling in her stomach of momentary alarm. She also reported that the anxiety would sometimes reach a crescendo, and then the feelings would appear in waves and not merely as discrete, moment-to-moment concerns.

This kind of anxiety was not limited to specific target situations, as would be the case with a phobic person, nor did she convert the tension to somatic symptoms such as tics or body rashes or any number of other psychosomatic symptoms; finally, she was not a dissociative type (a person with strange bodily phenomena), as might be the case with some hysterical symptom expressions, for which such strange bodily experiences are evident.

With the kind of lifelong generalized anxiety condition that this woman had, only medication could, and even rather quickly, extinguish the flames of tension. However, theoretically, it could be proposed that underlying the pervasive anxiety that she experienced existed a considerable amount of repressed and impacted anger, and this anger was, without a doubt, directed toward a specific person or a relationship with a specific person

(in her past—probably a parent). It would not even be outlandish to predict that if she were to be in touch with who that person was, and simultaneously be able to access the anger and know that it was directed toward that person, such internal work might be as powerful as any medication.

When this was suggested to her, she seemed amenable to examining her problem this way, and in addition, a promise was extracted from her that also committed her to trying antianxiety medication.

Emotionally Vulnerable Types

Remember

Vulnerable types will turn out to be full-time jobs.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Do I want someone always clinging to me?	❑	☑
Do I want someone who can't do anything?	❑	☑
Do I want someone who is always depressed?	❑	☑
Do I want someone who is always a victim?	❑	☑
Do I want someone who is always anxious?	❑	☑

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Emotionally Volatile Type

THE LOADED-WITH-PROBLEMS TYPE

During the past quarter of a century, one of the most researched diagnostic types is the one called the *borderline personality.* It should be understood that just as the personality profile labeled "schizoid" is not schizophrenic, so, too, the borderline profile does not mean the border between normalcy and psychosis.

The borderline person is a complex individual. A main characteristic of such a person includes the possibility of a dramatic display of anger always brewing just beneath the surface. This anger can be released suddenly and by any number of factors—some of which, to the average person, can seem unfathomable. The reason for such impulsive anger reactions concerns this person's fragile or thin ego, instability of self-image and self-esteem, and an overall instability of mood.

At various moments, this kind of person can be optimistic, but because of a focus on outcomes, the prevailing mood is then governed by tension—even pessimism. Along with this, there usually exist problems of sexual identity (in terms of what to do or what not to do, or even in terms of promiscuous behavior) and, in many cases, an underlying fear of abandonment. Furthermore, because of the overall instability of the personality, tasks may be handled inconsistently. Behavior

is usually highly idiosyncratic (the different drummer trait), and the person usually shows an inability to stick to the job or a tendency even to make the job more important than it is.

Unlike the schizophrenic person, the borderline person experiences great discomfort with loneliness and, to comfort the self, is frequently found to be susceptible to addictions of various kinds.

As if such characteristic problems of the borderline person were not enough, the reason this person is referred to as a loaded-with-problems type is the complexity of personality dispositions reflected in this person's experience. These dispositions or traits include compulsive, obsessive, paranoid, schizoid, and narcissistic elements that combine to form a tough problem for treatment as well as relationship building.

WISDOM
Relationship building is difficult here.

P.S.: Earthquake fault—beware. Without fortitude and great love, it is best not to try it.

HOPE: With fortitude, great love, and organizational help from a significant other, the ego may be supported.

Case Study of the Loaded-with-Problems Type (the Borderline Personality)

A 39-year-old woman was taken to the outpatient department of a psychiatric hospital. She had been depressed and moody for some time, and her father found her cutting (self-mutilation), through which she made little cutting marks on her thigh with a razor blade. Her father indicated that his daughter would have frequent angry outbursts, and at times, no one could figure out what caused such emotions. The daughter was also a loner, and yet she sought interpersonal events to feel as though she was a person.

She had never experienced any enduring relationship outside of her family, and for example, even as a child growing up, she never had a best friend. As an adult, she was also never involved in a relationship that would possibly lead to long-term commitment. She was a chain smoker (attesting

to her considerable anxiety load) and used codeine-enhanced cough medicine as a sleeping aide. She was clearly addicted to the codeine.

With respect to her diagnosis, hers was a clear picture containing a variety of subdiagnoses. For example, she displayed the cynicism and critical stance of the paranoid personality, the isolation of the schizoid, and the lability (mood swings) of the hysteric and manic depressive. Her father also confirmed that in his daughter's entire life, moodiness was a chief characteristic of her personality, and the moodiness had the distinct flavor of depression.

Her school record was a disaster, and she quit school in her sophomore year of high school. Her mood swings were especially noticeable in school because in short order, she would at first sometimes overvalue a teacher, but because of either an answer she gave that wasn't correct or because of some other even rather innocuous disagreement, she would just as easily and instantly devalue that same teacher. This overvaluing or idealization of someone and then the mood swing accompanied by a devaluation is a typical characteristic of a borderline personality.

Her employment history was actually a nonhistory because as a result of her unusual behavior she lost the only three jobs she ever had. She tried always to do things perfectly on the job, and because of that, she couldn't tolerate anyone who, as she saw it, slacked off. Her behavior was seen as immature and petulant, and this was consistently reported by her employers on all three of the jobs she had.

Her emotional facade also reflected a confused self-identity along with terribly immature sexual development, in which this woman was unable to achieve stable, consistent sexual attractions. In addition, she had many encounters with people in which she exploded with frustration and anger, and this was an indication of a marked instability of mood, of the difficulty she had in tolerating any reasonable measure of frustration, and generally of a profoundly underdeveloped system of inner personality controls. In addition, she was preoccupied with feelings of boredom and reported that she was sure people would abandon her. Of course, this conflict over isolation and the opposite need of safety with others was too much for her to handle and caused her a great deal of tension, ending up in a lot of dyscontrolled acting out, usually in the form of angry outbursts.

All of this pointed quite accurately to a borderline personality diagnosis of a woman who clearly had a deficient ego. The terrible tragedy of the borderline person's life is that generally, such a person is radiated with a feeling of self-loathing.

If there is good news here, it's that in the therapy situation, an understanding therapist would probably be able to penetrate the dilemma such a person has regarding the tendency both to idealize and then devalue another person. And of course, this idealizing and devaluing would be targeted toward the therapist as well. The point is that provided such a person sticks it out, the conflict possibly could be diluted in favor of a stronger ego.

With a stronger ego, mood swings would be less frequent, and then the therapy could tackle this person's poor ability to tolerate frustration as well as the most pathognomonic symptom (the cardinal symptom): that of just scratching the surface of her psyche and having a flash of anger appear. When anger flares like that, it's because of her *thin stimulus barrier.* The therapy would be directed to shoring up and further strengthening her ego so that her ability to withstand the process of emotional and interpersonal experience can improve. She could possibly then be stronger and able to absorb shocks better.

Emotionally Volatile Type

Remember

When everything is a problem, life will be difficult.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Would I want to live in a house that's built smack-dab in the middle of a geographical fault line or tornado corridor?	❑	☑

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Emotionally Healthy Type

THIS IS THE ONE!

It's possible—oh, yes, it's possible to forge a good, even fantastic relationship. There are lots of well-meaning people around, even though everyone has problems. So what should you look for to know you've found a so-called normal person? Well, how about a little tenderness? And this means trying to be an understanding person, and a fair and loving one. So if you run into someone like that, go for it. If, in addition, this person is conscientious, absorbed in some interesting activity, and not an airhead, then all the better (provided there's no air in your head!).

People need to have interests, and some of these interests need to be shared. However, not everything is togetherness. It's also important to be able to have downtime, alone time, and other-friends time. Your partner will, it can be hoped, not be put off by this part in you, and the other way around is good, too, that is, that you'll be OK with your partner's need for the same.

Therefore, in the other person, look for content and not solely form. When you meet someone like this, that's the one! The only remaining question is, are you the one?

WISDOM
Are you the one?

P.S.: Try to be the one: loving, understanding, and patient.

HOPE: You can find him or her, as she or he can find you.

Emotionally Healthy Type

Remember

It's possible to have a great relationship.

Ask yourself	*We hope so*	*We hope not*
Isn't it good to be able to work things out?	☑	❑

THE BEGINNING

In this book, we have tried to list the kinds of everyday problems of relationships. We have tried to show how the interaction of the partners can be the source of difficulty—even the source of serious dissatisfaction—leading to the gradual erosion of love. And we have tried to suggest ways to improve such interactions.

In addition, we have also listed various problems that each individual brings to the relationship with respect to common reactions (that all people have) that lead to the butting of heads. These common reactions include how people talk to one another, argue, fight, and also apologize. And we have suggested ways also to deal with such things.

Finally, we have listed a grouping of basic personality types, who, in their deeply etched personality characteristics, contribute to the difficulty in all relationships in that these etched personality characteristics only listen to their own imperatives and do not consider the needs of the other. We have also suggested in postscripts the extent of variation of each of these types that can make the relationship more possible, or not, and we included case studies as examples of particular personality types.

Because this book is directed toward what it takes to make love work, it is hoped that all this material—the insights related to the three parts of the book, "Your Relationship," "You," and "Personality Styles"—will be helpful in allowing the channels of communication of the partners to be enriched and more productive. In

this way, people can see that the struggle to communicate is a valuable one. If inputted correctly (and with effort), then, and perhaps only then (and with a little wisdom), can love be enough.

It's important to remember that we all have a culture to our personality. And as in culture, there are traditions, so, too, are there traditions in the culture of everyone's personality. The point is that when we do things in a better way, we begin to establish new traditions of our personality, and when we continue to struggle, to practice a new pattern, a new tradition, it will eventually begin to compete rather effectively with the older, not-so-good tradition that had been there. In other words, it's definitely possible to build in new traditions within one's personality that can absolutely help you to do better.

And that's the aim of working on relationships: doing better.

WISDOM
Go to it!

P.S.: Don't worry about the struggle. It's worth it.

HOPE: Hope springs eternal!

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About the Author

DR. HENRY KELLERMAN is a psychologist, psychoanalyst, and author. In a career spanning 50 years, Dr. Kellerman has held professorial faculty appointments at several university doctoral programs as well as clinical positions at several hospitals. He has published scores of papers in scientific and clinical journals and is the author and/or editor of more than 20 books. Dr. Kellerman is in private practice in New York City.

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