

Introduction

Congratulations on downloading *Manipulation and Dark Psychology: How to Learn Speed Reading People, Spot Covert Emotional Manipulation, Detect Deception, and Defend Yourself from Persuasion Techniques and Toxic People*, and thanks for doing so.

The following chapters will discuss the traits of malicious and manipulative people and teach you how to identify the techniques they use to take advantage of others. We will look at the concept of dark psychology and discuss dark psychological traits such as narcissism, psychopathy, sadism, and Machiavellianism so that you understand the driving forces behind manipulative people.

The book will also list and dissect all the manipulation techniques while using simple anecdotes to help you understand how those techniques work, and how someone might use them against you. The book also covers the behavioral tendencies and character traits of manipulators so that you can identify malicious people when they cross your path. It also covers covert and subtle methods that people in your life might use to influence you without your knowledge.

The book takes a dive into the psyche of the manipulators to help you understand exactly why they do what they do, and what end goals they have

in mind when they target you. It also discusses the vulnerabilities that manipulative people look for in the people they choose to victimize.

Towards the end, the book teaches tried and tested methods that people can use to defend against manipulation and exploitation. You will discover why your self-esteem is your best defense when dealing with psychological manipulators, and what you can do to raise your self-esteem and regain control over your life.

There are lots of books on dark psychology and manipulation in the market right now, so thank you very much for choosing this one! Every effort was made to ensure that this book is filled with useful insights and practical information that can help protect you against manipulators, so please enjoy!

Chapter 1: What is Dark Psychology?



There are many different ways to define dark psychology, but in this book, we will go with the simplest one. Dark Psychology is the art and science of manipulation and mind control. Psychology, in general, seeks to study and understand human behavior. It is focused on our thoughts, actions, and the way we interact with each other. Dark psychology, however, just focuses on the kinds of thoughts and actions that are predatory in nature. Dark psychology examines the tactics used by malicious people to motivate, persuade, manipulate, or coerce others into acting in ways that are beneficial to themselves, and potentially detrimental to the other person.

Dark psychology can be seen as the study of the human condition, in relation to the psychological nature of the different kinds of people who prey on others. The fact is that every single human being has the potential to victimize other people or other living creatures. However, due to social norms, the human conscience, and other factors, most humans tend to restrain their dark

urges and to keep themselves from acting on every impulse that they have. However, there is a small percentage of the population that is unable to keep their dark urges in check, and they harm others in seemingly unimaginable ways.

The point of dark psychology, as a subject, is to try to understand those thoughts, feelings, and perceptions that cause people to behave in predatory ways towards each other. Experts in dark psychology work under the assumption that the vast majority of human predatory actions are purposeful. In other words, most of the people who prey on others (99.99%) do it for specific reasons, while the remaining people (0.01%) do it for no reason at all.

The assumption is that when people do evil things, they have specific motivations, some of which may even be completely rational from their point of view. People do bad things with specific goals in mind and specific rationales for their actions, and only a tiny fraction of the population brutally victimizes others without a purpose that can be reasonably explained by either evolutionary science or some form of religious dogma.

You have heard many times that everyone has a dark side. All cultures and belief systems acknowledge this dark side to some extent. Our society refers to it as “evil” while some cultures and religions have gone so far as to create mythical beings to whom they attribute that evil (the devil, Satan, demons, etc.). Experts in dark psychology posit that there are some among us who commit the worst kinds of evil, for purposes that are unknown. While most people may do evil things to gain power, money, retribution, or for sexual purposes, there are those who do evil things because that’s just who they are.

They commit acts of horror for absolutely no reason. In other words, their ends don't justify their means; they cause harm for its own sake.

Dark psychology is rooted in 4 dark personality traits. These traits are; narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy, and sadism. People with such traits tend to act in ways that are pointlessly harmful to others.

Let's look at examples of how dark psychological aspects are manifested in the real world:

“I-Predators” are people or groups of people who use modern technology to prey on others, either directly or indirectly. As we have mentioned, everyone has a dark side, and the anonymity that the internet offers has a way of bringing out that dark side in many of us. The result is that there is an ever-increasing number of people who are looking to exploit, coerce, stalk, and victimize others online, and through the use of other technological tools.

These predators seem to be driven by deviant fantasies, which they feel free to play out because the internet makes it possible for them to lurk in the shadows. In other words, they are not restricted by the usual social norms that keep people from revealing their dark side because no one online knows their real identities. These people tend to have all sort of prejudices and preconceptions, which they go to great lengths to impose on others.

I-Predators come in different shapes and sizes; there are stalkers, harassers, criminals, perverts, terrorist, bullies, conmen, and even trolls. No matter what kind of predators they are, they all tend to have a self-awareness of the fact that they are harming others. They also tend to go out of their way to

cover their tracks, which means they don't want the people who know them in real life to discover that they have a dark side.

Arson is also a different manifestation of dark psychology. Arsonists are people who tend to be obsessively preoccupied with setting fires. Some of them become serial arsonists; they set fires regularly and in a manner that is highly ritualistic.

Necrophiliacs are people who are sexually interested in the dead, while serial killers are people who murder three or more people over a prolonged period of time. These are some of the most extreme manifestations of dark psychology, and although they are rare (as a function of the overall population), they are still worth discussing if you want to understand dark psychology. Experts in the field of criminal psychology believe that serial killers and other evildoers are motivated by the pursuit of psychological gratification, which they can only achieve by performing those brutal acts.

To the people who perform the worst kinds of evil acts, those acts are like drugs to them; they are addictive in a way. For instance, when a serial killer gets some form of gratification from murdering someone, he may feel the urge to do it again in order to experience the same gratification.

For the purposes of this book, we won't be discussing the darkest aspects of dark psychology; instead, we will be looking at those aspects that you are more likely to experience in your day to day life. We will be looking at how you can deal with people who are narcissistic, sadistic, Machiavellian, and psychopathic. We will look at why and how they do what they do, and what you can do to keep yourself from falling victim to their machinations.

Chapter 2: The 4 Dark Psychology Traits



For a long time, psychologists have referred to the dark human traits as "the dark triad," which consists of three negative personality traits; narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. However, in recent years, many experts in the field have been insisting that garden-variety sadism should also be added to the list of major dark psychological traits. As a result, we are now moving away from the dark triad and toward the "4 dark psychology traits".

In this chapter, we will take a look at each of the four traits and discuss them in detail. Before we look at those traits, it's important to note that understanding them is very crucial if you want to have functional knowledge of how to avoid being manipulated. In fact, research into these traits has many applications in different fields, including; clinical psychology, law enforcement, and even business management. Studies show that people who

score high when tested for the four traits are more likely to commit crimes, to cause problems within organizations, to cause distress to the people in their lives, and to society in general. In business situations, it may be important to keep people with such traits away from positions of power.

We encounter instances of narcissism, Machiavellianism, sadism, and non-clinical psychopathy on a regular basis, and if we are keen, we might be able to notice them. Statistically, we all have these traits in us to some extent. In fact, when psychologists test people for these traits, they use testing methods that assume that these traits exist in a spectrum. To take sadism as an example, such tests imply that instead of having people who are sadistic and those who are not sadistic, we have people who have high levels of sadism and those who have low levels of sadism.

Another important thing to note is that some of the characteristics that are displayed by people with each of the four traits can overlap, and this can be confusing, even for people who have professional training in psychology. For example, narcissists may behave in ways that are similar to Machiavellians or sadists. Because of this, it may be hard to tell what kind of dark trait a person has just by observing them for a short period of time.

If someone does something that's detrimental to others, you could be able to tell which dark trait the person has by examining the motivation, or the extent of the evil action. Don't jump to conclusions; take some time to examine the person's behavior closely before you make any judgment. If the person's actions are detrimental to you, it may be hard to stay objective when you are analyzing his dark personality trait, but it's important to remember that you can only appropriately deal with people if you have a good understanding of

their traits and motivations. You can try to remove yourself from the situation and analyze the person as an objective third-party observer.

Narcissism

Narcissism is the dark trait that is displayed by individuals who are narcissists. Narcissists display high levels of grandiosity, superiority, dominance, and entitlement. Narcissists tend to be charming people who have a positive outlook, which is why they are good at fooling other people. According to psychologists, narcissists are usually on the lookout for people to feed into their “narcissistic supply” because they want to use those people to build their own egos. They also lack empathy for others.

One main characteristic that you see in narcissists is that they are quite good at building and cultivating relationships, and they can initially blind people to the fact that they are acting out of self-interest. We all tend to have narcissistic traits to varying extents, but there are few among us who have Narcissistic Personality Disorder.

The terms Narcissist and Narcissism come from Narcissus, a character in Greek mythology. Narcissus was a hunter and a very attractive young man. He was so attractive that everyone seemed to fall in love with him. However, he only treated people with contempt and disdain, and he never returned the love that others showed him. Because of this, he was cursed by Nemesis (the goddess of revenge) to fall in love with his reflection in a pool of water.

Just like Narcissus, modern-day narcissists are in love with themselves. However, psychologists have come to discover that narcissist don't love the

real versions of themselves; they are in love with perfect versions of themselves, which only exist in their imaginations. It's easy to assume that narcissists have high self-esteem, but that is not actually the case; they have a perverse kind of self-esteem that is not predicated on accepting or loving who they are but loving a fictitious grandiose version of themselves. When a narcissist acts out of self-interest to someone's detriment, it's usually in pursuit of that grand vision of himself, even though he knows for a fact that it's not real.

Narcissists have an exaggerated sense of self-importance. They think they deserve to be treated better than everyone else around them. They have an exaggerated sense of entitlement, and they truly believe that when they receive favorable treatment in certain situations, it is for the common good. A narcissist thinks that when he is taking advantage of you, he is actually doing you a favor. This way, he can rationalize a lot of selfish and evil acts. In a relationship, a narcissist will think of himself as more important and more deserving than the other person. In the workplace, a narcissist will think that he has more natural talent than his colleagues, and he, therefore, deserves to be put in charge of projects or to be promoted ahead of everyone else.

The interesting thing about narcissism is that in some cases, it can make someone successful. Narcissism can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. When a narcissistic person believes that he is smarter than everyone else, he may work hard to prove it, and in the end, he may be more accomplished in his career. When a narcissist believes that he should be in a leadership position, he may exude confidence and acquire leadership traits, and the people around him will become truly convinced that he deserves to be their leader.

Because of this fact, some have argued that narcissism could be a positive trait in a person who is ethical. The problem, however, is that most narcissists seem to believe that their needs come before everyone else's, so sooner or later, they are likely to do something unethical, and to betray the trust of those who hold them in high esteem. Narcissists who seem confident at the beginning will often turn out to be arrogant. A narcissist who seems ethical at the beginning will throw ethics out of the window as soon as he feels that his dominance is being threatened.

Narcissists believe that they are special, and to reinforce this belief, they surround themselves with people who tend to be agreeable. They want to be around people who will validate their inflated sense of self-worth. Now, even the most agreeable people have the ability to spot flaws in others, and after spending some time with narcissists, they will stop affirming the negative actions of the narcissist. To prevent this, narcissists try to control the thoughts and actions of the people around them.

Narcissists are very controlling. They control people in both covert and overt ways. They try to manipulate others so that they keep feeding their "narcissistic supply," and when people try to break from their control, they can react with anger or rage. In relationships, narcissists are more likely to practice domestic abuse because they are trying to keep the other person under their thumb. At work, narcissists are more likely to act vindictively because they want to punish others for challenging their dominance. Later in the book, we will discuss ways to deal with narcissistic people.

Machiavellianism

Machiavellianism is a dark trait that involves deceitfulness and manipulation. Machiavellians tend to be very cynical people (not that they are skeptical or they have doubtful curiosity; they just don't care for the moral restrictions that the rest of society adheres to). They tend to be amoral and self-interested. They don't have a sense of right and wrong; they'll take any course of action, as long as it serves their interests.

Machiavellians are cold, unprincipled, and they are naturally adept at interpersonal manipulation. They believe that life is a zero-sum game and that the key to success is manipulating others. They approach all kinds of relationships with a cold, calculating attitude, and to them, when they desire a certain outcome in a given situation, the end invariably justifies the means.

Machiavellianism is named after Niccolò Machiavelli, the Italian political philosopher who is best known for writing *The Prince*. The book offers advice on how one can control the masses and manipulate people in order to gain power over them. The book teaches people to be cunning, manipulative, and deceitful, as long as they get what they want. It argues that in pursuit of one's interests, it's morally justifiable to harm others. In this sense, Machiavellianism is similar to narcissism because, in both traits, there is an underlying belief that one's own interests serve the common good, even if people are hurt in the process.

People with these traits are likely to cheat, lie, and harm others in order to achieve their goals. They are emotionally detached from the people around them, so if you are in a relationship with them, you may notice that all your experiences are shallow. They won't hesitate to harm others if it's expedient for them. Where narcissist, sadists, and psychopaths may harm others for

their own enjoyment, because they lack empathy, or to fulfill certain emotional needs, Machiavellians will do it for a rational and arguably pragmatic purpose. They have little consideration for the emotional collateral damage that they leave behind; in fact, they only care about others' emotions if they know it will come back to haunt them.

Machiavellians seem to have "cold empathy" as opposed to "hot empathy." Cold empathy is an understanding of how people may think or act in certain situations, or how certain events may unfold. On the other hand, hot empathy refers to being aware of and caring about people's emotions in a given situation. Normal people have hot empathy, which means that they understand how others feel, and they take care not to negatively impact the sensibilities of those around them. Machiavellians tend to understand the moves that others are likely to make in specific situations, but they don't resonate with other people's emotions. As a result, they tend to come across as unfriendly, emotionally distant, and harsh.

Some psychologists and anthropologists have argued that Machiavellianism could be an evolutionary advantage and that it's, therefore, a desirable trait. Machiavellians understand people's emotional reactions, which helps them deal with real and perceived threats, but they can technically bypass empathy when reacting to threats, which means that their actions are more effective. If the rule of the jungle (survival of the fittest) applies, then Machiavellians are more likely to thrive. The problem with this argument is that we are not in the jungle anymore, and society only functions if we all care about the welfare of others.

Machiavellians are master manipulators, and they are highly likely to be involved in white collar crimes. People with this trait are more likely to be involved in embezzlement schemes, pyramid schemes, stock swindling schemes, overpricing schemes, and political crimes. They work their way to the top by manipulating people, and when they get to positions of power (whether in business or in politics), they use the same techniques to manipulate the masses.

Psychopathy

Of all the dark traits, psychopathy is the most malevolent. Psychopaths have very low levels of empathy, so they don't care for others. On the other hand, they have extremely high levels of impulsiveness, and they are thrill-seeking individuals. They are very callous, very manipulative, and they have a heightened sense of grandiosity. They seek thrills without caring about the harm that they inflict on others in the process.

Psychopaths are more difficult to spot than you might think. They tend to keep normal outward appearances; even though they lack empathy and a conscience, they learn to act normally by observing others' emotional reactions. They can even come across as charming when they are trying to manipulate you. They are volatile, and they have criminal tendencies, although this isn't always the case.

There is a lot of interest and fascination with psychopaths, which is why you see so many depictions of them in pop culture. However, with fascination comes misconceptions. We tend to think of psychopaths as serial killers, bomber, super villains, and people who are certifiably insane, and the danger here is that we forget that most psychopaths are just normal (at least by all

appearances), and they can harm us in other ways. People who like starting fights, who disregard your emotions and those who consistently lie to you may turn out to be psychopaths.

Adult psychopathy cannot be treated. However, when psychopathic tendencies are observed in children and young people, they can be put through certain programs that teach them to be less callous and more considerate of others.

A key thing you need to understand is the difference between a psychopath and a sociopath. In colloquial conversations, these two terms are often used interchangeably, but in psychology, they have different meanings. A sociopath is a person who has antisocial tendencies. Now, these antisocial tendencies are usually a result of social and environmental factors; for example, a person who has a bad childhood may turn out to be a sociopath because he doesn't trust society in general, or he has developed certain psychological issues as a result of the unfavorable upbringing.

On the other hand, psychopathic traits are innate. People don't become psychopaths; they are born psychopaths. However, social and environmental factors may contribute to a person's particular brand of psychopathy. For example, people who are born with psychopathic traits and are brought up in an environment that is chaotic and violent, are more likely to have more pronounced manifestations of their psychopathy. Experts agree that there are three main factors that contribute towards psychopathy; genetics, brain anatomy, and environmental factors.

Like the other dark traits, psychopathy exists on a spectrum. Clinicians use a scale assessment system to measure the level of psychopathy; everyone falls somewhere on that scale, but people with a score of 30 and above are considered to have psychopathy that rises to the level of clinical significance. The Hare Psychopathy Checklist is used by mental health professionals to check for psychopathy, mostly in clinical patients and in criminals, but if you suspect that someone you are dealing with is a psychopath, you can find it online and use it for free as a guide if you want to know for sure that you are indeed dealing with a psychopath.

Sadism

Like the other three dark traits, sadism is characterized by callousness. Sadists tend to have normal levels of impulsiveness and manipulation, which explains why this trait wasn't originally included in what is now known as the "dark triad." The defining characteristic of sadists is that they enjoy cruelty.

Everyday sadists tend to be normal and functional by all indications, but they enjoy harming others. Sadists are referred to as "everyday sadists" because it's important to make a distinction between them and the narcissists, Machiavellians, and psychopaths who may manifest sadism as part of their other dark traits. Sadists are intrinsically motivated to cause others harm, even if they are completely innocent. Sometimes, sadists can prioritize the infliction of emotional pain on others even if it comes at a personal cost to them. They find cruelty to be pleasurable and exciting, and some even find it sexually stimulating.

Some psychologists have noted that sadists are often drawn towards career paths where they are allowed to harm other people under the guise of legitimate work. That means that many of them flock towards law enforcement, the military, etc. Psychologists have observed that when the levels of sadism in police forces are compared to the levels of sadism in the general population, the levels within police departments are always invariably higher. This could explain why police forces often have problems with some of their members taking the law into their own hands.

Sadists tend to inflict pain on people around them for no reason, and they are likely to escalate, especially when they discover that the person in question is less likely to push back. That explains why bullies keep picking on people who don't stand up to them.

Sadists are the kind of people who would tell your secrets to other people even after promising to keep them private because they enjoy it when you experience discomfort. They are also more likely to portray others in false or unflattering terms, with the intention of damaging the other person's reputation; while Machiavellians may do this to advance their personal agenda, sadists would do this because it's fun for them. Sadists may also work actively to get you fired from your job or to jeopardize your success, not because they want to get ahead of you, but just because they want you to be unhappy. They may also try to ruin your personal relationships; they'll cause turmoil in your relationship, then sit back and enjoy the drama and misery. They are more likely to steal other people's property, not because they need it, but because they don't want what the other person to have it. They are more likely to bully you either in real life or online.

You can always spot a sadist by the comments and remarks he makes online. Most internet trolls tend to be everyday sadists. They will make negative comments about pretty much anything, not because they strongly believe in the opinion that they have, but because they want to annoy you or get a rise out of you. They'll always find something negative to say about even the most unifying things online. With trolls, the more you engage with them, the more energized they become, and the more they'll bother you online.



Chapter 3: Psychological Manipulation Techniques

Psychological manipulation is defined as a form of social influence which seeks to alter the behavior and the perceptions of others, by the use of tactics that are indirect, deceptive, and underhanded. In other words, it's about using certain tricks to get people to act in a certain way or to think certain things, usually to the advantage of whoever is perpetrating the manipulation.

This way, the interests of the manipulator are advanced, usually at the expense of the other person in that equation. Psychological manipulation employs methods that are both devious and exploitative, and they are often used by people who have one or more of the dark personality traits that we discussed in the previous chapter.

Now, from the very start, we need to make sure you understand that not all psychological manipulation and social influence is negative. It's possible to manipulate someone for their own good. For instance, parents may manipulate their children into eating vegetables. In as much as that is manipulation, it ends up benefiting the child because his or her health is improved. Similarly, friends, family members, and healthcare professionals may try to influence you using certain manipulation technique with the aim of getting you to make the right choices in certain situations.

Social influence is a normal and important part of social discourse. In healthy social influence, there is no aspect of coercion. In other words, when a well-meaning person tries to influence you, and you resist that influence, they are not going to strong-arm you into doing what they want. However, in unhealthy psychological manipulation, the manipulator often resorts to coercive techniques if they sense that you are resistant to the softer techniques that they have been trying to use on you.

When malicious people deploy psychological manipulation techniques against you, they usually try to conceal the aggressive nature of their intentions, so you have to understand that most of their techniques are designed to be subtle. Most of them will also take some time to get to know you and understand your psychological vulnerabilities before they can decide which manipulation techniques will work on you. This means that just because you have known someone for a while, and you haven't seen them try to harm you in any way, it doesn't guarantee the fact that their intentions are pure, which means that you shouldn't start disregarding your instincts about them. The best manipulators are those who reveal their intentions long after you have decided to trust them.

Remember that manipulators generally have a tendency toward ruthlessness, so even if they are treating you well at the beginning of your association with them, pay close attention to the way they act towards others. If you see them using manipulation techniques against other people, you should know that it's just a matter of time before they get around to using the same techniques against you.

In this chapter, we discuss the most common psychological manipulation techniques that are used by people who mean to harm you or to take advantage of you. It's important to understand these techniques and how they work so that you can be able to spot them when they are being used against you or someone close to you, and so that you can know how to defend against them.

Gaslighting

Gaslighting is one of the most lethal psychological manipulation techniques out there. It's where a manipulator tries to get their target to start questioning their own reality. It involves getting someone to doubt their own memories and perceptions, and instead, to start believing what the manipulator wants them to believe.

The manipulator will sow seeds of doubt in the person so that they start thinking that either they remember things wrong, or they are losing their sanity. Gaslighting involves the persistent denial of things that obvious facts. It also involves a lot of misdirection, contradictions, and blatant lying. When a person is subjected to gaslighting for a long time, they start to become unstable, and they start feeling as though their own beliefs are illegitimate.

One common example of gaslighting is where an abuser convinces the victim that the abusive incident she recalls did not even occur. This phenomenon is more common than you might imagine, and it happens in all sorts of relationships. An abusive spouse might deny ever abusing you when confronted later, by either blatantly denying that they abuse occurred, or claiming that it didn't happen as you remember and that your version of the events is greatly exaggerated.

A manipulative boss or colleague might prey on a subordinate and later deny that it happened that way. Someone who groped you might later claim that they "accidentally brushed against you," and they may insist on it so much, to the point that you start thinking that maybe you were mistaken.

You may wonder; "How does it even work? I mean, I have a firm grasp of my own reality, and I doubt someone could be able to convince me that my perceptions are wrong!"

It's easy to assume that gaslighting won't work on you because you are smart or because you are strong-willed, but the truth is that when a manipulator is good at what he is doing, you might not even see it coming. The way it works is that it often starts with small lies on the manipulator's part and small concessions on your part.

Say, for example, your boyfriend shows up a few minutes late to an appointment when you had agreed to meet at a specific time, and he insists that he is on time and that it's you who came in a bit earlier and is mistaken about the timing that you agreed upon. At that moment, you might think, "Well, a 10-minute difference isn't such a big deal, and maybe we just got our lines crossed". You could dismiss this small discrepancy because it seems inconsequently, but that will just be the beginning. The next time, the lie will get a little bigger, and you will feel obligated to excuse it as well, because you already let something else slide, so it would seem inconsistent if you made a big fuss at this point.

After that initial seed is sown, the lies will start to escalate, and you will continue making concessions and agreeing with things that you know are lies, until one day, you realize that you are so far gone. You might not even notice when the small lies graduate into bigger lies. In every step of the way, you will be letting go of your reality and accepting the other person's version of things, and you will find yourself trusting their judgment over your own.

In a nutshell, gaslighting involves desensitizing you to your own reality, until the truth becomes what the other person says it is.

Gaslighting is more likely to work in situations where there is a power dynamic between two people, or between a person and a group of people. In a relationship where the victim is financially or emotionally dependent on the manipulator, the victim may accept to let go of her reality because its more comfortable to do so than to stand up to the manipulator, only to end up losing the relationship. In the workplace, a subordinate may go along with the boss's lies because he is afraid of losing his job. In a situation where a leader gaslight his followers, it often works because deep within, the followers want to believe whatever lies the leader is telling them.

There are several techniques that gas lighters use to get a stranglehold on their victims. One such technique is withholding. This is where the manipulator refuses to listen to what the victim says or pretends not to understand what they are saying. You might bring up something important, but the response you get is, "I don't even remember this thing you keep talking about."

Another gaslighting technique is called countering. This is where the manipulator questions the victim's memory of the events in question. They say things like "Were you even sober? Because that is not how that happened." The manipulator would then go on to offer an entirely different version of the story, where he casts himself as the hero or even the "real victim."

Gas lighters also use blocking and diverting as a manipulation technique. This is where they change the story or question the way the victim is thinking in order to avoid addressing whatever issue the victim is raising.

Trivializing is also a common gaslighting technique. This is where the manipulator makes the victim feel that her feelings or needs aren't that important, or that she is just being unnecessarily dramatic. Manipulators in such cases may say things like "don't blow things out of proportion."

You may be able to tell if someone is gaslighting you if you find that you are frequently second-guessing yourself, or that your convictions fade away when you interact with a certain person. If a person makes you ruminate about certain character flaws, they are most likely gaslighting you. Someone who tells you that you are too emotional might really be trying to get you to stop trusting your emotions. If you feel confused about the nature of your relationship, or you feel like the person is driving you crazy, or that you are losing control when you are with them, they might be gaslighting you.

If you walk into a room with the intention of having a discussion about something specific, but a few moments later, you find yourself arguing with your partner about a whole other topic, it means that the person is

deliberately frustrating your genuine efforts to communicate, and it could be a sign of gaslighting.

If you feel fuzzy about your own beliefs, thoughts, and feelings whenever you are with someone that is a clear red flag. When you are being gaslighted, you might also find that you are constantly apologizing for “being mistaken” or that you are frequently making excuses to yourself and to others for your partner’s behavior.

Projection

Projection is a psychological manipulation technique where someone transfers their emotions and mistakes onto you. Projection is a defense mechanism that almost everyone uses to some extent. We all have a natural tendency to project our negative emotions and undesirable feelings onto the people around us, and this often happens when we feel like we have been put on the spot. However, in as much as we all do it, narcissists and people with other dark personality traits tend to do it excessively and to absurd extents.

Toxic people find it very difficult to admit even to themselves that the nasty things around them could be a result of their own doing, and they always find people to blame for every little thing that happens. Such people often go out of their way to avoid taking responsibility for their own actions. As a result, they may assign their negative behavior and traits to you. For example, if you have a boss who is always late to work, you might be surprised to find him accusing you of tardiness even if you are consistently punctual. A kleptomaniac is more likely to accuse you of stealing his/her personal items.

In relationships, a manipulator who cheats on your is more likely to accuse you of cheating in him/her or to act in a way that suggests that he/she suspects you of cheating. When a person is cheating on you, he may choose to spy on you by checking your messages, phone calls, and emails, and he is more likely to barrage you with questions every time you are a few minutes late. Now, a good partner may get a little suspicious or insecure if you suddenly become more secretive or absent, but if your partner starts treating you with suspicion even if you acting completely normal, chances are they are the ones who are cheating, and they are just projecting it onto you.

Manipulators tend to project partly because they want to destruct you and to keep you on the defensive, and this gives them more control over your life. When they accuse you of certain things, and you feel like you owe them an explanation, it allows them to dominate you; in other words, it becomes as though they are the “boss or you” and you now have to answer to them. As you frantically try to defend yourself from the accusations that they have made against you, they get to do whatever they want, and you never get the time to call them out on their mistakes. They are also counting on the fact that it would feel weird and childish if you accused them of the exact thing, they have already accused you of, so it takes away the possibility that you might confront them based on suspicions that you might have.

As we have mentioned, projection is something that everyone does, and that can complicate things for you if a manipulative person project onto you. When someone projects negative emotions onto you, you might have a natural inclination to project your sense of empathy and compassion back onto them. This explains why projection works so well as a manipulation technique. Even when someone is accusing you of doing something bad, you will still

feel compassion for them, and you will go out of your way to reassure them that they are mistaken; but when you do this, they win, albeit with your help. When you feel like someone is projecting onto you, the best thing you can do is leave your own emotions out of the equation and try to respond as rationally as possible.

Isolation

We all have social support systems that help us cope with difficult situations and keep us from making decisions that are bad for us. We have friends and family members who take notice when our behavior changes, or when we start hanging out with "bad people," and they always watch our backs. Manipulators understand this, and one of the first things that they'll do when trying to gain control over your life is to isolate you.

Isolation facilitates abuse because it takes away any recourse that you might have when someone starts getting abusive. It closes a victim's avenues of escape, and it increases their sense of helplessness. It ensures that when things go south, there's no one there to rescue you. It increases the power that the abuser or manipulator has over the victim because it makes the victim more dependent on the abuser.

Isolating the victim from the outside world is widely used by all sort of manipulators. When a cult leader tries to indoctrinate young recruits, he will make sure that they are locked away so that he can have complete control over the information that they receive. The same happens in abusive relationships, workplace bullying, and many other areas.

When an abuser sets out to isolate you, he will start by driving a wedge between you and the people that you depend on. He will learn everything about the dynamics between you and your family and friends, and he will use the weaknesses in your bonds to sow distrust and conflict. For example, if a guy knows that you are close with your sister, but you have some unresolved childhood conflicts with her, he may try to reignite those conflicts so that you start drifting apart.

In the workplace, a manipulator may create animosity between you and your colleagues so that they get mad at you and stop siding with you or watching your back. If you join a cult or any sort of group and the leader is a manipulator, he may insist that you cut ties with your family and friends, and only depend on other people within that group.

Rivals in business, at work, or even in your personal life can isolate you by smearing your name and discrediting you with other members of the community. “Divide and conquer” is also a form of isolation that is used especially by people with the Machiavellianism trait. In this instance, the manipulator is using isolation as a double-edged sword to gain control over both parties that are being pulled apart from each other.

Once an abuser has managed to isolate you, he will take his abuse to the next level because he knows you have no one to turn to. In fact, other manipulation techniques such as gaslighting work even more effectively when a person is isolated.

They say that love is blind, and sometimes, at the beginning of relationships, we are blind to the dark traits of the people we are dating. Some

manipulators may try to isolate you from the very first time you meet them. If you start dating someone and you notice that he never wants to hang out at your place, or he never wants you to bring your friends along on casual dates, chances are he is trying to isolate you so that you cannot get your friends to give you an objective assessment of his character.

In the workplace, isolation can take many different forms. A person may isolate you by denying you access to certain opportunities, withholding important information from you, or keeping you out of the loop on matters that are crucial to your job performance.

Isolation can also be used by a manipulative person as a form of punishment if you are not doing what he wants. For example, an abusive person might invite all your friends and acquaintances to a gathering, but fail to invite you, so that you feel left out, and you are forced to do what he wants just to score an invite to the next gathering.

Positive Reinforcement

We always think of positive reinforcement as a good thing, but malicious people can also use it to manipulate their victims. The fact is that we all use positive reinforcement in one form or another. Parents use it to get their kids to behave properly, teachers use it to make their students more interested in school, bosses use it to encourage productivity, and partners use it to modify each other's behavior in relationships. It is an integral part of our social interactions, but it only becomes a problem when it's detrimental of the person it's being used on.

Positive reinforcement happens when a good or desirable stimulus is presented in such a way that it appears to be a consequence of certain behavior. For example, a child who eats his vegetables gets a scoop of ice-cream at the end of the meal, and it registers in his mind that those two things are intricately linked. An employee who works hard and becomes more productive gets a bonus at the end of the month, and her brain makes the connection between the hard work and the extra disposable income. The next time the person has to perform the same activity, he/she will recall the positive feeling or the reward from earlier and will take a course of action that ensures he/she gets a similar outcome.

When manipulators use positive reinforcements, they are always trying to get you to do things that benefit them. For example, an abusive person in a relationship may buy you a gift after a major abusive incident in order to keep you from leaving or reporting him. You may have heard of people who hit their spouses and then buy them flowers the next day. In such cases, the abuser is trying to get you to accept the abuse as a norm that comes with a reward. The message here is that "if you shut up, you get something nice."

Positive reinforcement is also used by manipulators who want you to be their accomplice when they are taking advantage of a third party. Machiavellians are particularly good at using this technique. For example, a boss who embezzles from work may offer you a payoff to keep his secret.

Manipulators often use positive reinforcement on an incremental basis when they want you to do something against your will. The objective here is to lull you into complacency. They know that once you have accepted a basic level

of positive reinforcement, they can escalate things and push you outside of your comfort zone.

The simplest and most commonly used form of positive reinforcement is a commendation. When someone goes out of their way to compliment you in public, they could be using positive reinforcement to manipulate you. For instance, when you are with a group of friends and one of them starts saying what a nice guy you are, how much they know they can rely on you, the chances are that he is buttering you up to ask you for a favor.

Negative Reinforcement

Negative reinforcement is a form of psychological manipulation which is used to make people feel obligated to act in certain ways in order to avoid certain levels of mental or physical pain or discomfort. In positive reinforcement, you get a reward for acting the way the manipulator wants you to act, and the desire for that reward is what modifies your behavior in the future. Negative reinforcement is, however, a bit more complicated than that.

To understand the concept of negative reinforcement, you first have to understand how it's different from punishment. Both of them are popular manipulation techniques, but there is a subtle difference between them. Many people assume that they are the same thing, but they are not. In punishment, the manipulator adds something negative when you don't act a certain way. In negative reinforcement, the manipulator subtracts something negative when you act the way they want you to act.

Reinforcement is meant to strengthen voluntary responses, while punishment is meant to weaken voluntary responses; the manipulator will choose one

method or the other based on the kind of outcome that they desire in that particular situation.

While punishment is meant to stop a certain behavior from occurring again, reinforcement is meant to encourage the behavior to occur again. A manipulator would use punishment to stop you from doing something he doesn't want you to do. However, he will use negative reinforcement to force you to do (or to keep doing) something he wants. For example, nagging is more of a negative reinforcement technique than a punishment. When someone wants you to do something, they keep nagging you to do it, and the nagging (which is the negative stimulus) stops when you comply. So, negative reinforcement works on you because you want to put a stop to a negative stimulus that already exists, while punishment works because you want to keep something negative from happening.

Every time someone does something negative to twist your arm to get you to take a certain course of action; that is negative reinforcement. When you are trying to break up with someone, and he/she cries very loudly about it in a public place, until you change your mind, they are using negative reinforcement to manipulate you (at that moment, you feel that the uncomfortable stares from strangers will only stop if you take the person back).

Sanctions are also a very common form of negative reinforcement. They are used by powerful nations to get other nations to bend to their will, but they can also be used in interpersonal relationships or at work in one form or another. A sanction is basically a threat of a future consequence if you fail to do something. Sanctions may be used in relationships for the common good

or for malicious intentions; you have to assess the individual situation to tell if the use of sanctioning (or any other negative reinforcement technique) is malicious.

Punishment

In psychological manipulation, punishment is a negative action that is taken by the manipulator to weaken the victim's voluntary responses. Punishment works because it makes the victim fear the consequences of going against the will of the manipulator. We have already looked at how punishment differs from negative reinforcement, but we should point out that in some instances, those two can overlap. In this segment, we will take a look at some of the most common types of punishment that people with dark personality traits use to manipulate their victims.

Nagging

Nagging, also known as pestering or hectoring, is a form of manipulation where one person continuously urges another to do something, despite the other person previously refusing to do it or to agree to do it at a later time. One author famously described nagging as an interaction where one person makes a repeated request while the other person repeatedly ignores that request, and both people become annoyed as the battle of wills escalates.

Although it has negative connotations, nagging is actually an integral part of interpersonal communication in many social dynamics. Parents nag their kids to get them to do certain things. In fact, nagging is necessary when training children to take up certain constructive habits. Nagging may also be used by well-meaning people; friends or partners may nag you to do things that

benefit you. In fact, some amount of nagging is necessary even in healthy relationships. However, people with dark personality traits may nag you to do things that benefit them and impact you negatively.

To tell if the person nagging you has malicious intentions, you have to examine the individual situation. Are they asking you to do something that only benefits them? Does the nagging seem forceful? Do you detect anger or threats in their body language and in the words they choose to use? Are they trying to guilt you into doing something you don't want to do?

If your girlfriend repeatedly asks you to take out the trash, that might indicate that she has some control issues, but that's not the same thing as having malicious intentions. When malicious people nag you, there is usually an "or else" to what they are asking you to do, and if you look at the subtext, you will realize that it's more of a demand than a request.

Yelling

Yelling works as a manipulation technique for one simple reason; it makes you feel uncomfortable or afraid to the point that you comply with whatever the manipulator wants you to do. There are two main ways in which manipulators use yelling to manipulate others. People either yell to dominate over you, or to play the victim and to gain your sympathy.

Yelling can be used to intimidate someone. When a manipulative person yells at you, he may be trying to intimidate you because you are more likely to do what he wants if you are afraid of them. Manipulative people resort to yelling partly because at that moment; they know that they are unable to make a logical argument to get you to do what they want. They know that if you

stick to the facts of the matter, you might come out on top, so they yell because they want to disorient you and make you lose the argument by default.

When a person raises their voice during an argument, it's a clear sign of rising hostility, but it could also be a sign that they are passionate about the topic of discussion. You have to assess yelling in context to understand if it's being used to manipulate you. Just like with the other manipulation techniques; you have to look at the person's intent.

When manipulators use yelling to play the victim during an interaction, they often (but not always) choose to do it in front of an audience. When a person (particularly one who is perceived to be weaker) yells at you in a public place, by-passers who don't have the full story of what's going on will automatically assume that you are on the wrong, and that puts you on the spot. You may be forced to agree with the person's request just to avoid the judgmental eyes of strangers.

Silent treatment

The silent treatment works as a manipulation technique because it's a form of love withdrawal. When a person gives you the silent treatment, they are essentially saying, "I'm taking away the love unless you do what I want." It is a form of punishment that is designed to control people, and it's a very popular type of emotional abuse.

The silent treatment only works in cases where there is some level of emotional dependency between the two parties (you don't really care if a total stranger gave you the silent treatment). In certain dynamics, the silent

treatment can be used to make you feel powerless and invisible; as if you don't even exist.

As social beings, we need the approval and the affection of others to thrive. Even people who are introverted need to have some sort of back and forth with the people in their lives to feel whole. When someone gives you the silent treatment, they deny you that affection, and it can mess with you psychologically, and force you to make certain concessions that you aren't ready to make.

So, a manipulator will ask you to do something, and when you say no, he/she will start ignoring you. They won't respond when you talk to them, and they won't answer your calls or texts. Some of them may even suddenly vanish from your life or go out of their way to avoid being in the same room with you. The more emotionally involved you are, the higher the chances you will decide that the animosity isn't worth you standing your ground, and you will find yourself doing what they want.

The silent treatment is one of those bad habits that tend to escalate with time in a relationship. If someone uses this technique against you once and it works, they'll start using it at every turn.

Intimidation

Intimidation can either be covert or overt, but in either case, it's used by manipulators to get you to bend to their will out of fear.

Overt intimidation is also known as bullying. This is where manipulators make open threats to get you to do what they want. They'll use fear to

threaten you into submission. It may be a threat of physical violence. They'll brandish anger and rage to prove to you that they have violent tendencies. If you stand your ground, they may even resort to actual physical violence. They are usually angry people who have problems with authority.

Covert intimidation involves the use of veiled or vague threats to manipulate people. People who use covert intimidation has violent tendencies, but they try to control themselves because society frowns at overt displays of violence. Such people are very dangerous because they are good at hiding their true nature from the rest of the world. These are the kinds of people who abuse their spouses indoors but then present a charismatic character to the rest of the world.

People who use convert intimidation tend to be very calculated, and they are good at coming up with diabolical ways of punishing you if you don't do what they want.

Traumatic one-trial learning

One-trial learning refers to singular experiences that we encounter, which end up shaping our behavior in the future. This sort of experience is usually traumatizing and powerful enough to serve as a deterrent from acting in a certain way for the rest of our lives.

In many cases, one-trial learning may occur without anyone inducing it or imposing it on us. For example, if you try a certain kind of food for the first time, and then you get a serious bout of food poisoning, you may be traumatized to the point that you avoid eating that food again in the future. One-trial learning is important for humans and all animals because it's

crucial for survival. When we were still hunters and foragers, one-trial learning would help us avoid foods that were poisonous or situations that were dangerous.

Malicious people use one-trial learning as a manipulation technique to get us to tow certain lines. The way it works is they induce the traumatic experience in such a way as to ensure that our brains associate certain actions with the trauma.

One such example is corporal punishment. Corporal punishment is less common in Western societies than it was a few decades back, but it is one of the easiest forms of traumatic one-trial learning to understand. It used to be that when a child did something wrong, the parents (or teachers) would hit him while making it very clear to the child why he was being punished. In future, when the child considered making the same mistake again, he would remember the pain that he experienced earlier, and he would decide that the action was not worth a repetition of the painful experience. Of course, corporal punishment is now either frowned upon or illegal in most jurisdictions because it causes serious psychological wounds and self-esteem issues.

Manipulators use traumatic one-trial learning in many different ways. They use verbal abuse, intimidation, and explosive anger to traumatize people and keep them from acting in certain ways in the future. For instance, let's say that you are in a team with a colleague who isn't pulling his/her weight on the project you are working on. One day, you decide to confront him about it in a calm and rational way. However, he reacts in a very explosive way. He calls you names, throws a tantrum, causes a scene, and he makes you extremely

uncomfortable and traumatized. In the future, when a similar issue arises, you will be afraid to confront him, so he gets away with it. In this case, he has manipulated you by conditioning you to avoid confronting or upsetting him in the future.

There are many variations in the way traumatic one-trial learning works, and it's commonly used to manipulate people in interpersonal relationships. The next time you want to do something, but you decide against it because you had a bad experience in the past, you should know that you are dealing with traumatic one-trial learning; if the situation is tied to a specific person, that should indicate to you that the person is a manipulator.

Manipulation of facts

Manipulation of facts is one of the most effective psychological manipulation techniques because it is based on facts that are subject to interpretation.

When a person manipulates facts, he is technically not lying; he is just using the facts in his favor. It could involve cherry picking facts, omitting certain facts, or taking facts out of context.

Even the most indisputable facts are subject to interpretation, and people with dark personality traits are very good at coming up with interpretations that portray them in the best possible light. Machiavellians are especially skilled at using factual information to turn bad things into seemingly good things.

One way to manipulate facts in interpersonal relationships is by making excuses. People can excuse all sorts of bad behavior by creating narratives that warp the context of the objectionable actions that they have taken.

Another way to manipulate facts is by blaming the victim for causing his/her victimization. There are many documented cases where abusers in relationships were able to convince their victims that they did certain things to deserve the abuse. There are many wife beaters who defend themselves by saying, "you made me do it." This manipulation technique often works more effectively after the victim has been isolated from her support system. Victims who are in love or are dependent on the abuser are more likely to accept warped interpretations of abusive events because their own judgment is impaired by their affection for the abuser.

Withholding of key information, or strategic disclosure of facts, is another common technique that involves manipulation of facts. Someone might be telling you the truth with the intention of manipulating you. Manipulators know that your reaction to certain information depends on the mood you are in when you receive the information, or whether or not you will consider that information a priority at the moment you receive it. Manipulators also know that hiding certain key details can affect the way you digest and react to information.

Strategic disclosures and withholding of key details are used every day in interpersonal relationships, in business, and even in political discourse. Politicians use this all the time. When they have information that could damage their standing with the public, but they have a legal obligation to release it, they often do it at the close of business on Friday, when most people are looking forward to the weekend, and they aren't paying attention to the news. This way, they ensure the damaging information doesn't get a lot of media coverage.

Other ways to manipulate facts include; exaggeration of the facts, sensationalizing or the facts, understating facts, or presenting facts with one-sided biases. Everyone uses all of these techniques to some extent; you have to examine each person's intent to determine whether or not they are malicious.

Mind control and mind games

The term mind control has many definitions and interpretations, but the crucial thing to note is that it doesn't involve any sort of magic or supernatural ability; it just requires a rudimentary understanding of human emotions and behavior. Mind control can involve brainwashing a person, reeducating them, reforming their thoughts, using coercive techniques to persuade them of certain things, or brain-sweeping.

There are many forms of mind control, and we could fill an entire book discussing all those forms, but for our purposes, we will look at the concept in general terms. Mind control means a person is trying to get others to feel, think, or behave in a certain way, or to react and make decisions following a certain pattern. It could vary from a girl trying to get her boyfriend to develop certain habits, to a cult leader trying to convince his followers that he is God.

Mind control is based on one thing: information. We have the thoughts and beliefs that we do because we learned them. When we are subjected to new information on a deliberate and consistent basis, it's possible to alter our beliefs, thoughts, or even memories.

The brain is hardwired to survive, and towards that end, it's very good at learning information that is crucial for our survival. When you receive certain information consistently, your brain will start to believe it even if you know it's not true. For example, even if you are the most rational person out there, if you go online and watch 100 videos about a certain conspiracy theory, you will start to believe it to some extent. That explains why people who seem smart can end up getting indoctrinated into cults or even terrorist groups.

Mind control also works more effectively when one is dependent on the person who is trying to control his/her mind. Even in relationships that are involuntary, the victim can start buying the perpetrator's world view if they have been dependent on the perpetrator for a long time. That explains phenomena such as Stockholm syndrome (where people who are kidnapped or held hostage start being affectionate towards their captors and empathizing with their causes).

The worst thing you can do is assume that you are too smart for mind control to work on you. Under the right circumstances, anyone can be persuaded to abandon their world view and adopt someone else's.

Mind games are covert tricks that are deliberately crafted in order to manipulate someone. Think of them as "handcrafted" psychological manipulation techniques. While other techniques are applied broadly, mind games are created to target very specific people. They work best when the victim trusts the perpetrator, and the perpetrator understands the victim's personality and behavior.

Most of the psychological manipulation techniques we have discussed thus far can be used when crafting mind games. A person who understands you will tell you certain things or behave in certain ways around you because they are deliberately trying to get you to react in a certain way. It almost always involves feigning certain emotions.

People who play mind games use innocent sounding communication to elicit calculated reactions from you. Psychologists refer to such mind games as "conscious one-upmanship," and they have observed that they occur in all areas of life. Mind games occur in office politics, personal relationships, and even in international diplomacy.

At work, someone could try to make you feel like you are not up to the task so that they can steal an opportunity from you. In a marriage, your partner could make certain seemingly innocent slights against you so that you feel like you have something to prove, and you take a certain course of action as a result. In dating, there are "pickup artists" who use different kinds of tricks to get you to lower your guard and let them in.

Chapter 4: Behavioral and Character Traits of the Manipulators



Being able to tell if someone is taking advantage of you or manipulating you is one of the most important survival skills that you need today. Everyone around you has their own interests and agendas, but it's crucial to be able to tell when those agendas are malicious or likely to cause you unintended harm.

Manipulators have many identifiable behavioral and character traits, some of which we will discuss in this chapter. With the information you learn here, you will be able to tell whether or not a person is a manipulator, whether or not his/her brand of manipulation is meant to cause you harm, and what kind of manipulator he/she is.

Here are the character and behavioral traits that you ought to look out for if you suspect that someone is a manipulator.

Lying by the commission and lying by omission

A lie of commission is what's called a "classic lie." When someone says something that they know is not factual, then that is a lie of commission. In other words, a lie of commission is something that is simply untrue. It involves purposefully telling someone something with the intention of deceiving them. It is extremely deliberate, and its main purpose is to gain a personal advantage in a given situation.

Lying by the commission isn't always done with malicious intent, but people who are more comfortable telling outright lies are more likely to be manipulators. Everyone lies. Even seemingly innocent young children will tell a lie of commission to get out of trouble; a child with jam on his face will deny touching it because he is trying to evade the consequences of telling the truth, not because he is malicious.

When you spend time with a manipulator, you will notice that he lies all the time out of habit, even when the situation doesn't necessitate it. Narcissists will lie because they want you to think highly of them, while sadists will lie to cause you pain. Lies of the commission may seem pointless to you in specific situations, but they always have a certain value for the manipulator, even if you aren't able to see it.

Lying by omission is also known as "exclusionary detailing." It involves telling the truth but leaving out certain specific details. It may also involve failing to correct certain misconceptions that one is aware of. Lies of

omission are more sophisticated than lies of commission because they give the person a loophole in case they are caught on the lie. Even in legal situations, it's possible to get away with lies of omission, because you can always argue that the person asking the questions wasn't specific enough about what details they wanted you to give.

The first and most common instance of lying by omission is the kind that involves leaving out details. The best example of such a lie is when a salesperson talks about the positive aspects of a product but fails to mention its negative aspects. Manipulators can use lies of omission to control the way people react in certain situations.

For example, when a malicious person reports to you what a mutual friend said about you in an earlier conversation, they may choose to mention the details that are likely to breed animosity between you and your friend but leave out the redeeming details. If someone said three things about you; two compliments and one critical comment, the malicious person will report the critical comment to you and deliberately fail to mention the two positive comments.

Failing to correct misconceptions is a less common kind of lie of omission, and it's mostly used by diabolical Machiavellians and psychopaths. This is where a person lets you believe a certain thing even when they know it's not true. For example, if you blame yourself for a situation that the other person knows isn't your fault, they'll let you keep believe it because it benefits them. Experienced manipulators may say things or act in ways that lead you to arrive at a certain false conclusion, and when you get there, they let you keep believing it.

Lying by omission can be used to trick or confuse people into making assumptions that benefit manipulators. Manipulators understand that the human mind tends to jump to conclusions, so they often use cues that lead you to those conclusions. Conmen use this technique all the time to gain the trust of unsuspecting victims. For example, if you are sitting in the hospital waiting room and someone walks up to you wearing a lab coat, you will assume that the person is a doctor even before he starts talking to you. In that case, you would have come to a reasonable conclusion based on the context. Manipulators know that you have the inclination to do that so they'll create the right context to make you jump to the conclusion that they want. Once you are at that conclusion, they'll let you keep believing it, and they'll exploit you.

Denial

When you say that someone is in denial, it often means that they are having a difficult time accepting reality. However, denial takes on a whole different meaning where manipulators are concerned. Manipulators use denial to feign innocence when they know full well that they have done something wrong.

Manipulators use denial to control other people's impressions of who they are and interpretations of the things they did. Some manipulators are so good when it comes to using denial that they are able to get people to start second-guessing themselves. Denial is a crucial behavioral trait in predicting whether or not a person is likely to gaslight you. If in the early stages of a relationship, your partner blatantly denies something you both know to be true, you can rest assured that he is the kind of person who will be gaslighting you for years to come.

When manipulators are confronted and put on a spot, they might use denial to save face. This is fairly easy to conceive; the person doesn't want to admit the truth, so they deny it. But with some people with dark personality traits (especial the psychopaths), denial goes beyond that. When ordinary people use denial, do it to deceive you. However, when some disturbed individuals use denial, they do it to deceive both you and themselves. This is a particularly dangerous trait because it could mean the person completely lacks a conscious. For instance, if a person causes you harm, and he denies doing it to get you off his back, that's one thing. But if he denies it because he truly believes there is nothing wrong with what he did, then you are dealing with a dangerous psychopath.

Denial also indicates that the person you are dealing with is unwilling to change his behavior. In as much as he is manipulating you as he would using other techniques, denial implies that the person feels justified, and he won't hesitate to do the exact same thing again in the future.

They say that accepting a mistake is the first step towards correcting it. If a person can't accept a mistake he has made, it means he is nowhere near the path to fixing it. If you meet a person (whether at work or in your personal life), and you notice that he habitually denies things about him that are objective facts, it means that you are dealing with a rigid person who would go out of his way to make sure things go his way even if it means refusing to accept the truth.

Denial can be a defense mechanism, a manipulation tactic, or a way to avoid taking responsibility. In any case, people who use it can cause serious

damage to your psyche, so watch out for them.

Rationalization

Rationalization is similar to making excuses. Manipulative people are very skilled when it comes to concocting narratives that justify the way they treat other people. When you confront a manipulator, even with the most damning accusation, he will come up with a well-thought-out and rather convincing explanation for his actions. When ordinary people rationalize or make excuses for their actions, you get the sense that even though they are trying to assuage their conscience, they feel guilty and they are even apologetic about what they have done. However, when manipulators rationalize their actions, they are trying to manage the way you perceive them, and they feel justified in their actions.

Most people use rationalization as a defense mechanism, or to make the actions they have done or are about to do seems morally tolerable. Whenever rationalization is used, there is a certain “leap” that is taken by the person who is using it. The larger the leap, the higher the person is likely to score when tested for dark psychological traits.

For example, a person who rationalizes taking \$20 from the office petty cash box for personal use may be a bit narcissistic, but a person who rationalizes embezzling \$20 million from the company retirement accounts may have extremely high levels of narcissism, Machiavellianism or even psychopathy. Like with all other traits that are common in the entire population, the motivation behind the rationalization has a bearing on whether or not the person doing it has malicious intentions.

When you encounter someone who rationalizes things that are clearly wrong, you have to examine what it is they are rationalizing to tell how they feel about certain principles. Even if you are having a hypothetical conversation with someone, you can learn a lot about their attitudes towards certain things by the way they rationalize them.

For example, if you confront someone you've just met who behaves in a belligerent way, and he consistently comes up with ways to excuse that behavior, it could mean that he is the kind of person who believes in the principle that bullying is acceptable. It means that it's just a matter of time before he turns around and starts bullying you.

If you are in a new relationship, you should take a keen interest in the things your partner is willing to justify. One thing many people fail to understand is that if you hear someone close to you justify something and you don't object to it on principle, it registers in his mind that you are okay with it, and it becomes part of your social contract with him. That means that a person who rationalizes small things won't hesitate to rationalize bigger things if the same basic principle applies.

Minimization

Minimization involves trivializing a person's emotions or actions for the purposes of manipulation. It often combines elements of denial and rationalization; it's somewhere in between those two characteristics. When a manipulative person can't completely deny something, and he can't completely rationalize it either, he will settle for minimizing it.

Manipulators downplay the significance of certain events or emotions all the time. The emotions or actions that they downplay could either be yours, theirs, or those of a third party, as long as it serves their purposes.

If you have accomplished something significant, a manipulative person may try to belittle or to discount that achievement. A narcissistic person may try to make your contribution to a team effort seem like its "no big deal," even if it was pivotal to the success of a project you are working on together.

In a relationship, your partner may trivialize your emotions and make them seem insignificant. If you react emotionally to something they have done or said, they may say that you are too sensitive, and you are making a big deal out of nothing, or that you are immature. Both male and female manipulators can have this character trait. A man could say that a woman is a "drama queen" for "overreacting" and a woman could accuse a man of being "unmanly" for expressing strong emotions.

Minimization often works on people because it makes them feel self-conscious. If someone accuses you of blowing things out of proportion, you are likely to take a step back to see if you are overreacting.

Abusers also use minimization to make it seem as though their actions aren't as harmful as the victim claims. A physically abusive spouse could say that he "didn't hit you that hard" and an emotionally abusive one could get a rise out of you and then say that you are "just being a big baby." In both cases, the person minimizes the harm they have caused by arguing that it could have been much worse. In their minds, they think they deserve credit for holding back.

Another common aspect of minimization is called "cognitive distortion." This is where a person minimizes certain actions or emotions by making it seem as though they are not that important, or by trying to reduce the perception of the impact of those emotions and actions.

For example, a person may insult or taunt you, but when you confront him about it, he may try to say that it was just a joke and that you should get a sense of humor. Cognitive distortion also happens at institutional levels. For example, institutions that have systemic problems always claim that they have "a few bad apples" instead of acknowledging that there is a big-picture problem that needs to be addressed.

You should be very careful with people who use minimization in manipulation because this behavior has a tendency of escalating.

Diversion and Evasion

Evasion and diversion are used by manipulators to keep the spotlight away from their manipulative behavior. These tactics also help them to avoid being exposed for who they are, and they keep them from having to take responsibility for what they are doing.

Evasion involves providing rambling or irrelevant feedback in a situation that demands direct responses. When manipulative people are asked direct questions, they start talking about vaguely related things that aren't even relevant to the conversation.

A person who uses evasion will try to avoid giving a straight answer to a question that you have asked them. On the other hand, a person who uses diversion will change the topic or steer the conversation in a whole other direction. Diversion involves avoiding a topic by bringing up a different topic, especially one that is likely to spark outrage.

For example, if you are in a relationship and you ask your partner a question about why they have come home late, the evasive ones will start talking in detail about random topics such as things that happened at work, which have nothing to do with what you want to know. The person who uses diversion, on the other hand, will bring up an unresolved issue, and they may even try to turn things around on you. Instead of telling you where he was, he will reignite an argument you had put on hold, and a few minutes later, you will find yourself arguing about your mother, with no idea how the conversation got there.

Politicians use diversion and evasion all the time when they don't want to address certain issues, and they would rather have the public outraged about something else. Politicians are very masterful when it comes to turning any line of questioning into a discussion about a talking point that they have. There are also other professions where evasion and diversion are considered useful techniques. Lawyers and PR managers use it to keep their clients from being closely scrutinized in public.

Evasion and diversion mostly work on victims who have problems being assertive. When a manipulator finds that you keep insisting on getting a straight answer despite his best efforts to avoid providing it, he may resort to other techniques.

Evasion and diversion are clear signs of deception. They often mean that the person is hiding something, and he doesn't want to go on record, so he goes out of his way to avoid giving a real answer to your question.

Covert intimidation and guilt tripping

Covert intimidation and guilt tripping use the same underlying principle; they prey on a person's emotions. Covert intimidation preys on fear, while guilt tripping preys on compassion. People who use these techniques have what psychologists refer to as covert-aggressive personalities. They are "wolves in sheep's clothing." They present one face to the world, while deep within, they are very malicious people.

Covert intimidation involves threatening victims in subtle ways. It can be used by people who are close to you if they understand your fears or desires. Your boss could use covert intimidation to get you to do his bidding at work. If he knows that you are working towards a promotion, he could ask you to do him certain favors, and then imply that your promotion is dependent on that favor. He may not say it directly, but it's all going to be in the subtext.

If you are afraid of ending up alone, an abusive partner may play on that fear to manipulate you. For example, if you want to break up with someone who is emotionally selfish, he could keep implying that you will never meet someone else and that he is your only chance of not being lonely.

Guilt tripping is used by manipulators to get people to doubt themselves, to be anxious, to revere the manipulators, or to do certain favors for the manipulators. People can guilt trip you by making themselves appear like

victims, or by making you appear to be selfish. When you are accused of being selfish, you are likely to go out of your way to prove that you are not, and manipulative people can take advantage of this.

For example, if you are dating someone and she wants you to buy her something expensive, or to do her a favor that is going to cost you, you'll try to explain as plainly as possible that you are unable to do it. She may then say something like, "you just don't care about me enough." When she says this, even the most rational argument you make won't matter. There is a bottom-line in place here; that you value keeping your money more than you value her happiness. Guilt trips work because they are not based on objective reasoning; they are based on emotions (which are more primal and rank higher in the hierarchy of brain functions).

When you care about someone, and you feel a sense of obligation towards them, then they have the power to take you on a guilt trip. That means that for a manipulator to guilt-trip you, they are going to make sure that you have some emotional connection with them. If you are in a new relationship, you should watch out to see if your partner likes to take his/her friends and family members on guilt trips, because it could mean that you will be subjected to the same treatment once you are emotionally involved.

Shaming

Shame refers to the uncomfortable feeling of distress or humiliation, which results when we are conscious of certain behavior that we consider to be wrong or foolish. The thing to understand about shame is that it's a social construct, and it's highly subjective.

You'd feel shame if the wind blew up your skirt in a public place, but there are remote tribes of people and even communes in Western societies where people walk around naked. The point is that most shameful things are only shameful because we perceive them as such. Manipulators can use shame against you by either convincing you to be ashamed of something that you weren't, or by revealing (or threatening to reveal) your secrets to people who revere you.

Traditionally, shaming is used as a deterrent to make people adhere to social contracts or to teach children the proper way to behave. Malicious people shame people in many different ways, often to their own benefit. They shame people by calling them names, expressing disgust in response to others' ideas, emotions, and behavior, using sarcasm, rolling their eyes, or exposing their secrets.

A malicious person shames others to bring them down and to elevate themselves. They can do this because they want to distract people from their own inadequacies. A sadist may shame you because he enjoys it when you are uncomfortable. A narcissist may shame you just to show others that he is smarter than you. A Machiavellian may shame you because he wants to modify your behavior to his advantage.

Shaming is somewhat similar to guilt-tripping, but shaming tends to play out in the public arena. Shaming works more effectively when there are people whose opinion you value who are involved. Malicious people know that there are certain things you don't want people to find out about you, even if you are comfortable with them in principle. "Slut shaming" is one example. "Revenge porn" is an even more extreme example. When you are in a

relationship with a malicious person, and you try to get out of it, they may use these techniques to either get you to stay or to punish you for leaving them.

Vilifying the victim

Manipulators, especially Machiavellians, tend to be smart and devious, so they can easily find ways to vilify their victims. There are two ways that this can happen; they can either convince other people that the victim is the real aggressor, or they can convince the victim that he/she is the one who did something wrong. Vilifying the victim involves using several tactics, including rationalizing, and gaslighting.

People who vilify victims try to justify their actions by making it seem as though the victims are the "bad guys." For example, someone who cheats on his spouse may explain his behavior away by telling people that his spouse is a "bitch," or she is "frigid" and "controlling." The manipulator is trying to rationalize his actions here by creating the impression that whatever he may have done, the person he did it too, had it coming, and she probably deserved worse.

You can tell if a person you have started seeing has a tendency to blame the victim by assessing the way he/she talks about his/her past relationships. If he blames everything that went wrong on his ex and takes no responsibility whatsoever for his role in what happened, you can be certain that he'll approach your relationship the same way.

Manipulative people know deep within that they are responsible for the things that go wrong, but to them, vilifying the victim is just another way to be deceptive and to control the way people perceive them. If they are

vilifying you, they want you to take responsibility for their actions so that they can dominate you.

Narcissists tend to believe that they are superior to other people, and when they vilify the victim, they may truly believe that it's within their right to take advantage of you however they can; it's not that they don't know they are taking advantage of you, they just think that you are subservient to them and that's just the natural order of things.

Playing the victim role, and playing the servant role

When manipulators play the role of the victim, in actual sense, they never really see themselves as victims. It's just a game for them, and the point is to avoid responsibility while getting the benefits that come with sympathy. They want to be perceived as weak people who are suffering, emotionally wounded, or even physically injured for the purposes of eliciting sympathy or managing impressions.

Manipulators try to convince their victims that they are the ones who are suffering in one way or another. If the victim is invested in the manipulator's welfare, he/she may decide to offer help, often at a high personal cost.

You should be extremely cautious if you realize that you are dealing with a person who likes to play the victim because you never know how far they may go. If someone plays the victim in any dynamic, someone else has to be cast as a victimizer, and if the manipulator is good at it, he/she could come

up with a very well-constructed narrative that could irreversibly ruin your reputation or even put you in legal jeopardy.

If someone you are dating plays the victim when the two of you are together, it might be possible to deal with the issue by seeking counseling. However, if you notice that he/she is selling that narrative to other people, you should try to get out of that relationship as fast as possible before the lie escalates and everyone turns against you.

Playing the servant role refers to a manipulative trait where a person pretends to be doing something for a noble cause or to serve someone else when they are actually cloaking a self-serving agenda. This is common in Machiavellians and psychopaths, but not so much in narcissists.

A Machiavellian may pretend to be on your side, and he may offer to do your bidding. He may even give you plenty of reasons to trust him, and you may let him in and give him access to your resources. Sooner or later, he will reveal his true intentions; often time, it could be that he has a desire for power or control, and to him, you are just in the way. Machiavellians are good at hiding their ambitions, but when the opportunity arises, they'll strike, and they'll exert their dominance over you.

There are manipulators who get into leadership positions by playing the servant role. They then go on to use those leadership positions for personal enrichment, or for their own agendas. You may have heard of people who start charities and prey on conscientious and well-meaning people to collect donations, which they proceed to embezzle.

Seduction

Seduction is an integral part of romance and courtship, but it can also be a very effective manipulation tactic if a person has malicious intentions. We all want to be liked and to be valued, so when someone says flattering things about us, we are likely to believe them. Seduction is one of the first manipulation techniques that most manipulators will deploy when they meet you for the first time. As we have mentioned several times already, manipulation techniques tend to be more effective when the manipulator and the victim have some sort of emotional connection; seduction is the first step towards establishing that connection.

Seduction and flattery are insidious ways of managing impressions when manipulators want to conceal their true intentions. When someone gives you attention, you feel special and flattered, and you let your guard down, allowing him to come in and take advantage of you. We all have some level of narcissism inside of us, so when someone flatters us, we rarely stop to think that maybe they have an ulterior motive and that the flattery has nothing to do with us.

Even when people are aware that they are being buttered up, they often let it happen, and they don't put a stop to it. They start off by assuming that they are immune to the manipulator's charms, and they tell themselves that they are indulging the person just for fun, but before they realize it, they end up actually falling for the trick and becoming emotionally invested in the manipulator.

Manipulators don't pull any stops when they are seducing their victims. They present themselves very well, and they use every trick in the book to win over their victims. Depending on the manipulator's dominant dark trait, after

getting what they want, they may either reveal their true nature, or they may continue to make efforts to conceal it. By the time the victim knows what's going on, it would probably be too late.

Projecting the blame

Playing the blame game is one of the most defining characteristics of manipulators. They like to project blame on others because it keeps others from blaming them, and as a result, they are able to avoid taking responsibility for their actions. Projecting blame on a person forces him to go on the defensive, and this serves as a distraction.

Such people always claim that it was another person or a circumstance that caused them to do something wrong. Psychologists call this tactic "projection." In ordinary people, projection is an automatic mental behavior that is well documented in research concerning psychodynamic psychology. People can unconsciously project their intentions, motivations, or actions on others if they are feeling guilty or unnerved under the prevailing circumstances. However, after that initial subconscious reaction, most people will do the logical thing and admit to themselves that the projection is mistaken.

People with dark personality traits, on the other hand, will stick with the projection even if they know that they are the ones who are truly responsible for a negative outcome. Sadists will not only project their mistakes onto you, but they will also go out of their way to make you feel bad about it.

Narcissists, Machiavellians, and psychopaths are especially good at projecting blame on others because they don't feel guilt and shame the way

most people do. When an ordinary person projects blame on someone else, he will have to deal with a high level of cognitive dissonance, which means that he would be torn up inside. Manipulators, on the other hand, will rationalize their projections; for example, Machiavellians will just see it as a means to an end.

The more tactful manipulators can pass blame in a more subtle way by spreading it around rather than just projecting it onto one entity. For example, when they do something wrong, and you call them out on it, they will bring to your attention a whole list of "contributing circumstances" with the intention of obscuring or minimizing their role in creating the problem under discussion.

Brandishing anger

Malicious people use anger to manipulate people all the time. When someone brandishes anger at you, they may yell, or use threatening gestures, spit out harsh words, or react in totally unpredictable ways. People's emotions have an effect on how we act and react in specific situations, so manipulative people can strategically deploy anger to control the way you react. It could be that they want you to be afraid of them so that you refrain from asking prying questions. No one wants to be yelled at, so if someone is angry at you, it incentivizes you to drop the issue you are raising.

Manipulative people also brandish anger to convey fake moral outrage in order to portray themselves as innocent in the face of damning accusations. For example, if you suspect your partner of cheating on you and confront him about it, if he is manipulative, he may react very angrily to show you that he is outraged that you would even ask him about such a thing.

Brandishing anger also makes manipulative people feel superior to those around them. A boss who yells at his subordinates may be doing it to show that he is in control, that he knows more than everyone else, and that he wants people to do things his way out of fear. Abusive partners do the same thing when they want to put their spouses or girlfriends under their thumbs.

Chapter 5: What is Covert Emotional Manipulation?

Covert emotional manipulation is used by people who want to gain power or control over you by deploying tactics that are both deceptive and underhanded. Such people want to change the way you think and behave without you ever realizing what it is they are doing. In other words, they use techniques that can alter your perceptions in such a way that you think that you are doing it out of your own free will. Covert emotional manipulation is “covert” because it works without you being consciously aware of that fact. People who are good at deploying such techniques can get you to do their bidding without your knowledge; they can hold you “psychologically captive.”

When skilled manipulators set their sights on you, they can get you to grant them power over your own emotional well-being and even your self-worth. They will put you under their spell without you ever realizing it. They will win your trust, and you will start attaching value to what they think of you. Once you have let them into your life, they will then start chipping away at your very identity in a methodical way, and as time goes by you will lose your self-esteem and turn into whatever they want you to be.

Covert emotional manipulation is actually more common than you might think. Since it's subtle, people are rarely aware that it's happening to them,

and in some cases, they may never even notice. Only keen outside observers may be able to tell when this form of manipulation is going on.

You might know someone who used to be fun and jovial, then she got into a relationship with someone else, and a few years down the line, she seems to have a completely different personality. If it's an old friend, you might not even recognize the person she has become. That is how powerful covert emotional manipulation can be. It can completely overhaul someone's personality without them even realizing it. The manipulator will chip away at you little by little, and you will accept minute changes that fly under the radar, until the old you are replaced by a different version of you, built to be subservient to the manipulator.

Covert emotional manipulation works like a slow-moving coup. It requires you to make small progressive concessions to the person that is trying to manipulate you. In other words, you let go of tiny aspects of your identity to accommodate the manipulative person, so it never registers in your mind that there is something bigger at play.

When the manipulative person pushes you to change in small ways, you will comply because you don't want to "sweat the small stuff." However, there is a domino effect that occurs as you start conceding to the manipulative person. You will be more comfortable making subsequent concessions, and your personality will be erased and replaced in a cumulative progression.

Covert emotional manipulation occurs to some extent in all social dynamics. Let's look at how it plays out in romantic relationships, in friendships, and at work.

Emotional manipulation in relationships

There is a lot of emotional manipulation that takes place in romantic relationships, and it's not always malicious. For example, women try to modify men's behavior to make them more "housebroken"; that is just normal. However, there are certain instances of manipulation where the person's intention is clearly malicious, and he/she is motivated by a need to control or dominate over the other person.

Positive reinforcement is perhaps the most used covert manipulation technique in romantic relationships. Your partner can get you to do what he wants by praising your, flattering you, giving you attention, offering your gifts, and acting in an affectionate way.

Even the seemingly nice things in relationships can turn out to be covert manipulation tools and props. For instance, your girlfriend could use intense sex as a weapon to reinforce a certain kind of behavior in you. Similarly, men can use charm, appreciation, or gifts to reinforce certain behaviors in the women they are dating.

Some sophisticated manipulators use what psychologists call "intermittent positive reinforcement" to gain control over their partners. The way it works is that the perpetrator will shower the victim with intense positive reinforcement for a certain period of time, then switch to just giving her normal levels of attention and appreciations. After a random interval of time, he will again go back to the intense positive reinforcement. When the victim gets used to the special treatment, it's taken away, and when she gets used to normal treatment, the special treatment is brought back, and it all seems

arbitrary. Now, the victim will get to a place where she becomes sort of "addicted" to the special treatment, but she has no idea how to get it, so she starts doing whatever the perpetrator wants in the hope that one of the things she does will bring back the intense positive reinforcement. In other words, she effectively becomes subservient to the perpetrator.

Negative reinforcement techniques are also used in relationships to manipulate others covertly. For example, partners can withhold sex as a way of compelling the other person to modify their behavior in a specific way. People also use techniques such as the silent treatment, and withholding of love and affection.

Some malicious people can create a false sense of intimacy by pretending to open up to you. They could share personal stories and talk about their hopes and fears. When they do this, they create the impression that they trust you, but their intention may be to get you to feel a sense of obligation towards them.

Manipulators also use well-calculated insinuations to get you to react in a certain way at the moment, with the aim of modifying your behavior in the long run. Such insinuations can be made through words or even actions. In colloquial terms, we call this "dropping a hint." People in relationships are always trying to figure out what the other person wants out of that relationship, so a manipulative person can drop hints to get you to do what they want without ever having to take responsibility for the actions that you take because they can always argue that you misinterpreted what they meant.

Dropping hints isn't always malicious (for example, if your girlfriend wants you to propose, she may leave bridal magazines out on the table). However, malicious insinuations can be very hurtful, and they can chip away at your

self-esteem. Your partner can insinuations to suggest you are gaining weight, you aren't making enough money, or even to suggest that your cooking skills aren't any good. People use insinuations to get away with "saying without saying," any number of hurtful things that could affect your self-esteem.

Emotional manipulations in friendships

Covert emotional manipulation is quite common in friendships and casual relationships. Friendships tend to progress slower than romantic relationships, but that just means that it can take a lot more time for you to figure out if your friends are manipulative. Manipulation in friendships can be confusing because even well-meaning friends can come across as malicious. That's because there is a certain social rivalry that exists between even the closest of friends, which explain the concept of "frenemies."

Manipulative friends tend to be passive-aggressive. This is where they manipulate you into doing what they want by involving mutual friends rather than by coming to you directly. Passive aggression works as a manipulation technique because it denies you a chance of directly addressing whatever issue your friend is raising, and so in a manner of speaking, you lose by default.

For example, if a friend wants you to do her a favor, instead of coming out and asking you, she goes to a mutual friend and suggests that she asks you on her behalf. Now, when the mutual friend approaches you, it becomes very difficult for you to turn down the request because there is added social pressure. When you say no, your whole social circle now perceives you as selfish.

Passive aggression can also involve the use of silent treatment to get you to comply with a request. Imagine a situation where one of your friends talks to everyone else but you. It's going to be incredibly awkward for you, and everyone will start prying, wondering what the issue is between the two of you, and taking sides on the matter.

Friends can also covertly manipulate you by using subtle insults. They can give you back-handed compliments which have hidden meanings. When you take the time to really think about what they meant by the compliment, you will realize that it's an insult in disguise, and that will bruise your self-esteem, and possibly modify your behavior.

Some friends can manipulate you by going on a "power trip" and trying to control your social interactions. For example, there are those friends who are going to insist that every time you hang out, it should be in their apartment, or at a social venue of their choosing. Such friends often have the intention of dominating your friendship, so they are keen to always have the "home ground advantage" over you. They'll try to push you out of your comfort zone, just so that you can reveal your weaknesses and you can then become more emotionally reliant on them.

Manipulative friends tend to excessively capitalize on your friendship, and to a disproportionate degree. They will ask you for lots of favors with no regard for your time or your effort. They are the kinds of friends who will leverage your friendship every time they need something, but then make excuses when it's their turn to reciprocate.

Emotional manipulation at work

There are many reasons why your colleague may want to manipulate you. It could be you are on the same career path, and so he wants to make you look bad. It could be that he is lazy and he wants to stick you with his responsibilities. It could also be that he is a sadist and he just wants to see you suffer.

One-way people at work exert their dominance over others is by stressing them out and then, almost immediately, relieving the stress. Say, for example, you make a minor error on a report, and your boss calls you into his office. He makes a big fuss and threatens to fire you, but then towards the end, he switches gears and reassures you that your job is secure as long as you do what he wants. That kind of manipulation works on people because it makes them afraid and gives them a sense of obligation at the same time.

Some colleagues can manipulate you by doing you small favors, and then reminding you of those favors every time they want something from you. For instance, if you made an error at work and a colleague covered for you, he may hold it over your head for months or even years to come, and he is going to guilt you into feeling indebted to him.

Colleagues can also manipulate you by leaving you out of the loop when they are passing across important information. The intention here is to get you to mess up so that they can have a better standing with the boss or with other colleagues. When you discover that someone is leaving you out of the loop at work and you confront them, they could feign innocence and pretend that it was a genuine mistake on their part, or they could find a way to turn it around and blame you.

People with dark personality traits tend to be hyper-competitive at work, and they won't hesitate to use underhanded means to pull one over you. Most colleagues turn out to be good friends, but you should be careful with colleagues that are overly eager to befriend you. It could be that they want to learn more about you so that they can figure out your strengths and weaknesses, and find ways to use them against you. Narcissist, Machiavellians, and psychopaths are very good at scheming at work, so don't let them catch you off guard.

Chapter 6: What are the Manipulators Trying to do?

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

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

Cancellation of willpower

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

So, how can someone take away your willpower? Well, first, you have to understand that willpower isn't unlimited. We can lose our will power through a process that psychologists refer to as "ego depletion." To understand this, you have to think of willpower as a resource that may be

renewable, but it can only be renewed at a slow pace. So, if we spend that resource on one thing, we have less of it to spend on another thing that demands it. So, ego depletion is the outcome that occurs when we spend all the willpower that we have, and we are left without adequate willpower in the face of subsequent challenges.

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

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

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

Ego depletion is sometimes also referred to as "decision fatigue." The idea behind this concept is that the more decisions we make, the more fatigued we become, and as a result, we are unable to make good decisions. When

manipulative people put us in situations where we have to keep making decisions, they eventually are able to wear us out.

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

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

Another way to cancel someone’s willpower is by threatening their wellbeing or their livelihood. Malicious people can compromise your willpower by doing things that jeopardize your job, your relationships, or your happiness. When a colleague does something that puts your job security in jeopardy, or if your partner does something that makes your life a living hell, you will become somewhat desperate, and at that moment, your willpower is more likely to be compromised leading you to either surrender or do something that is detrimental to you.

Stress is another factor that can cause the depletion of one's willpower. When we are constantly stressed, our minds are filled with worries that cloud our judgment, and we end up making bad decisions. Malicious people will work both overtly and covertly to introduce stressors into our lives in

the hope that the resultant stress will take up all our energy, and we will be left more susceptible to their manipulation.

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

Destroy self-esteem

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

you are, they'll take over and create a version of you that they can push around.

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

At work, manipulators may want to destroy your self-esteem to make you feel like you are not up to the job so that they can climb over you on their way to the top. If they can't completely convince you that that you are a loser, they'll settle for making you so afraid of failure that you are even unable to gather the strength to try to compete with them.

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

Passive-aggressive revenge

Some manipulators will go after you because they are seeking passive-aggressive revenge against you. If you have ever slighted a narcissistic person, a sadist, or a psychopath in any way, they are probably holding some

sort of grudge against you, and they may manipulate you because they want to get even.

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

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

When someone is seeking passive-aggressive revenge against you, they'll want to put you down so that they can feel superior. They think that you have it good, so they want to cut you down to size by making you feel insecure. If you outperform them at work, they'll want your performance to decline because it will make them feel better. Such people will treat you with a lot of disguised verbal hostility. They will propagate negative gossip about you

when you are away. They will go out of their way to find fault in the things that you do, and they will be habitually critical of you. They'll try their best to invalidate your thoughts, feeling, and contributions because they just don't want you to be happy.

Some people will seek passive-aggressive revenge against you because they are miserable, and misery loves company. Most people with dark personality traits just can't stand seeing you happy when they are miserable. The narcissists believe the world revolves around them, so if they are miserable, they'll expect everyone else to be miserable, and they'll try to punish anyone who isn't miserable through psychological manipulation. Sadists will try to make you miserable as a way of cheering themselves up. Machiavellians, on the other hand, will scheme to steal your happiness.

People seeking passive-aggressive revenge often use disguised hostile humor to bring others down. They use sarcasm to veil their hostility towards others. They'll say hurtful things then claim that they are "just kidding." They'll attack others based on their looks, their social-cultural background, their gender and sexual orientation, their levels of education, and anything else that comes to mind. In other words, these manipulators have deep-seated issues which result in psychological disturbances, and they'll go out of their way to harm others in order to satisfy their psychological needs.

Confuse reality

Manipulators also want to confuse your reality so that they can control you. Altering a person's perception of reality is the ultimate way to control and dominate them. That's because when you can convince a person that what he

sees and hears isn't real, then you gain the power to tell them what they should think, what you should feel, and what you should value.

Controlling other people's reality is the ultimate dream for any manipulator. They want you to substitute your judgment for theirs, and the chances of that happening increase exponentially when you question your own reality. That is why mind control manipulation techniques, such as brainwashing and gaslighting, are the most dangerous ones.

There are lots of reasons why a manipulator would want to confuse his victim's reality. An abusive partner would want you to quit looking for help, so they would either want you to believe that you are going crazy and the abuse isn't really happening, or that no one will offer you the love and protection that you are hoping for, so you should stop searching for it.

When psychopath's gaslight others, they tend to do it intentionally. They are deliberately trying to damage their victim's mental health because they know when you are mentally weak, they can control you. They don't have a conscience, so they don't care if they do irreversible damage.

Narcissists, on the other hand, tend to gaslight others or confuse their reality unintentionally. That is because the narcissists are themselves delusional; they have delusions of grandeur, and they think that they are entitled to dominate you. They'll confuse your reality because they want to impose their own perceptions onto you so that their delusions of grandeur can become your reality.

Bullies and sadists will want to confuse your reality because they want it to be bleak. Their intention is to make you have a pessimistic outlook, just like them.

Chapter 7: Behavioral Traits of Favorite Victims of Manipulators



There are certain characteristics and behavioral traits that make people more vulnerable to manipulation, and people with dark psychology traits know this full well. They tend to seek out victims who have those specific behavioral traits because they are essentially easy targets. Let's discuss 6 of the traits of the favorite victims of manipulators.

Emotional insecurity and fragility

Manipulators like to target victims who are emotionally insecure or emotionally fragile. Unfortunately for these victims, such traits are very easy to identify even in total strangers, so it's easy for experienced manipulators to find them.

People who are emotionally insecure tend to be very defensive when they are attacked or when they are under pressure, and that makes them easy to spot in social situations. Even after just a few interactions, a manipulator can gauge with a certain degree of accuracy, how insecure a person is. They'll try to provoke their potential targets in a subtle way, and then wait to see how the targets react. If they are overly defensive, manipulators will take it as a sign of insecurity, and they will intensify their manipulative attacks.

Manipulators can also tell if a target is emotionally insecure if he/she redirects accusations or negative comments. They will find a way to put you on the spot, and if you try to throw it back at them, or to make excuses instead of confronting the situation head-on, the manipulator could conclude that you are insecure and therefore an easy target.

People who have social anxiety also tend to have emotional insecurity, and manipulators are aware of this fact. In social gatherings, they can easily spot individuals who have social anxiety, then target them for manipulation. "Pickup artists" are able to identify the girls who seem uneasy in social situations by the way they conduct themselves. Social anxiety is difficult to conceal, especially to manipulators who are experienced at preying on emotional vulnerability.

Emotional fragility is different from emotional insecurity. Emotionally insecure people tend to show it all the time, while emotionally fragile people appear to be normal, but they break down emotionally at the slightest provocation. Manipulators like targeting emotionally fragile people because it's very easy to elicit a reaction from them. Once a manipulator finds out that

you are emotionally fragile, he is going to jump at the chance to manipulate you because he knows it would be fairly easy.

Emotional fragility can be temporary, so people with these traits are often targeted by opportunistic manipulators. A person may be emotionally stable most of the time, but he/she may experience emotional fragility when they are going through a breakup, when they are grieving, or when they are dealing with a situation that is emotionally draining. The more diabolical manipulators can earn your trust, bid their time, and wait for you to be emotionally fragile. Alternatively, they can use underhanded methods to induce emotional fragility in a person they are targeting.

Sensitive people

Highly sensitive people are those individuals who process information at a deeper level and are more aware of the subtleties in social dynamics. They have lots of positive attributes because they tend to be very considerate of others, and they watch their step to avoid causing people any harm, whether directly or indirectly. Such people tend to dislike any form of violence or cruelty, and they are easily upset by news reports about disastrous occurrences, or even depictions of gory scenes in movies.

Sensitive people also tend to get emotionally exhausted from taking in other people's feelings. When they walk into a room, they have the immediate ability to detect other people's moods, because they are naturally skilled at identifying and interpreting other people's body language cues, facial expressions, and tonal variations.

Manipulators like to target sensitive people because they are easy to manipulate. If you are sensitive to certain things, manipulators can use them against you. They will feign certain emotions to draw sensitive people in so that they can exploit them.

Sensitive people also tend to scare easily. They have a heightened "startle reflex," which means that they are more likely to show clear signs of fear or nervousness in potentially threatening situations. For example, sensitive people are more likely to jump up when someone sneaks up on them, even before they determine whether they are in any real danger. If you are a sensitive person, this trait can be very difficult to hide, and malicious people will be able to see it from a mile away.

Sensitive people also tend to be withdrawn. They are mostly introverts, and they like to keep to themselves because social stimulation can be emotionally draining for them. Manipulators who are looking to control others are more likely to target people who are introverted because that trait makes it easy to isolate potential victims.

Manipulators can also identify sensitive people by listening to how they talk. Sensitive people tend to be very proper; they never use vulgar language, and they tend to be very politically correct because they are trying to avoid offending anyone. They also tend to be polite, and they say please and thank you more often than others. Manipulators go after such people because they know that they are too polite to dismiss them right away; sensitive people will indulge anyone because they don't want to be rude, and that gives maliciously people a way in.

Emphatic people

Emphatic people are generally similar to highly sensitive people, except that they are more attuned to the feelings of others and the energy of the world around them. They tend to internalize other people's suffering to the point that it becomes their own. In fact, for some of them, it can be difficult to distinguish someone's discomfort from their own. Emphatic people make the best partners because they feel everything you feel. However, this makes them particularly easy to manipulate, which is why malicious people like to target them.

Malicious people can feign certain emotions, and convey those emotions to emphatic people, who will feel them as though they were real. That opens them up for exploitation. Emphatic people are the favorite targets of psychopathic conmen because they feel so deeply for others. A conman can make up stories about financial difficulties and swindle lots of money from emphatic people.

The problem with being emphatic is that because you have such strong emotions, you easily dismiss your own doubts about people because you would much rather offer help to a person who turns out to be a liar than deny help to a person who turns out to be telling the truth.

Emphatic people have a big-hearts, and they tend to be extremely generous, often to their own detriment. They are highly charitable, and they feel guilty when others around them suffer, even if it's not their fault and they can't do anything about it. Malicious people have a very easy time taking such people on guilt trips. They are the kind of people who would willingly fork over

their life savings to help their friends get out of debt, even if it means they would be ruined financially.

Malicious people like to get into relationships with empathetic people because they are easy to take advantage of. Empathetic people try to avoid getting into intimate relationships in the first place because they know that it's easy for them to get engulfed in such relationships and to lose their identities in the process. However, manipulators will doggedly pursue them because they know that once they get it, they can guilt the empathetic person into doing anything they want.

Fear of loneliness

Many people are afraid of being alone, but this fear is more heightened in a small percentage of the population. This kind of fear can be truly paralyzing for those who experience it, and it can open them up to exploitation by malicious people. For example, there are many people who stay in dysfunctional relationships because they are afraid, they will never find someone else to love them if they break up with an abusive partner.

Manipulators can identify this fear in a victim, and they'll often do everything they can to fuel it further to make sure that the person is crippled by it.

People who are afraid of being alone can tolerate or even rationalize any kind of abuse.

The fear of being alone can be easy to spot in a potential victim. People with this kind of fear tend to exude some level of desperation at the beginning of relationships, and they can sometimes come across as clingy. While ordinary people may think of being clingy as a red flag, manipulative people will see it as an opportunity to exploit somebody. If you are attached to them, they'll

use manipulative techniques to make you even more dependent on them. They can withhold love and affection (e.g., by using the silent treatment) to make the victim fear that he/she is about to get dumped so that they act out of desperation and cede more control to the manipulator.

The fear of being alone is, for the most part, a social construct, and it disproportionately affects women more than men. For generations, our society has taught women that their goal in life is to get married and have children, so, even the more progressive women who reject this social construct are still plagued by social pressures to adhere to those old standards. That being said, the fact is that men also tend to be afraid of being alone.

People with abandonment issues stemming from childhood tend to experience the fear of loneliness to a higher degree. There are also those people who may not necessarily fear loneliness in general, but they are afraid of being separated from the important people in their lives. For example, lots of people end up staying in abusive or dysfunctional relationships because they are afraid of being separated from their children.

Fear of disappointing others

We all feel a certain sense of obligation towards the people in our lives, but there are some people who are extremely afraid of disappointing others. This kind of fear is similar to the fear of embarrassment and the fear of rejection because it means that the person puts a lot of stock into how others perceive him or her. The fear of disappointing others can occur naturally, and it can actually be useful in some situations; parents who are afraid of disappointing their families will work harder to provide for them, and children who are

afraid of disappointing their parents will study harder at school. In this case, the fear is actually constructive. However, it becomes unhealthy when it's directed at the wrong people, or when it forces you to compromise your own comfort and happiness.

When manipulators find out that you have a fear of disappointing others, they'll try to put you in a position where you feel like you owe them something. They'll do certain favors for you, and then they'll manipulate you into believing that you have a sense of obligation towards them. They will then guilt you into complying with any request whenever they want something from you.

Personality Dependent disorders and emotional dependency

Dependent personality disorder refers to a real disorder that is characterized by a person having an excessive and even pervasive need to be taken care of. This need often leads the person to be submissive towards the people in their lives and to be clingy and afraid of separation. People with this disorder act in ways that are meant to elicit caregiving. They tend to practice what's called "learned helplessness." This is where they act out of a conviction that they are unable to do certain things for themselves, and they need the help of others.

Such people have a hard time making decisions, even when dealing with simple things like picking out which clothes to wear. They need constant reassurance and advice, and they let others take the lead in their own lives.

These are the kinds of people who either move back into their parents' homes as adults or treat their spouses and partners as though they are their parents.

Manipulators like to target people with dependent personality disorders because they are very easy to control and dominate. These people willingly cede control over their lives to others, so when manipulators come knocking, they don't face much resistance. Manipulators start off by giving them a false sense of security, but once they have won their trust, they switch gears and start imposing their will on them.

Emotional dependency is somewhat similar to dependent personality disorder, but it doesn't rise to the level of clinical significance. It stems from having low self-esteem, and it's often a result of childhood abandonment issues. People with an emotional dependency will play the submissive role in relationships for fear of losing their partners. They tend to be very agreeable because they want to please the people in their lives. Such people are easy to manipulate, and malicious people can easily dominate them.

Chapter 8: What is Persuasion?



The goal of any type of manipulation is to get the intended person to do something. This can either be a direct action or a more general sort of behavioral change. It can also be the deliberate alteration of held beliefs, opinions, and world views. Getting to change the way a person thinks is tantamount to changing that person. The breakdown of an intended target's belief system is one of the first things that an experienced manipulator goes after.

In a world fueled by an increasingly divided political base, public opinion matters. The ability to sway public opinion to have a favorable view of an organization, political party or candidate is a form of manipulation. But here we come across the thin line once again between malicious manipulation and just plain manipulation. It is unclear whether a politician is malicious when

they make promises on their campaign trail only to fall back on them when they are in office.

Such promises might get them more votes, and might be to an extent misleading, but it isn't clear if they are malicious. Most would say that the candidate with the best speeches, talking points, and overall rhetorical strategies is the candidate who is most persuasive to their cause. And while persuasion sounds harmless at the surface level, persuasion is still a form of manipulation. To understand why it bears going back in history to find the beginnings of persuasion when it was being perfected as an art.

Pathos, Ethos, Logos the Three Emissaries of Public Opinion

The art of persuasion can be traced back to Greek origins. It was used as a tool by great orators to get their message across to the common folk. For a country that is said to have created the political frameworks behind democracy, persuasion was immensely popular. If you have ever taken an advanced writing class that went over rhetorical analysis, you might recognize the above three rhetorical modes of pathos, ethos, and logos. These were billed by Aristotle as the three main appeals that an orator could make to move their audience.

Its usage implies that the audience is a malleable entity, like putty. The words of a skilled orator can manipulate the audience like a child might manipulate a piece of putty. Other times persuasion is simply used to rile up a cause that was already popular, to begin with, but that had been up to that point undisclosed.

The three rhetorical modes are important because they represent three different attack vectors that a manipulator might use to persuade their audience. Again, any form of persuasion is a type of mental manipulation, but it doesn't become a psychological attack until it becomes malicious. In other words, there is a difference between plain old persuasive arguments and using persuasion to carry out dark psychology.

Regular persuasion is the type that might make you vote for a candidate, or buy some product (though some would argue that modern-day advertising has dark psychology aspects). Malicious persuasion, on the other hand, might entice you to go against your set of morals and beliefs. This sort of persuasion is dangerous, because an attacker's arguments may seem very convincing to you when, in reality, they are just cleverly designed to trick you. At the same time, the persuasion is being used for the benefit of someone else (most types of persuasion we are familiar with already do this).

The dark psychology mindset tells us that there are people out there with less than kind objectives. They may be after your wealth, your emotional labor, your body, your mind, or just a few minutes of your attention. And all of this is theoretically possible through the levying of persuasive techniques. But first, we should talk about everyday persuasion in the traditional sense. What is it, who uses it, and how to detect persuasive arguments.

Modern Day Aristotle

No matter what persuasive argument you come across, they will have all of the semblances of Aristotle's appeals, mixed in with a modern "secret sauce" that is unique to the persuader (and indeed the situation). It is still worth talking about persuasion and persuasive arguments because they are the cornerstone of all types of manipulation. If a manipulator was a boxer,

persuasion techniques would be like their left jab. Not as powerful as a KO punch, but still the punch that lands them the most points and slows down their opponent.

A modern-day Aristotle can be anyone. A politician, a used cars salesman, even your mother is trying to convince you to move closer to home. All of these would be Aristotle's have something in common: they want something from you. And it is your job to decide whether their needs are genuine and desirable for all parties. They will no doubt stop at anything to convince you that they are. To do this, you have to separate their argument from the chaff. For persuasive techniques, the chaff is usually the bubbly language or the sharp edge in their arguments that really cuts you into you.

But beware. Just because it cuts you, it doesn't mean that it is deep, or meaningful to you in any way. Many skillful persuaders will only pander to already preconceived notions that their audiences may have. They simply say something that they know their audience will like, and instantly become that much more credible.

But someone trying to come up with a novel argument will first have to design a rhetorical strategy using any of the three rhetorical modes available. This is true whether they are trying to form an essay, a speech, or simply persuade you into doing something. The world of sales is chock-full of strategies used designed to get you to buy. A competent salesman may try to get to know you first (especially if the purchase is large, like a new house or car). They wish to form a relationship on the first-name basis and then pose as a close friend.

In the world of sales, the only thing that matters is the purchase. If a customer decides to buy, then whatever strategies used to make that sale are fair game. This opens the ground for deploying several different types of psychological

tricks against the unsuspecting customer. For example, a salesman may introduce them to a high-end item that is purposely out of their buying range and then redirects them towards an item of similar functionality that is perceived as being more affordable.

A family looking to buy a new laptop for their college-bound son may be directed towards the expensive and latest Apple laptop product only to realize that it is well out of their budget. The savvy salesperson can then walk them to the Windows computers aisle and show them an alternative product that is the same color as an Apple computer, but that has a different operating system and is slightly less performative. Now, that other laptop may still be a flagship item and have a sizable price tag, but it is perceived as a good buy by the family because the salesperson showed them an item they believe to be state of the art.

Such tricks are less persuasive strategies than they are crude psychological manipulation. But both of these things can be used for devastating effect. Persuasion that is more psychological in nature involves more trickery and subterfuge—the type of things one would expect except dark psychology techniques. Indeed, the salesman trick of going high and then going low can pass as a type of emotional manipulation. It is subtle, but there is clear pandering towards what a customer believes their money can buy them. First, they are shown what is considered to be the “it” product. But since they can’t afford it, the salesman is putting them on an emotional roller coaster of desire.

In a way, it is a projection of what the customer believes they deserve. Sure, they can’t afford the best, but since they feel like they deserve the best (and since the salesman believes that they deserve the best) then buying the next best product is an easy choice. And if they can afford the high-end object the salesman shows them first, then their job is already finished. In other words,

whether the customer buys the expensive item or the lesser expensive one, the salesman still wins. It is a perfect example of a psychological manipulation that is difficult to detect in the heat of the moment, and that has a high rate of success.

Pathos

Pathos is an appeal to emotion. Traditionally, it has been based on appeals to sadness or pity (which shouldn't come as a surprise seeing that the Greeks were very into plays and tragedies). Nowadays, any appeal that has a strong emotional response may be considered as pathos. Emotion has infiltrated the marketing world in recent years, especially when it comes to social media ad campaigns. Companies and large corporations are waking up to the new realities of social awareness. Never before has an audience been so keen on the problems facing the world, many of which are blamed on the corporations in the first place.

Pathos works best when it is bare and out in the open. When used correctly it hits the target like a punch to the gut (think about those cancer hospital commercials or animal cruelty videos) Pathos often strives to make the audience uncomfortable, but making the audience feel good about themselves is just as common now.

The anatomy of a good argument from pathos is as follows: establish a connection with the audience through common understanding, put forth an argument, and then charge the audience with the emotional payload in relation to the argument. Take, for example, the following implicit argument about cancer research.

1. Cancer is a terrible disease. Cancer can hit anyone, at any time, even innocent children. Sometimes it is the reward for simply being "born." Because of this, it is in the best interest for humans to find a cure for it.

2. Cancer is a common enemy for humanity to defeat (1). An effective way to defeat it is to increase government and public spending on cancer research.
3. The people who suffer the most from cancer are those who are diagnosed with it and their families. The financial burden of a cancer diagnosis can be just as disastrous as the illness itself.
4. Charity organizations can both provide aid to families (3) and increase spending on cancer research (2)
5. Therefore, by donating to charity organizations (4) you helping fight in the war against cancer (2)

This entire argument can be implied through a short, 30 second commercial on TV by using compelling images. It is powerful because it establishes a moral common ground (cancer is bad, people who get cancer through no fault of their own don't deserve it) and then uses that common ground against the audience (if you don't donate, then you have no sympathy for others). Or alternatively, if you don't donate to help end cancer, then you are contributing to the deaths of thousands every year)

Note that appeals to emotion are almost always logical fallacies. Obviously, a person can still be sympathetic towards cancer research but not have the kind of disposable income to donate. Or they don't believe that charities are efficient at getting money to the cause (this happens all the time).

But pathos is effective because not everyone cares about spotting a fallacious argument when they are getting hit in the gut by an emotional attack. Though logically inconsistent, plenty of people do and will fall for the persuasive power of pathos arguments.

Ethos

Ethos is less easy to classify into argument form. In Ancient Greek, ethos means “character.” It is sometimes called the appeal to ethics, from the Nicomachean ethics theorized by Aristotle himself. His ethics, in short, emphasized personal character and virtue. An Aristotelian appeal to ethics, then, is an appeal from someone's character (if it is deemed virtuous). For example, people were more likely to listen to what an esteemed orator had to say than to pay attention to what the local drunk said. Politicians in Ancient Greece used the power of ethos to solidify their public image as men of virtue. Men who, on any given day, acted in the way that the ideal man should. This demeanor of rightness gave them considerable voting share.

Now when we use ethos, we use it a little differently (though in many situations in the same way of old). Instead of making an appeal to the ethics of the speaker, modern ethos makes an appeal to authority, social standing, fame, and domain knowledge. We live in a world where experts in their fields hold more persuasive power than the right to do man. And why shouldn't we? The scientific revolution shifted the focus from virtue ethics to the scientific method. It is now men in lab coats who command the strongest ethos in a purely logical sense.

People listen to doctors for their health advice. But they might also listen to what a celebrity says, or believe the political advice given by a five-star general. They might listen to what their local religious leaders say (both in established religious sects and in cults). Children listen to what their nearest authority—their parents—tell them to do. And so goes the argument. Ethos is convincing because people believe in the person who is endorsing the argument. They want to show the way, by someone who has the perceived authority to do so.

These arguments, like with appeals to emotions, tend to be hopelessly fallacious. Before cigarette companies were demonized for selling cancer-

causing product and before they were required to put health information on the label, they used depictions of doctors or celebrities smoking. But doctors or celebrities endorsing a product says nothing about their potential harm, especially before cigarettes were branded a carcinogen. Prior to the acceptance that cigarettes caused lung and throat cancers, the major concern was with dental health. A new line of cigarette filters was created to protect consumers oral hygiene, rather than to protect them from the real menace.

A quite famous old-timey cigarette ad by Viceroy's featured a man in a white frock with the caption "As your dentist, I would recommend Viceroy's." The emphasis was that Viceroy filters prevented tar buildup and were thus "healthier" for you than other brands. Of course, we know now that the notion of a healthy cigarette is completely absurd.

Perhaps the most well-known of these arguments is WWJD, or "What would Jesus do?". Jesus is a moral character, is given moral weight to any situation. By posing the question to any potential dilemma, one could imagine the righteous course of action.

Logos

The last rhetorical mode is logos or appeals to logic. This is the most straightforward rhetorical mode available and the most logically consistent. An appeal to logic will have the necessary scientific and mathematical facts to back up the argument's position. An argument for gun control should be accompanied with a number of violent crimes using handguns, deaths and so on compared across various different gun control legislation (including no legislation). The audience is then tasked with deciding for themselves if the numbers tell the truth, or if they tell lies.

Logos can be used by itself or in conjunction with ethos and pathos to form a persuasive argument.

While logos seems logically consistent at first glance, it is still possible to form fallacious arguments using them. And these are just as convincing as using arguments from the other two forms.

A drug company is trying to sell a new medication for a serious illness. The company says that their product saves 20% more lives (or some other treatment improvement. But what does this really mean? The company doesn't provide a full breakdown where their numbers came from. All the consumer sees is a commercial with uplifting music and people doing everyday things.

What the company may not tell you, is that the breakdown is much more sinister. In other words, if only 20 people normally survive out of 100, then a 20% increase is only four additional people. That isn't very much—especially when you consider the potential side effects of the given medication.

Sadly, pharmaceutical companies get away with this all the time. They use purposely misleading health information in the form of relative frequencies (mostly because they are easier to understand). The net effect is that a consumer might make a decision based on false pretenses. For the company, it means higher profits.

Chapter 9: Methods of Persuasion

The basis of persuasion is to direct the other person to the thought you desire and to make it normal in the basic belief and vision system. To simplify, it is to make the other person think the way you want. That's exactly what it means to convince. If the other person thinks the way you want, you can take the action that you want to take, that is, buying a product or consuming a product.

Located below are techniques to persuade and convince some of the most effective techniques effectively. Persuasion techniques are not limited to these, but they are important for efficiency. You may encounter many other techniques of persuasion, such as rewarding, punishing, creating a positive or negative perception.

1. Creating Needs

One of the best methods of persuasion is to create a need or to reassure an old need. This question of need is related to self-protection and compatibility with basic emotions such as love. This technique is one of the biggest trumps of marketers in particular. They try to sell their products or services using this technique. The kind of approaches that express the purchase of a product to make one feel safe or loving is part of the need-building technique.

2. Touching Social Needs

The basis of the technique of touching social needs are factors such as being popular, having prestige, or having the same status as others. The advertisements on television are the ideal examples. People who buy the products in these advertisements think they will be like the person in the

advertisement or they will be as prestigious. The main reason why persuasion techniques such as touching social needs are effective is related to television advertising. Many people watch television for at least 1-2 hours a day and encounter these advertisements.

3. Use of Meaningful and Positive Words

Sometimes it is necessary to use magic words to be convincing. These magic words are meaningful and positive words. Advertisers know these positive and meaningful words intimately. It is very important for them to be able to use them. The words “New,” “Renewed,” “All Natural,” “Most Effective” are the most appropriate examples of these magic words. Using these words, advertisers try to promote their products and thus make the advertisements more convincing for the liking of the products.

4. Use of Foot Technique

This technique is frequently used in the context of persuasion techniques. The processing way is quite simple. You make a person do something very small first because you think they can't refuse it. Once the other person has done so, you will try to get him to do more, provided he is consistent within himself.

First, you sell a product to a person at a very low price. Then you get him to buy a product at higher prices. In the first step, you attract him to yourself, so you convince him to buy it. In the second step, you convince yourself to buy products at a higher price. Their acceptance of a small thing will help you to fulfill the next big demand from you.

After refusing the small request from the other party, you feel a duty to make a big request from the same person. This is usually the case in human relations. For example, you agree when your neighbor comes and asks you if you can keep an eye on the shop for a few hours. If your neighbor comes to ask you to look at the shop all day, you will feel responsible and probably

accept it. This means that the technique of putting a foot on the door is successfully applied.

5. Use of Orientation from Big to Small

The tendency to ask from big to small is the exact opposite of the technique of putting a foot on the door. The salesperson makes an unrealistic request from the other person. Naturally, this demand doesn't correspond to the real issue. However, the salesperson then makes a request that is smaller than the same person. People feel responsible for such approaches, and they will accept the offer. Since the request is small, by accepting it, people have the idea that they will help the salespeople and the technique of moving from big to small requests works.

6. Use of Reciprocity

Reciprocity is a term for mutual progress of a business. When a person does you a kindness, you feel the need to do him a favor. This is one example of reciprocity. For example, if someone bought you a gift on your birthday, you would try to pay back that gesture. This is more of a psychological approach because people don't forget the person who does something for them and they try to respond accordingly.

For marketers, the situation is slightly different from human relations. Reciprocity takes place here in the form of a marketer offering you an interim extra discount" or "extra" promotion... You are very close to buying the product introduced by the marketer you think offers a special offer.

7. Making Limits for Interviews

Setting a limit for negotiations is to provide an approach that will affect future rights. This is particularly effective when negotiating prices. For example, if you are trying to negotiate a price to sell a service, it might make more sense to start by opening the price from a higher number. Opening from

a low number is not the right method because you have weakened your stretching share.

Even if the limitation for negotiations is not always useful, it's particularly useful in terms of price negotiation. Say the first number and get on with the bargaining advantage.

8. Limitation Technique

Restriction technique is one of the most powerful methods to influence human psychology. You can see this mostly in places selling products. For example, if a store has a discount on a particular product, it may limit it to 500 products. This limitation can be a true limitation or a part of the limitation technique. So, you think that you will not find the product at that price again and you agree to buy that product at the specified price.

The restriction technique is particularly useful in new products. As soon as a new product goes on sale, you can convince people to buy it for a limited time or by selling a limited quantity of products with extra promotions or discounts. People who think that the product will not be sold again at a similar price may choose to buy the product you have chosen thanks to the success of your persuasion technique.

Persuasion techniques are not limited to these. Different techniques can provide more successful results in various fields. However, most of the techniques we may encounter in our daily lives consist of the methods shown here. If you want to be a marketer, if you are trying to sell a product or service, you need to have detailed information about these techniques if you want to make them available.

Difference between Persuasion and Manipulation

There are many similarities between Persuasion and Manipulation as the two words confuse non-English individuals: Natives too. There are many comparisons between the two concepts, and because of the overlap, people think these two can be used interchangeably. There are convincing good people, and there are good manipulators. Both try to make sense and encourage others to accept their views. However, although there are similarities in manipulation to being able to persuade someone, there are differences that must be emphasized.

Persuasion:

Persuasion is a behavior from someone else directed in a specific direction. You've managed to convince when you try to explain a certain way of behavior logically and correctly, and others accept your opinion that they think is of mutual benefit. If you have good marks on your test and you asked your mother for an expensive gift, you are trying to convince her to buy you a gift. This persuasion is convincing because it sees the logic behind your request and she buys the gift.

Chapter 10: Brainwashing



If you would ask a person at random whether they know what brainwash means, you get an affirmative answer 90 percent of the time. That's not the case more often. This concept has been heard by many of us, but we often tend to confuse our vague realization of what it is for an otherwise accurate understanding. The question we dare ask ourselves then is what brainwashing means and why it does. It is perhaps the essential kind of dark psychology we are going to discuss, which offers much more negative results than the rest.

This complex brainwashing enigma is essentially the gradual process of replacing the ideas of a victim with a manipulator about their being and of replacing them with new ideas that should adapt to one's own needs, and that can either narrowly take place. For example, a manipulator can control a person or adopt the same principle but a broad group. The circumstance of

brainwashing is like the one where people believe they can be a call for a higher purpose to join a terrorist organization. In the majority of other scenarios, indoctrination appears to be effective. Most believe that brainwashing is the Hollywood fiction of someone who continually imposes certain concepts on their victims, and within a short period, the person becomes the manipulator for every bidding. More realistically, it is a process that generally changes an individual's perception of reality far from what they have had a very gradual but voluntary process. The fundamental trick is to make the victim feel as though they are always in control. There are several situations that make brainwashing possible, and often they are motivated differently by it. Let us discover these specific scenarios, starting with the situation of a cult. A cultic can be said to be an organization of people who often believe that one individual is considered as their leader in something larger than themselves. The leader is often characterized by his exceptionally great influences and a very charismatic behavior on his followers. The question that we now try to ask ourselves is, why is brainwashing a culture in those contexts?

The very basic appeal that these cults possess is that actual reality is only graspable if they decide to cultivate and follow the teachings in the factions. This is often something that people want to listen to because the truth is that today's world is a complicated journey often appears confusing, which gives some relief from a promise of fraternity and an unparalleled opposite. Brainwash resonates here with the idea of a new normal. It is because of this idea that cults used by different sect leaders to brainwash the members to accept their mostly strange doctrines at the same time, making them a dominant theme in their lives. It sounded incredibly strange to idolize a mere mortal to the extent that he actually adored it. But that's so 'normal' in a cult that it doesn't seem to be a little bizarre for other members. Probably the

most potent way to ideological brainwashing is through this process of social strengthening. Cults have the same DNA as drug distributors. Why is that? Why? Usually, a person finds a particular sect to find something he or she lacks in life. In the drug world, the same thing happens because a person often tries not to experiment freely. Cults do not make brain wash people members, as people have sought some form of fulfillment of a particular desire. It is this innocent desire to search and to be prepared, making them easy goals for brainwashing.

The context of ideologies would be another similar one, which must brainwash on its foreheads like cults. Their principal difference is that not so much the individual is the focus of ideology, but the whole idea. In principle, ideological brainwashing is stirred up by persons who have put absolute and full confidence in a plan. It is regarded as a very dangerous tactic because it goes beyond one person. Use an example to understand this better. When you look at the religious extremist groups, they worship their leaders like tomorrow is no one. Would it be enough to say that your 'god' could be killed? This is a definite no because, as long as they are 6 feet below the surface of the ground, they will be praised and recognized as martyrs who died because of their ideologies.

This theme not only resonates in the cultural playground, but it also places me on a more innocent level. The brainwashing effect on fans is too often experienced by musicians. If you hear music often, a diehard fan of a particular musician will mark a reasonably young and impressive person with his sense of identity and happiness for a specific musician. You are frequently able to defend your famous superstar as if you knew the person personally. Some fans will even go to a higher level to harm themselves if their idols also imply that it is a cool thing to do. Can you imagine the effects this will have if used in a cult context if ideological washing on the innocent

level is so dangerous? In addition to the general brainwashing scenarios, it can easily take form in a personal setting.

When you dive into the bowl of personal brainwashing, we find that the brainwashing process, as it is at the border, is also the slow and gradual replacement of the existing beliefs of a man with those placed by a manipulator to serve his benefit more effectively. The main difference between the two is that unlike a group to implement the new typical scenario, the manipulators, in this case, aim at establishing a profoundly personal relationship with the victim. This is considered to be stronger than the brainwashing group because the brainwashing tape can be continuously altered to match the psychological structure of the victim.

After you have had an insight into the real occurrence of brainwashing, how do the manipulators use this kind of dark psychology? Hollywood's one thing is to lay the groundwork for indoctrination. Each brainwashing movie typically begins with a focus on the mental state of the individual and the social circumstances surrounding him — this way of controlling the mind.

Brainwashing is not a technique that every single person can smoothly perform. These manipulators are often the preferred victim who seems to be attempting to fill an absolute emptiness, particularly those who are turned on by certain life events by their current reality. There is no question of losing a loved one as the best example of this to be illustrated. The emptiness is often conveyed to people wherever they go. This person, in search of their being full again, will choose to flee and join religious extremist groups and become suicide bombers in pursuit of being entire. The brainwasher gives us assurance as a killing ideology.

Once a handler intensifies his aim from the Internet or in an individual, the brainwashing method has been launched. Contrary to the image, the actual representation of these unhappy personalities, which looks strange and

culturally withdrawn from the fellow with a particularly distorted perversion as an intellectual washer, is north of this because they are only ordinary individuals with whom we communicate on a regular occasion, with a calm and pleasant feel. Slowly but certainly, the manipulator will operate challenging to create an atmosphere in which the person thinks he can trust him. It is accomplished by generating clever peripheral associations such as a shared interest in a specific sport and a similar musical relationship. After that, the manipulator will then move forward to create even more confidence. He does so by creating some grim experiences from the background, which are also associated with painful survivors. For instance, if the victims share in the loss of a wife, the manipulator will give them a history in which he, too, has lost a friend.

The next phase is recognized as a demonstration of utopias. What does that imply? What does that imply? The manipulative person regularly provides alternatives to any of the issues that the people face. It is a brainwashing method. This is generally performed informally, at first, to prevent any negative pressure interactions of the person. The perfect introduction is never any specific item, and it is either character; the manipulator often tries to transform his target as well as religion or a particular religion. It could be either terror or his stupid willingness to honor and validate. If procedures are started correctly, a specific person often seeks to gain perspectives into greater knowledge of the alternatives. In certain situations, the manipulator will initially retain this data, emotionally forcing the person to operate to prevent it. This outcome is what occurs effectively.

Once the person who was subsequently introduced into this new belief system and appeared to be reacting in such a manner that the manipulator would like to, his real motives will be revealed very carefully. This concept is called "gradual disclosure." In essence, this is a method where ideas are

presented that are often simple to comprehend before anything disputed becomes apparent. When we stare at religious terrorism, this is made completely clear. Recruits are frequently taken in by persuasive phrases like God enjoys them. After you're a wholly committed participant, the story requires a severe turnaround. What those rulers advise the participants is that the person is now crossing a line of no exchange, and nothing can be said to modify their minds because of this love.

I can bet that the question you are asking yourself right now is, why does the person consider it still okay to still communicate with his oppressor after the aims of manipulation have been disclosed? Usually, this is because of several factors. First of all, the participants experience a powerful feeling of pleasure and acceptance at this stage. This is because they took the time to build this solid base of friendship and helped them out of a challenging period in their lives. Secondly, the victim has spent a lot of time and money on the process so far and isn't right to let all of that drain back from everything. This is also referred to as the price mistake. Finally, because the manipulator has now collected a box of conflict of the perpetrators of most mysteries, the person decides to remain. They are cautious that this could be used at some stage at the moment against them. The problem of blackmail is not generally grasped to explain, particularly if they are endangered, why a person would be associated with them. Why is that? Why? The manipulator is willing to hide the truth often in a non-threatening manner as a master of deception. The manipulator will tell, "if I can no longer assist you, you get the greatest person, like a near family-member bug, you can go," because the manipulator already has a profound feeling of relationship and confidence in the subject, the blackmail image and power is usually seen to emanate from it. That is what persuades the viewer externally to remain ahead of this brainwasher's manipulating route. The events behind it create the pain and

difficulty of moving back so severe that the only way to stay in this manipulative room is for the survivors. More often than not, this method puts the person in a situation to believe that whatever the manipulator says is eventually the reality. The person feels as if he has selected his opinions as his own and has sought them out of his will. This turns a human being, who is once usually imagining, away to something that they have no concept of life into an indoctrinated psychological slave.

Brainwashing affects a person since it is considered as one of the most potent tactics of mental control. One of these side effects that the victim is likely to suffer is identity loss. In many cultures and ideologies, one characteristic is the fact that individuals often obliged to finish their initiation cycle are often told to give up their earlier identities, and their oppressors are granted another name. You're going to do what was just out of your moral radar before. When a manipulator skillfully deploys brainwashing, he tends to let the person feel like he only wakes up from a lifetime vision.

The primary risk of brainwashing is not that it influences the manner the person believes about sand, but also significantly affects the behavior of manipulators. People are changing drastically from productive employees to morbid personal outcasts ready to commit abominable crimes like rape and assassination.

This feels somewhat drastic, but it's right in almost every way. If you have any doubt, for instance, as to what brainwashing an individual can do, take these instances. Members of certain spiritual cults happily break up all their links to their families beforehand, put behind their thriving lives, hand over all their assets and property, and give full autonomy to the organization that has brainwashed them — not everything. The person will regard their new lifestyles as a gift, rather than a disagreement in which they were compelled to live.

Another example of the toxic brainwashing consequence is the recurring tale of mostly youthful people who are brainwashed by spiritual extremes who travel abroad to a community of persons that they never encountered and never damaged by a car filled with explosives Such perpetrators are often educated people who have a long history of lives and have no disruption or abuse. Does this dramatic death show that the brainwashing method is overwhelming, conquering?

Another characteristic of those who escape or who is rescued from an intense brainwashing situation is post-traumatic stress disorder. In most instances, victims of brainwashing show severe symptoms of mental distress comparable to those of military servicemen. This demonstrates that brainwashing produces outcomes similar to those submitted in a war-like context, which is probably the most significant impact of brainwashing, where the person returns to the communities they once thought secure after being expertly drawn out from the bleak angles. Even though the people have been fished from this psychological grip, some have been harmed only too much that they wind up with latches in the fingers of their manipulator. This is because they are so harmed that they do not understand otherwise.

Chapter 11: Hypnosis



Hypnosis or hypnotherapy is a state that is trance-like where a person's focus is heightened as well as their concentration. Hypnosis is done with the assistance of a therapist that uses verbal repetitions and mental pictures. When a person is put under hypnosis, they normally feel relaxed, calm and are open to suggestions.

Therapists have used hypnosis to help individuals gain control over behaviors that are undesirable. In dealing with anxiety and pain, hypnosis has also been found to be helpful. Although a person is relaxed and more open-minded to receive various suggestions, it is important to know that a person doesn't lose control over their behavior.

Why is Hypnosis Done?

Therapists say that hypnosis is an excellent way to cope with anxiety and stress. For instance, if someone is supposed to go for a medical procedure that they are anxious and stressed about, hypnosis can help calm them before

the procedure. There are various conditions where hypnosis is used. These may include:

- Pain control – if a person is suffering from chronic pains from cancer, childbirth, joints, headaches among others, hypnosis may help in bearing the pain.
- Hot flashes – when a woman is going through menopause, she will experience hot flashes that are uncomfortable most of the time. Hypnosis has been known to help with the discomfort of hot flashes.
- Behavior change – some people may find themselves having behaviors that are undesirable. Such include bed-wetting, insomnia, eating disorders, among others. The use of hypnosis has been known to help in transforming these undesirable behaviors.
- Side effects of cancer treatment – during cancer treatment, patients go through chemotherapy and radiation treatment. These forms of treatments leave the patient with undesirable side effects. The use of hypnosis helps cancer patients deal with these effects and cope with the treatment.
- Mental health conditions – many people suffer from various mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress, anxiety, phobias, among many more. The uses of hypnosis help a person deal with these conditions and bring relief.

What are the Risks of Hypnosis?

When hypnosis is done by a trained therapist or a medical practitioner, it is considered a safe addition and alternative treatment. However, in people

with serious mental health issues, hypnosis may not be the best method to use. There are various reactions to hypnosis. However, these reactions are rare and they include:

- The person may feel dizzy after therapy
- Experience slight headaches
- After therapy, a person may feel drowsy
- A person can be distressed or anxious
- In rare cases, hypnosis can create false memories

Preparing for Hypnosis

There is no need for special preparations before a hypnosis session. However, it is recommended for a person to be comfortable and relaxed. It is also important for a person to be well-rested to avoid falling asleep during therapy.

Before you go for therapy, research and ensure the therapist you have settled on is certified to perform hypnosis. Look for someone you trust that has undergone hypnosis and ask for references. You can also opt to interview the therapist before the session by finding out some of these:

- Does your therapist have psychology, social work, medicine training?
- Is your therapist licensed and certified to perform hypnosis?
- Where did the therapist get his training from?
- How much training does your therapist have in hypnotherapy and where did they get the training from?
- Does your therapist belong to any professional organizations and if so which ones?

- How long has the therapist been in practice?
- How much the cost per session and are their sessions covered by insurance?

Once you have settled on a therapist, he or she will explain the expectations and the process. The therapist will then embark on talking in a gentle soothing voice as he describes pictures that create relaxation, well-being, and security.

When you are relaxed and in a state of reception, the therapist will begin to suggest ways you can achieve your goals. A therapist may also help you have a vivid mental picture of yourself accomplishing the goals. Once the session is over, you can either bring yourself out of it or the therapist will help get out of your relaxation state.

During hypnosis, one does not lose control of their behavior. A person is always aware and remembers all that happened during the hypnosis session.

Hypnosis is used to help in coping with pain, anxiety, and stress and is used in cognitive behavioral therapy to change the behaviors and thoughts that are undesirable. However, hypnosis is not recommended for every person. Some people find it hard to get hypnotized while for others it is easy and they enjoy the benefits.

Three Stages of Hypnosis

Hypnosis is a process that involves the deep body and mind relaxation. Before we get to the various hypnosis stages, it is important to first understand how hypnosis works or the process of hypnotherapy.

1. Getting ready – every hypnotherapy session with a qualified therapist must be carried out in a relaxed, safe and calm environment where there are no interruptions of any kind. There is usually a preliminary discussion between the therapist and the person to be hypnotized. This is usually done to establish if the person has had prior hypnotism sessions and their experiences as well as trying to establish the problem one needs working on.

Most of the problems usually include a behavior or thoughts a person needs to balance or completely changed. For instance, a person may be struggling with bed-wetting; this behavior with the help of hypnosis is addressed and changed.

A skilled therapist should gather as much information as possible during the preliminary talk. This is important so that he may work on the best technique for the particular person and problem. The pattern most therapists use during the session is loose. It follows:

- Preparing and screening a client
- Inducting a client to an altered state consciousness state
- Deepening the trance state that opens suggestibility
- Posthypnotic suggestions. This is where advice is given regarding the problem the therapist worked on.

2. Induction – in a typical hypnotherapy session, the initial 15 minutes are for helping the client relax their mind and body. This stage is referred to as the induction stage. It involves helping a person to enter into a light state of trance by the use of relaxation techniques that work on the mind and body.

Gradually, the person is encouraged to relax their muscles and mind. This technique is aimed at ridding a person of any tension and releasing anxiety. The therapist focuses on instructing the client to slow and control their

breathing. This is also to help relax and distract the conscious mind so that a person focuses on the subconscious mind. Because of many methods of induction, it is important for the therapist to understand their client and apply a method that works for them.

3. Deepening a trance – this stage is where the subconscious mind is made ready to be more receptive to suggestions or new behavior. Once the mind accepts new thought patterns, a change in behavior follows. To deepen the trance, some therapists may opt to continue reinforcing the induction method used. The method can be accompanied by visualization techniques that are very deep to increase the trance. A qualified therapist knows that it is important for a person to be deeply altered in consciousness before starting hypnotic suggestions.

Now that you know how hypnosis works, it is important to understand the three stages to hypnotism.

Stage 1 – Hypnoidal State

This is the stage of light induction. At this stage, the person is encouraged to relax and have an internal focus. This stage is light and is characterized by the fluttering of the eyes of the person.

Stage 2 – Cataleptic State

This is the stage where the therapist moves to deepen the trance state. To know if a person is in this state, their eyes move from one side to the other.

Stage 3 – Somnambulistic State

This is the deepest stage in a trance. This is evidenced by the rolling up and down of eyes. This is the stage where suggestions are given and received at a

subconscious level and the person in some cases may not remember hearing them.

Applications for Hypnosis

Hypnosis has been known to have existed for as long as records have been able to show. According to the American Society for Clinical Hypnosis (ASCH), the use of modern clinical hypnotherapy goes back to the late 1700s. Since 1958, the use of hypnotherapy as a form of reliable therapy and tremendously increased. Hypnotherapy has found use in the modern world in different ways.

Hypnosis is used in various ways from mental health conditions to psychological and physical conditions. It is used on people suffering from chronic pain, depression, in sudden and acute illnesses, among others. Most health professionals nowadays recommend the use of hypnosis to treat their clients facing different conditions. Some of the uses of hypnosis include:

Treatment of phobias and fears

Unreasonable irrational fear or phobia of anything can be treated through the use of hypnotism. Many people struggle with phobias on a daily basis causing them not to function normally. Some of the fears that paralyze people are fear of spiders or arachnophobia, fear of enclosed spaces or claustrophobic, fear of heights, snakes, flying or agoraphobia; the fear of leaving home. A hypnotherapist will work with a patient while under hypnotism to try and identify the reasons for the fears and work on finding solutions to them.

Stopping smoking

There are people that want to stop their habit of smoking but it becomes very difficult. Most smokers attempt several times to quit smoking and find themselves falling back. Regardless of how committed a smoker is to cease smoking, it is not easy and they may need help to do so. A hypnotherapist may be able to help them. In a relaxed environment, the therapist works on understanding the various stress factors in the life of the client that may be causing fall back to smoking every time they stop. A therapist will go to the subconscious mind to find these reasons and make suggestions on how to stop. Once the subconscious mind has received the suggestions, it is then possible for the person to change their behavior by addressing the stress factors.

Weight loss

Many people struggle with weight loss and often feel they have lost the battle with food. With a qualified hypnotherapist, a person can learn more about their relationship with food. They also learn why they have no control over food and how to overcome their cravings. Through hypnosis, a therapist can suggest ways to overcome the destructive behavior and have a healthy relationship with food.

Boosting Confidence

There are many people that suffer from low self-esteem issues. To gain their confidence back, such people may require assistance. Most people lose confidence because they can seem to embrace their good qualities. A therapist can help such a person find their confidence by tapping on their best qualities that are subconsciously hidden.

Anesthesiology during surgery

There are cases where a surgeon may hire a hypnotherapist to supplement medical anesthesia. In some extremely rare cases, hypnotherapy has been used solely as an anesthetic during a surgical procedure. Some procedures that surgeons have used hypnotherapy include the removal of gall bladder, cesarean, hysterectomy, and amputation. There are patients that have sensitiveness and allergies of chemicals used in anesthesia. However, they can still benefit from health-improving and life-saving procedures through the use of hypnotherapy.

Hypnosis has been credited with improving the lives of many people. For cognitive-behavioral therapy, hypnotism has been known to help many patients transform their thoughts and in effect changing their outward behaviors for better.

Types of Hypnotherapy

There are many types of hypnotherapy techniques used in the world today. Depending on the need of the client and the therapist, different therapies can be used to treat a given condition. However, here we are going to discuss some of the most common hypnotherapies available.

Cognitive hypnotherapy

Cognitive hypnotherapy uses hypnosis to align the subconscious mind with the conscious one and the way it understands reality. Cognitive hypnotherapy is most useful for dealing with anxiety and phobias although it can also be used for other conditions.

Ericksonian hypnotherapy

Milton Erickson was a family psychiatrist and a medical hypnotist. He brought a revolution in the use of hypnotherapy to approach many issues. Ericksonian hypnotherapy uses storytelling to change behavior while the patient is under hypnosis.

Hypno-psychotherapy

This is an approach where hypnosis is used alongside another type of psychotherapy like mindfulness, psychodynamic, among others. Therapists that offer this kind of therapy often have training in psychotherapy as well as hypnotherapy. Through hypnotherapy, a therapist can be able to analyze more deep-seated issues and is helpful for individuals that feel they need more.

Hypnoanalysis

It draws from analytical psychotherapy concepts. Hypnoanalysis looks to know a trigger or a cause of an event that leads to the problem at hand. By understanding the root of a problem, the hypnotherapist helps in resolving negative associations that come from the issue. This process can take several sessions because it needs the patient and the therapist to build a trusting relationship.

Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP)

This is a technique hypnotherapist's use often in their practice. This technique is designed to help patients help themselves to reach their best state of mind and attain happiness.

Past life regression

Therapists that use this technique believe each person has a past and they use hypnosis to recover past memories. They believe these memories are able to help understand why a person is struggling with various issues and understand who they are better. This is a holistic therapy that works the mind,

spirit, body, and emotions. Past life regression is especially useful where a person feels stuck on certain issues of the past.

Solution-focused hypnotherapy

This kind of hypnotherapy focuses on the present. It looks at your current situation to determine your future would look like. This kind of therapy is centered on the client meaning the client takes the lead in the session while being guided by the hypnotherapist. In this session, a client focuses on setting goals and questioning techniques that one needs to get solutions. It is based on the premise that a client has inner strength and resources to draw upon and help themselves.

Suggestion hypnotherapy

In most types of hypnotherapy, suggestion techniques are employed. The premise behind the use of hypnotherapy is that when a person is in a hypnotic state, their subconscious is more open to suggestions or advice. During hypnotherapy, suggestions are given that are aimed at helping alter the thought pattern of the patient. If the aim is to transform behaviors, this technique is ideal and it also helps in dealing with anxiety and stress.

Timeline Therapy

Timeline therapy is based on the understanding that the memories of a person are stored in a linear pattern. A timeline therapist uses various techniques to help a person release beliefs that are limiting as well as negative emotions that are linked to their past. This technique is believed to be very helpful in dealing with depression, stress and anxiety disorders.

Chapter 12: Dark NLP

What is Neuro Linguistic Programming?

Neuro-Linguistic Programming has to do with the study of thoughts (neuro) and language (linguistic) in a systemic way and the scripts that run the life of an individual (programming).

It deals with the understanding and the development of the mind and the entire understanding of the language of the mind in relation to the way it is designed to function and the ways in which it is molded by the personal experiences of an individual. It is simply a study of a person's subjective reality.

A proper understanding of the language of the mind influences every aspect of a person's life from his relationship with others to his communication skills with friends and clients to the general outcome of a person's life. It is a holistic study that puts the spirit, body, past and present of an individual into consideration.

As Homo sapiens who are gifted with the ability to think, it is presumed that our most important function is the thought or the thinking function. NLP, however, brings one to the understanding of the fact that no thought process exists in a vacuum, as they are a product of a person's perspective. It has a presupposition of perception as reality and it holds that the things, we think are colored by the way we think.

For different individuals there are different ways of thinking and interpreting reality. What NLP does is assist in the understanding of these various

representational systems to help each person narrow down his own system. It helps in the understanding of the three different types of thinking patterns which are:

Visual: deals with both pictures and visual metaphors.

Auditory: sound (hearing).

Kinesthetic: deals with the five senses, as well as gut feelings.

In NLP, a person is thought to take absolute control of his mind and ultimately his life. Unlike what is obtainable in psychoanalysis, which places its focus on “why,” NLP presents a more practical approach with its focus on the “how.”

How NLP Works

If you are just coming across this topic for the first time, NLP may appear or seem like magic or hypnosis. When a person is undergoing therapy, this topic digs deep into the unconscious mind of the patient and filters through different layers of beliefs and the person's approach or perception of life to deduce the early childhood experiences that are responsible for a behavioral pattern.

In NLP, it is believed that everyone has the resources that are needed for positive changes in their own lives. The technique adopted here is meant to help in facilitating these changes.

Usually, when NLP is taught, it is done in a pyramidal structure. However, the most advanced techniques are left for those multi-thousand-dollar seminars. An attempt to explain this complicated subject is to state that the

NLPer (as those who use NLP will often call themselves) is always paying keen attention to the person they are working on/with.

Usually, there is a large majority of NLPers that are therapists and they are very likely to be well-meaning people. They achieve their aims by paying attention to those subtle cues like the movement of the eyes, flushing of the skin, dilation of the pupil and subtle nervous tics. It is easy for an NLP user to quickly determine the following:

- The side of the brain that the person uses predominantly.
- The sense (smell, sight, etc.) that is more dominant in a person's brain.
- The way the person's brain stores and makes use of information (the NLPer can deduce all this from the person's eye movement).
- When they are telling a lie or concocting information.

When the NLP user has successfully gathered all this information, they begin to mimic the client in a slow and subtle manner by not only taking on their body language, but also by imitating their speech and mannerisms, so that they begin to talk with the language patterns that are aimed at targeting the primary senses of the client. They will typically fake the social cues that will easily make someone let their guard down so that they become very open and suggestible.

For example, when a person's sense of sight is their most dominant sense, the NLPer will use a language that is very laden with visual metaphors to speak with them. They will say things like: "do you see what I am talking about?" or "why not look at it this way?" For a person that has a more dominant sense of hearing, he will be approached with an auditory language like: "listen to me" or "I can hear where you're coming from."

To create a rapport, the NLPer mirrors the body language and the linguistic patterns of the other person. This rapport is a mental and physiological state which a human being gets into when they lose guard of their social senses. It is done when they begin to feel like the other person who they are conversing with is just like them.

Once the NLPer have achieved this rapport, they will take charge of the interaction by leading it in a mild and subtle manner. Thanks to the fact that they have already mirrored the other person, they will now begin to make some subtle changes in order to gain a certain influence on the behavior of the person. This is also combined with some similar subtle language patterns which lead to questions and a whole phase of some other techniques.

At this point, the NLPer will be able to tweak and twist the person to whichever direction they so desire. This only happens if the other person can't deduce that there is something going on because they assume everything that is occurring is happening organically or that they have given consent to everything.

What this means is that it is quite hard to make use of NLP to get other people to act out of character, but it can be used to get a person to give responses within their normal range of character.

At this point, what the NLP user seeks to do may be to either elicit or anchor. When they are eliciting, they make use of both leading and language to get the person to an emotional state of say, sadness. Once they can elicit this state, they can then lead it on with a physical cue by touching the other person's shoulder for example.

According to theory, whenever the NLP user touches the person's shoulder in the same manner, the same emotional state will resurface if they do it again.

However, this is only made possible by the successful conditioning of the other person.

When undergoing NLP therapy, it is very possible for the therapist to adopt a content-free approach, which means the therapist can work effectively without taking a critical look at the problem or without even knowing about the problem at all. This means that there is room for privacy for the client as the therapist does not really need to be told about whichever event took place or whatever issue happened in the past.

Also, prior to the commencement of the therapy, there is an agreement which ensures that the therapist cannot disclose any information, hence the interaction between the therapist and the client remains confidential.

In NLP, there is the belief in the need for the perfection of the nature of human creation, so every client is encouraged to recognize the sensitivity of the senses and make use of them in responding to specific problems. As a matter of fact, NLP also holds the belief that it is possible for the mind to find cures to diseases and sicknesses.

The techniques employed by NLP have to do with a noninvasive, medicine-free therapy that enables the client to find out new ways of handling emotional issues such as low self-esteem, lack of confidence, anxiety and destructive relationship patterns. It is also a successful tool in effective bereavement counselling.

With its roots in the field of behavioral science, which was developed by Skinner, Pavlov and Thorndike, NLP makes use of the combination physiology and the unconscious mind to bring about change in the thought process and ultimately the behavior of a person.

Importance of NLP

NLP is not only necessary for the understanding of a person's being, but it also helps in the understanding of the way an individual is. It helps a person to get deep into the root cause of the problem, as well as the foundation of their being.

Here are some other reasons why NLP is important:

It helps people take responsibility for the things that they feel they may not be able to control. With the help of NLP, it is possible for a person to change the way they react to events of the past and have a certain level of control over their future.

It is very important for people to be aware of the body language of the members of their inner circle, as well as those who they seek to do business with. With NLP, it is possible to make use of language with both control and purpose, and with this it is possible to have control over your life.

Remember, you cannot expect to make the same mistakes using the same mindset and hope to get different results. During an NLP session, the focus is placed entirely on the client as they are made the subject. This helps a lot because at the point where a person can deal with his or herself as a person, they gain more clarity into his or her dealings with other people.

It helps to improve finance, sales performance, marriage, health issues, parenting, customer service and every other aspect and phase of life. This is because it helps in the holistic improvement of an individual and when a person is whole, his interactions and relationship with himself and other people become whole as well.

It assists in targeting your beliefs, thoughts and values and helps with the targeting of a person's brain functions, as well as developing certain

behaviors. It also shapes the way these behaviors metamorphoses into habits and how the habits change to actions which in turn comes as results.

NLP is applicable in different vocations and professions. This is a tool that is very important in the mastery of sales, personal development experts and self-help, teaching, communication, parenting and other facets of life.

NLP Techniques

Here are some of the techniques that are employed in the users of NLP:

Dissociation

Everyone experiences a bad day when a situation ruins it and gives one a bad feeling. This may be an experience that drowns your spirit every time you are faced with it. Also, it may be a certain nervous feeling that comes at any point that you have to address an audience. It could be a feeling of shyness that comes whenever you need to approach a certain (special) person.

Although it may seem as though this feeling of shyness, sadness or nervousness is automatic and unstoppable, what the NLP technique of dissociation offers are ways to get over these feelings.

Get to know about the emotion that you wish to overcome. Whether it is a feeling of discomfort, anger or dislike for a certain situation.

Imagine the possibility of teleportation and looking back at yourself going through the same situation, but this time from an observer's point of view.

Take note of the dramatic change that occurs in the feelings.

To get an extra boost for your morale, think about floating out of your body and watching yourself. This means that you will now be looking at yourself while your other self is also looking at yourself. What this double

dissociation attempts to do is to take away all the negative emotions in all possible minor situations.

Content Reframing

This technique is useful for all the times you feel like you are trapped in a negative or helpless situation. With the help of reframing, you will be able to get rid of all negative situations by becoming empowered by interpreting the meaning of the situation into becoming a positive thing.

Take a situation where your relationship ended for instance. Although it may seem as if it is an awful situation when one looks at it on the surface, what about the possibility of those hidden benefits of being single? Think of the fact that you are now open to meeting and interacting with new people, which means that it is possible for you to get into a new relationship. This means that you are now free to do whatever you want to do at whatever time you want to do it. From the last relationship that ended, you must have learned some valuable lessons that will eventually be useful to you in your subsequent relationship(s).

It is very possible to panic or get thrown into fear in certain situations. Instead of focusing on fear, you can sway your focus by reframing. This will contribute to helping you make some even-handed and responsible decisions.

Anchoring yourself

This process of creating a neurological connection between the ringing of a bell and the attitude of salivating is known as a conditioned response. These responses to stimulus anchors can also be used on humans.

The result of anchoring oneself is that a person gets to link a desired positive emotional response with a specific sensation or a phrase. When you can select a positive emotion or a thought and intentionally link it to a gesture,

you will be able to trigger the anchor at every point you feel low, so you will be able to change your feelings immediately. Here are some ways of anchoring yourself:

Take note of the feelings you want to experience. It could be a feeling of happiness, confidence, calmness, etc. Decide on the part of your body where you would love to place the anchor. This could be a certain action like pulling your earlobe, squeezing your fingernail or touching your knuckle. With this physical touch, you will be able to trigger the desired positive feeling whenever you want to. This has nothing to do with the part of the body that you have chosen, all that needs to be done is create that connection between the unique touch and the feelings. You do not have to make this touch for anything else besides the feeling.

Think about a certain time in the past when you had the same feelings you are experiencing at a given moment. Reminisce on the time you felt the same way then float into your body by looking through your eyes so that you will be able to replay and relive the memory.

Once this is done, you can make some adjustments to your body language to match with the memory and the state of mind. When you are reliving the memory, make sure you can see, hear and feel everything the way you remember it. If you can do this, the feeling will come back, just as it will when you tell a funny story from the past to your friend.

Keep in mind that you will typically begin to laugh over again as you tell the story because while you get into the story, you will create some mental association to the story and relive the experience.

While you are going back to this memory, pull, touch or squeeze that part of your body that you had earlier chosen. If you do this, you will notice that the

feeling will heighten while you are reliving the memory. Once the emotional state gets to its peak and begins to wear off, you can then release the touch.

This touch will create a certain neurological response that will be a trigger for the state whenever you touch that spot again. So, in order to feel this state again, all you need to do is to touch yourself again in the same way.

To get an even stronger response, you can think of another memory from the past where you had that same feeling and go back and relive it from your own perspective. Anchor that same state as you have done before. Every time you add another memory, this anchor will gain more potency so that it will trigger an even stronger response.

Whenever you feel the need to change your mood, you can revisit this technique.

Hypnotists make use of NLP to get a great selection of methods that they can make use of during the process of hypnosis. When the process of NLP is being used, the hypnotist will use thought patterns that are causing problems for the subject. This will save both parties a lot of time as opposed to the use of the process of suggestion.

Let's take the process used in stress relief or in dealing with excessive appetite for example. This thought pattern will be used to get rid of any problem that the subject is facing, and when it is used by a certified hypnotist or a psychologist it will prove to be a very effective technique.

Chapter 13: Body Language

The power of persuasion means nothing more than using mental abilities to form words and feelings used to convince other people to do things they may or may not want to do spontaneously. Some people are more capable to persuade than others and some people are easier to persuade than others.

The ease of persuading other people is directly connected to their current mental or emotional state. Someone who is lonely or tired is easier to persuade, simply because their defense mechanism is lowered. Someone who is momentarily needy may be easier to persuade than someone who has a strong sense of self-worth. People who are at a low point in their lives are easy prey for others who might try to persuade them to do something they might not usually do.

The first step in persuasion involves the idea of reciprocating. If a person does something nice for someone else, then the receiving usually feels the need to do something good in return.

As an example, if someone helps their elderly neighbor carry in groceries from the car, that neighbor might feel obligated to bake homemade cookies for that person. A coworker who helps complete a project is more likely to receive assistance when it is needed. Many people do nice things for others all the time without expecting anything in return. The person who does nice things for people and then mentions some little favor that can be done in return may be someone to watch closely. He or she lacks in genuine purpose.

There are ways to improve the power of persuasion. Just like any other trait, it can be made stronger by following a few strategies and by regular practice.

Did you know that your body speaks more eloquently than words? Body language is at work constantly whether you are aware of it or not. When you want to master the art of persuasion, you need not only to understand (and read accurately) body language, but also learn to use it to drive your point home.

Body language is a mix of hand and facial gestures, posture and overall appearance. You can decide to use these to your advantage and you will make people to do what you want without them realizing that you are actually controlling the outcome of the discussion.

Why people are persuasive

What makes a person convincing? Why are they persuasive, and you aren't? There is no single, short answer to that question.

Confidence is the absolute most important aspect when it comes to persuasion.

There's no doubt it's been scientifically proven that it's easier to persuade people when you're confident, when you believe in yourself and trust the message you are passing to the other person. That's because through your attitude, people convince themselves you are an authority on the topic and they'll listen to you, because they have no knowledge or experience, but you seem to have both.

In this framework, it's also crucial to understand that humans are doubtful creatures. We're not very confident and we don't really believe in our own abilities or even experience, so when someone comes along and appears to be confident and to know more, we follow them like a herd of dim sheep.

Persuasion is just as much about the impression you leave upon people as it is about your actual skill. Like many other times in life, appearances are more “real” than actual reality, because that is all other people will ever know about you. It doesn’t matter if deep inside, you’re insecure or you don’t really think you know what you’re doing.

On the outside, you’re this dazzling, confident creature that can persuade anyone into anything because you’ve mastered all the important contributing factors: confidence, eye contact, body language, manner of speaking, tone, facial expressions, as well as your general demeanor.

Confidence

How do you think so many scammers make a living?

Now, I’m not advocating that you try to trick people, but I am simply suggesting that we have to work on our confidence. You’ll notice that every single person you find convincing has some sort of authoritative stance. It’s like their presence demands attention and respect.

Eye contact

Eye contact is a classic, natural display of dominance. It’s a technique that’s even present in the animal kingdom. Be extremely mindful when it comes to “using your eyes” since they are the first tool you can use during an encounter and the way you decide to use them can determine the outcome of such a meeting. Eye contact can intimidate, eye contact can attract and push your imagination, create desire and interest, use them consciously and effectively.

Body language

Do you know how often people underestimate body language, or just ignore it outright? Body language is an incredible tool for persuasion. People are

always advised to display open body language, like facing your audience, making sure not to keep your arms crossed against your chest, keep your palms open, and all sorts of little tips that we'll discuss at length.

What you maybe haven't heard is that in order to be effectively persuasive, you also need to take note of and use the body language of the person you're talking to. You need to observe carefully your counterpart and by detecting his/her body language predict his/her attitude towards you in real time.

Manner of speaking

Your choice of words is overwhelmingly important when attempting to convince someone, because it must be very deliberate. There's a clear strategy behind verbal persuasion, and it relies on appealing to the person's emotions.

The way you speak and what you say are both equally important, because even though your message may be perfect, if the delivery is lacking, it won't do much good. We've already established that speaking with authority is half the battle, but you also have to speak the right words, in order to win it. If your aim is to persuade, go to the meeting fully prepared about the topic and try some rehearsal before that, so you will have the possibility to observe the counterpart attitude and response while you are talking, in real time, and adjust your speech and body language.

Tone

Continuing on the idea that the way you say things is vastly important, let's talk about tone and why it matters. In fact, I lied when I said tone and message are equally important: tone weighs much more on a person's impression.

If someone has a very somber voice, a serious, measured tone, and an equally severe facial expression, it almost doesn't matter what they're saying

— you're going to assume it's grave and important; the actual words or what they mean matters less. A joke told with a serious tone is not perceived as funny at all.

Facial expressions

Facial expression goes hand in hand with body language and eye contact and is similarly important to tonality. Creating the impression that you mean what you say involves your face, because it will be the very first to betray you or, on the contrary, help you enforce your message.

What you can obtain through persuasion

Persuasion is a very powerful and very valuable skill that everyone should have and learn how to master and use in a positive constructive way. It comes in handy throughout your life in virtually any aspect of your existence, from sweet-talking your way into free movie tickets to convincing your boss you deserve a raise.

Your relationship with your spouse

Far from being unfair or manipulative, having the ability to convince your significant other can actually improve your relationship because you can have less discussions about your disagreements and lack of compromise. Now you can use all that extra time and energy implementing your superior decisions.

Your relationship with your kids

Persuasion skills and indisputable power and authority to convince your kids to actually listen to you and follow your advice is an essential educational tool. Master daily affirmation about your parenting abilities, work on your confidence when talking to them, use eye contact and body language in the most difficult moments to attract their attention and stop their negative

behavior. You will realize that your mental attitude will lead and guide your body language. Guide your thinking and master it to obtain the highest level of positive persuasion with your children.

Your relationship with your friends

We all have that one friend who always makes terrible life choices and no one can get through to them and steer them towards the right path...except you, that is. If you have influence and persuasion skills, don't keep them for yourself. Use them for good, not evil.

Get paid what you deserve

Negotiating falls under persuasion, absolutely everyone should master this skill. You need to have the ability to convince your 'opponent' that you deserve an increase and you should have it.

This advice mostly applies to the workplace, where – let's be real – no boss will ever willingly part with their money and hand it over to you. This is the reason why you must convince them to do it. You've earned it, you deserve it, and it's rightfully yours. You have to ask for it, but you have to know how, and persuasive skills help with that.

Start with your daily affirmations about the concept of abundance and being enough to prepare your mindset; "you deserve more and are made for more" and it is just to your counterparty, your boss, to accept it and see it. Master daily affirmations to prepare your subconscious mind to fully accept this idea you are more and deserve more.

Prepare yourself for the meeting and visualize the situation, get emotionally involved, experience the conversation and feel it, this will help you prepare to get out of your comfort zone.

Work carefully on your body language, make straight eye contact at the beginning of the meeting and use a soft but precise tone, outdistance the words, the sentence and prepare the speech so that the “opponent” will perceive and feel your confidence.

Earn the trust and respect of your boss

You can accomplish that by becoming their go-to person. Offer your bright ideas, come up with solutions to problems the company is facing, persuade them to implement your suggestions and that they’re the contribution the company needs right now. In time, you will reap the rewards when your boss comes to consult with you first.

Be a good leader to your colleagues

Your persuasive abilities will prove to be invaluable and will bring you to a position like this if you want people to respect you, your work, and your ideas. It should be obvious for everyone that your way is the right way and there will be minimal dissent if you have the necessary influence over them.

Get important information

If you can talk the talk well enough, you can basically convince anyone to tell you anything. Preferred customer sales dates from sales attendants, and even gossip from your friends, you get the idea. Sweet talk yourself into perks and valuable info. Follow the steps above listed and when it comes to the meeting with people, remember not to ask direct questions, but let me talk about the topic and be aligned with the interlocutor without being assertive or disruptive about the topic otherwise the person will never open up and a rapport will never form.

How to Persuade People

The ability to influence someone during a conversation and make them take a decision is necessary in order to become one of the most important people in the world today.

This ability is useful in business negotiations, and in everyday life.

In general, the impact on people is not so obvious. The basic idea is that people's behavior is often guided by their subconscious simple desires. And to achieve your goals, you need to understand the simple desires of people, and then make your interlocutor passionately wish for something.

It should be noted that in order to influence people you should NOT try to impose or force them to make a hasty decision, or to go for something they did not even consider.

The first step is to try to reach a mutually beneficial cooperation.

If you are willing to put yourself in the shoes of another person from whom you want to get something and understand his/her thoughts, then you do not have to worry about your relationship with the person.

The secret lies in the ability to help the self-affirmation of the interlocutor.

What does this mean?

We have to make sure that your companion looks decent in his own eyes. He needs to feel at ease, you need to be able to establish a rapport whereby the person feels she/he can trust you. The person needs to feel she/he can trust you and establish a rapport, that he can open up himself to his interlocutor without feeling that the latter has a specific expectation on him.

Moreover, in order to have influence and control over another person, you must know their personality and behavioral traits. Most importantly, learn

how to use this knowledge to master the specific methods and techniques of influence and control the behavior of the other, on the basis of his outlook, character, personality type and other important psychological features.

To help people to look beyond the limits of consciousness, professionals use a variety of methods and techniques. One of the most effective of these is hypnosis.

This method can directly influence the psyche, whose essence consists of the introduction of human narrowed state of consciousness, makes it is easy to control someone else's suggestion and management.

The ability to manage people, primarily, is to combine the knowledge of human psychology and their personal characteristics. They help to change their own behavior so that this change will cause the desired reaction in others.

Try to be more observant while communicating; it will help you better understand the individual psychological characteristics of the interlocutor. Based on this knowledge, try using the following methods and techniques that will help you manage people correctly and efficiently.

Chapter 14: Deception

This type of dark psychology shares some similarities to manipulation in the sense that a lot of deceptions are disseminated to achieve the desirable.

What is Deception?

How can deception be defined? Deception, alongside subterfuge, mystification, feign, deceit and beguilement, is an art employed by an agent to spread beliefs in the subject which are untrue, or truths coated with lies. Deception involves numerous things, example dissimulation, sleight of mind, suppression, cover-up, propaganda etc. The agents win the favor of the subjects, they trust him and are unsuspecting of his propensity to be dubious. He is able to control the subject's mind having won their confidence and trust. The subjects have no doubts on the agent's words, in fact the subjects trust the agent completely and possibly plan their affairs based on the agent's statements.

The deception practiced by the agent can have grave consequential effects if discovered by the subjects. How? The subjects will not be disposed to hearing his words, neither will they accept them anymore, no wonder the agent must be skilled at the deception technique. He must create an escape route to cover up if things boomerang and still retain the trust his subjects have in him.

Deception breaks the laws that govern relationships and it has been known to affect negatively the hopes that come with relationships. Deception does occur every now and then and this could result in feelings of doubt as well as disloyalty among the two people who are in the relationship. Nearly everyone desires to have an honest discussion with their partner; if they find out that their partner has however been dishonest, they, in turn, need to find out how to make use of confusion and distraction so as to get the dependable and honest information that they are in need of. Trust, on the other hand, would be lost in the relationship, making it hard to restore the relationship to its former glory.

The individual on the receiving end of both dishonesty and betrayal would always wonder about the things their partner was telling them, thinking about whether the story was true or false. As a result of this new doubt, most relationships will be brought to an end once the agent realizes their partner's dishonesty.

Types of Deception

Deception is a type of communication based on omissions and falsehood so as to convince the subject of the world that best fits the agent. Seeing that there is a need for communication to take place, there will likewise be various kinds of deception that could take place. As per the Interpersonal Deception Theory, there are 5 different sorts of deception. A few of these have been revealed in other types of mind control, showing there can be some similarities.

The 5 major types of deception include:

1. Lies: This occurs when the agent manufactures information or provides information that is not similar to the truth. They will give this information to the unsuspecting individual as the truth and the individual will then see this lie to be fact indeed. However, this can be unsafe as the person being given this false information would have no idea about the falsehood; most likely, if the subject understood that they were being given information that was not true, they would not be on talking terms with the agent and no deception would have occurred;
2. Equivocations: This is the point at which the agent will make statements that are differing, unclear, or not direct, such that the subject becomes confused and does not understand what is going on. Also, it can help the agent to preserve their reputation, saving face if the subject later returns to blame them for the falsehood;
3. Concealments: It is the most frequently used form of deception. It refers to when the agent leaves out information that is related or critical to the situation on purpose, or they display any such behavior that would cover up information that is of importance to the subject for that exact situation. The agent won't have lied straightforwardly to the subject, they will, however, have ensured that the vital information required never gets to the subject;
4. Exaggeration: Exaggeration occurs when the agent emphasizes too much on a fact or stretch the truth just a little so as to twist the story to suit them. Although the agent may not directly be lying to the subject, they will manipulate the situation such that it appears as though it is a bigger deal than it actually is, or they may twist the truth to make the subject do whatever they need them to do;
5. Understatements: This is the inverse of the exaggeration tool in the sense that the agent will present part of the fact as less important, telling the subject

that an event is less of a deal than it actually is when in it really could be what decides whether the subject gets the opportunity to graduate or gets a huge promotion. As such, the agent will be able to return to the subject saying they had no idea how huge a deal their omission was, they get to keep their reputation leaving the subject to look petty if they protest.

The above are only some of the forms of deception that there are. To reach their final goal, the agent of deception will make use of any means that is available to them, same as what happens in other types of mind control. These methods mentioned are however not limiting, as the agent would use any means to get to their goal.

The agent of deception (who is going to be good at what he does) can be dangerous since the subject will be unable to know what is the truth or lie.

Reasons for Deception

It has been confirmed by researchers that there are 3 major reasons for deceptions found in intimate relationships. These consist of motives focused on partner, motives focused in self-focused, and motives focused on a relationship.

In the case of the partner focused motives, the agent will use deception to keep their partner from harm. Also, they could make use of falsehood to save their partner's relationship with an outsider, thereby protecting the subject from worry, or keep the subject's confidence intact. This reason for deception is often seen to be of benefit to the relationship and socially respectful.

In comparison with some of the other reasons for deception, this one is not as bad. If the agent finds out about something terrible that the subject's closest friend said about them, the agent may remain quiet about it. Although this is a

type of deception, it not only saves the subject's friendship but also keeps the subject from feeling terrible for themselves. This is the type of deception that is often found in most relationships and also if found out, might not cause a lot of damage. To protect their partner, a larger percentage of couples would use this form of deception to protect their partner.

The self-focused motive for deception is not thought to be as noble as the partner focused motive for deception, and as such, is not as acceptable as the other methods. Rather than stressing over the subject and how they are doing, the agent is going to simply consider how they are doing, and about their very own self-image. Here, the agent makes use of deception so as to protect the agent from criticism, shame or anger. Using this form of deception in a relationship is typically seen to be a very serious issue and offense than in the case of partner-focused deception. This is because the agent chooses to act in a manner that is self-centered instead of working to protect their relationship or their partner.

Lastly, the relationship focused motive of deception. The agent makes use of this form of deception to prevent any harm coming to the relationship basically by staying away from deception relational disturbance and quarrel. This type of deception will either help or harm the relationship depending on the circumstances. This form of deception could be harmful because it makes thing rather complex. For instance, if you do not reveal just how you feel about dinner to prevent a quarrel, this might just help the relationship. Then again, if you keep to yourself the fact that you took part in an extra-marital relationship the situation is only going to become more complex.

No matter the motive of deception in the relationship, deception is not advised. The agent is holding back details that may be vital to the subject; when the subject discovers it, distrust in the agent will set in and they are left to ponder what other details the agent is keeping from them. The subject

would however, not be too worried for the reason behind the deception, they will simply be vexed that they have not been told some things, causing a split in the relationship. Usually, it is best to stick with truthfulness in the relationship and not encircle yourself with individuals who don't put deception into practice in your social circle.

Detecting Deception

An individual that has interest in preventing deception to avoid the mind games that come with it should learn how to detect deception when it is occurring. It is not usually easy to know when deception is going on as there are really no pointers to rely on; except the agent makes a mistake and either tells an obvious lie or says something that the subject knows to be false. While it might be difficult for the agent to mislead the subject for a long period of time, it is something that will usually happen regularly between individuals who know one another.

Deception can place a heavy weight on the cognitive thinking of the agent because they will need to find a way to bring to remembrance all the conversations they have had with the subject on the situation, so the story stays believable and dependable. Any mistake will bring the subject to the realization they are being deceived. The stress involved in keeping the story believable, is much, and as such, the agent is very much likely to spill out details that will give the subject a clue that they are being deceived either through nonverbal or verbal signs.

It is believed by researchers that detecting deception is a process that is cognitive, fluid, and also complicated and which will regularly differ based on the message that is being passed across. As indicated by the Interpersonal Deception Theory, deception is an iterative and dynamic process of influence

between the agent, who attempts to manipulate the information and how they need it with the goal that it varies from the truth, and the subject, who will at that point try to know if the message is true or false. The agent's activities will be in relation to the actions that the subject makes after they get the information. All through this trade, the agent will uncover the nonverbal and verbal information that will signal the subject into the deceit. Eventually, the subject might have the capacity to tell that the agent has been lying to them.

It is not all the time that the subject will be able to know the agent is deceiving them. Aldert Vrij, a notable deception scholar, said that there are no specific nonverbal behaviors related with deception. There are, however, some nonverbal behaviors that can be related with the act of deception. These signs can be displayed also when other behaviors are present, making it hard to know whether the agent is being deceptive, except they tell a complete lie.

Mark Frank, another scholar of deception, suggests another idea of deception that contains how it very well may be detected at the subject's cognitive level. When deception takes place, an agent requires a cognizant behavior that is intentional. Hence, being attentive to words and focusing on the nonverbal behavior that is going on are both basic when trying to decide whether or not you are being deceived. If somebody asks a question and the agent isn't happy to answer it straightforwardly, rather makes use of some type of disturbance, with a poor logical structure, repeats words, and uses less time answering that exact question, they are most definitely lying.

Essentially, there are only a few signs that can be used to try and find out when deception is taking place. There are a couple of nonverbal signs that may be when an agent is being deceptive; they may, however, have some other issue, for example, anxiety or shyness.

Primary Components of Deception

Most times, the subject won't realize that these components have taken place except if the agent has told an obvious lie or been caught being deceptive.

These are parts that will be later known if the agent is making use of the deception process rightly. The 3 primary parts of deception are camouflage, disguise, and simulation.

Camouflage

The major component of deception is camouflage. It is the point at which the agent is attempting to hide the truth in such a way that the subject is unaware of the fact they are missing. Usually, this method is used when the agent gives information that is only partly true. Until these facts are uncovered one way or the other, the subject will not know that camouflaging has taken place. The agent will be so talented in hiding facts, with the goal that it is not easy for the subject to realize the deception has taken place by chance.

Disguise

This is yet another component which can be found in the process of deception. In this case, the agent tries to pass across the idea that they are something or another person. This occurs in such instances when the agent holds back details about themselves, for example, their genuine name, what they do for a living, the people they have been with, and what they do when they go out. This is more than simply changing the clothing that a person wears in a play or film; when disguise is employed in the process of deception, the agent is attempting to deceive the agent by changing their entire personality and appearing as somebody else.

There are quite a few models that can show the use of disguise in the deception process. The first is in relation to the agent masking themselves, often as someone else, with the goal that they are not recognized. The agent may do this so as to be accepted into a group of individuals that do not like him, change their persona to make somebody like them, or for the purpose of achieving their selfish interests. Now and again, the word disguise can simply be referring to the agent masking the real nature of a proposal with expectations of hiding an impact that is not agreeable with that proposal. Most times this type of disguise is found in propaganda or political spin.

Disguise can be harmful for the reason that it is concealing the genuine nature of what is happening. When important details are held back from the subject, it clouds their thinking since they don't have the correct information to settle on logical decisions. While the subject may imagine that they are settling on logical decisions all on their own, the agent has, however, removed important information that may change the subject's decision.

Simulation

This is the third component of deception. Simulation involves presenting false information to the subject. Three methods that can be used in simulation include; mimicry, fabrication, and distraction.

In mimicry, otherwise defined as the copying of another model, the agent will without thinking be giving a picture of something that is like themselves. They may have a plan that is like another person's and rather than giving credit to the other person, they will say that the plan is all their doing. This type of simulation can happen regularly through sound-related, visual, and other methods.

Fabrication is yet another means of deception. Here, the agent takes something found in reality and changes it until it becomes different. They may

tell a tale that did not take place or add to a true story to make it better or worse. While the heart of the story might be true, agreed they got a poor score on a test, it will have some additional things put in, for example the teacher gave them a poor score intentionally. While in reality, the agent got a poor score because they failed to read.

Lastly, distraction is another type of simulation in deception. In this case, the agent makes an effort to get the subject to concentrate on other things, but not the truth; usually done by offering the subject with something that may be more tempting than the truth that has been hidden from them.

For instance, if a cheating spouse thinks the wife is beginning to suspect, he may bring home a precious stone ring to distract her from the matter even for a short while. The problem with this method is that it is not usually long-lasting and as such, the agent has to look for a new way to trick the subject if they are to keep the process going.

Chapter 15: The Role of Defense

To avoid falling victim to manipulators, you have to build your defenses so that you are prepared for any manipulative strategies that they may try to use on you. The best way to build your defenses is by taking steps to improve your self-esteem and your willpower. However, as a point of caution, you should be very careful about how you build your defenses because you don't want to create restrictions that will keep you from living a fulfilled life.

For example, as you try to guard against manipulation, you can't act out of fear. You can't hide from the world just to avoid scenarios where someone might want to take advantage of you. Remember that the world is full of people with dark personality traits who may harbor malicious intentions, so acting out of fear won't protect you from anyone. In fact, it will just make you more of a target. As you build your defenses, make sure that start on the premise that you are willing to confront manipulators head on, and you will never run away or recoil. If you act out of fear, you lose by default.

The steps to raise self-esteem: To help you build your defenses, we will discuss the eight steps that you have to take in order to raise your self-esteem and to increase your willpower by extension.

Acceptance

Acceptance is about assenting to the reality of a given situation. It's about recognizing that a certain condition or process is what it is, even if it's characterized by high levels of discomfort and negativity. It's about consciously submitting to the fact that something cannot be changed, and that its reality is not subject to interpretation. It's about making peace with the situation that you are in.

Acceptance is the opposite of denial. Even the most rational among us tend to be in denial about lots of things in their lives, which are settled facts in real sense. Denial can be a coping mechanism, one that can keep us from being overwhelmed by the reality of a given situation. However, denial does us more harm than good, because unless we can accept something, we can't change it, and we will be stuck looking for alternative interpretations and explanations for our prevailing circumstances.

Without acceptance, the door remains wide open for malicious people to exploit us. Take the example of a patient who is told that he/she is terminally ill. After seeking the opinions of several medical professionals and getting the same diagnosis, the patient is still left with the choice of either accepting or denying the situation. The one who accepts it will make peace, and try to make the best out of what little time he has. The one who stays in denial will become susceptible to tricksters who may offer "alternative cures," and he may end up losing all his savings paying such people so that in the end, he leaves his family with nothing. That is an extreme example, but it perfectly illustrates why acceptance is important in avoiding manipulation, even if the reality may seem too painful to accept.

The most crucial form of acceptance is self-acceptance. It refers to the state of being satisfied with yourself, the way you currently are. Self-acceptance is a kind of covenant that you make with yourself, to validate, support, and appreciate who you are instead of constantly criticizing yourself and wishing you were someone else. Most people have trouble accepting themselves as they are. We are all in a constant strive for self-improvement. We want to be more successful, to be wealthier, to be more attractive, or to be perceived more positively by others. Even the most accomplished among us have issues with self-acceptance.

In many ways, the desire to be a better version of yourself can be seen as a positive thing; it can help you study harder in school, work harder to earn a promotion at work or exercise more to get in shape. However, the problem is there is always room for improvement, so no matter how high you ascend, the dissatisfaction will always be there, and it will make you vulnerable to manipulation by people who want to take advantage of your desires.

To defend against manipulation, you have to accept your reality, and you have to accept yourself. People tend to think that if they accept themselves, they won't try to improve – that couldn't be further from the truth. Accepting yourself means owning up to your flaws, and that gives you control over your life. With self-acceptance, attempts at self-improvement would come from within, so when you decide to change, you will be doing it for yourself and not for anyone else.

Increase awareness

Increasing your awareness means having a higher level of alertness when it comes to understanding what's going on in your environment. It means paying

close attention to your surroundings, and to the way, people behave around you. The higher your level of awareness, the better you will be when it comes to adapting to your surroundings and understanding the motivations of the people you interact with.

When you become more aware, you will be able to catch on quick when people try to manipulate you. Many of us tend to be preoccupied with our own thoughts that we hardly ever notice the cues of the people we interact with. We tend to live life on autopilot, so when other people try to seize control over our lives, we only notice it when it's too late. If you increase your awareness, you will be equipped with the skills necessary to identify all the red flags, and you will be able to stop most manipulators on their tracks before they can do any real harm.

The first step towards increasing your awareness is to learn about the tendencies of manipulative people. Reading this book puts you ahead of the curve; you now know enough to be able to spot people with ill motives, but you should understand that the worst kinds of manipulators are very good at concealing their motives, so you have to keep working on increasing your awareness.

To be truly aware of manipulative people, you have to approach all interactions with some levels of skepticism. We are not telling you to turn into a paranoid person who doesn't let anyone in; we are just saying that you should take a deeper look each person you interact with. Try to study their body language and their words, and try to see if they are trying to hide something.

Apart from increasing your awareness, you have to increase your self-awareness as well. Many people confuse those two things, but them entirely different concepts. Self-awareness is about understanding yourself. It's about having a clear concept of your own personality. You have to examine yourself and figure out what your strengths and weaknesses are, what your values and motivations are, and what kind of thoughts and emotions you are likely to have in specific situations. Self-awareness helps you understand both who you are and how other people perceive you.

Self-awareness works as a defense against manipulation because when you know who you truly are, it becomes more difficult for someone to alter your thoughts and perceptions. If you have strong and well-articulated values, it becomes harder for a manipulator to get you to abandon those values. People who like self-awareness are more likely to be gaslighted or to be subjected to other forms of mind control.

If you end up in a relationship with a manipulative person, self-awareness can help you keep your identity. Manipulators will try to tell you what to think and how to behave, but if you are self-aware, you will experience cognitive dissonance, and your brain will push back against any attempts at manipulation.

Detach with love

Detaching with love is a defense against manipulation that is most commonly used by people who have loved ones who suffer from substance abuse problems. Even though it was conceptualized to help people deal with addicts, it can also work when you are dealing with manipulators.

Detaching with love is about showing love and compassion for others without taking responsibility for their actions. For example, if you have a family member who is a drug addict, the way it works is that you try to support them and encourage them to get clean, but you let them make their own decisions, and you let them suffer the consequences of their actions. If the addict doesn't come home, you don't waste your time looking for them in the seedy parts of the city, you stay at home, and you do the things that benefit you and make you happy.

The point of detaching with love is to stop trying to control other people's lives, even if you are doing it for their own good. The idea is that you accept that people are different from you and that they have their own free will.

Detaching from love can defend you from manipulation in many ways. There are manipulators who want to exploit you by making you responsible for them. We have mentioned several times in the book that some malicious people will take the submissive position in a relationship because they want your world to revolve around them. They want you to give them all your attention; that is how they control you.

When you detach with love, you will learn to stop fixing everyone's problems. So, when the manipulator tries to play the victim in order to gain your sympathy, you will keep doing whatever is in your best interest, and you will tell him or her to take responsibility for his or her own actions.

Some manipulators may take up self-destructive habits because they want to dominate you by making you clean up after them. When they do this, you can detach with love by letting them follow the paths they have taken, no matter

where they lead them. If they are causing you harm, you can get away from them, but leave your door open. If they find the right path in the future and regain control over their own lives, you can let them in again. You have to make it very clear, through your words and actions that you will let them direct their own lives, and you won't take any responsibility for them.

Detaching with love is about accepting others for who they are, and respecting them enough to let them be in charge of changing their own lives. When you feel responsible for someone, and he makes a choice that harms you both, often times, you will react with fear, anger, or anxiety. To detach with love, you have to learn to let go of those negative emotions.

Manipulators count on the fact that you will react in a predictable way to their machinations, but when you detach with love, you learn to calm yourself down and think about your role in the other person's life before you take any sort of action. This will keep you from falling into the traps that manipulators will set for you.

Detaching with love builds your self-esteem because it allows you to put your own needs ahead of those of the people that try to manipulate you.

Build self-esteem

You can defend against manipulation by building your self-esteem in the old school way; using self-help techniques. People tend to discount classic self-help techniques, but they actually work. They won't solve all your problems, but they'll make you feel worthy enough and give you the strength to resist many forms of manipulation.

The oldest self-help technique in the book is to try to be nicer to yourself. This usually involves being kind to yourself and being your own cheerleader. It also involved challenging the negative thought and assumptions that you make every day. It also involved treating yourself as you would treat a close friend.

If your friend had certain fears and doubts and he came to you for advice, you would try to tell him the truth, but you won't be harsh with him. Similarly, you should embrace your reality even if it's uncomfortable, but you shouldn't beat yourself up even if you have made mistakes. Even when things are gloomy, you should try to talk yourself up.

We all have to draw strength from somewhere. That means that if you don't try to build your own self-esteem, you will look for external sources of strength and motivation, but the problem with that is that people have their own interests and agendas, and your wellbeing isn't always their biggest priority. When you look for strength from external sources, you open yourself up for manipulation.

You can also build your self-esteem by avoiding comparing yourself with other people. Manipulators are very good at preying on your desires. When you desire the things that other people have, manipulators see this as an opportunity to gain control over you. Most people who end up getting conned are usually pulled in because they are blinded by their desires, and they want what other people have.

To build your self-esteem, you have to do your own thing. You should pursue your own interests and create your own goals. Never live your life by

measuring it against someone else's. That is a surefire way of obliterating your self-esteem, introducing negative emotions into your life, and opening the door for all sorts of predatory characters.

You can also build your self-esteem by being careful about the kind of company you keep. Surround yourself with positive people who make you happy, and try to keep away from the kind of people who are constantly negative, or those who unnerves you.

You can also build your self-esteem by exercising more. Studies show that when we exercise, we are more motivated, more confident, and we feel more in control of our lives. Working out makes our bodies release feel-good hormones, which can help boost our self-esteem.

Change reactions

To defend against manipulation, there is one important thing that you need to realize; the only person you can control is you. You have absolutely no control over what other people might say, or how they might act. Your reaction is the only thing that is within your control. Even if you are a victim, and someone limits your choices considerably, at the end of the day, the power to choose how to act or react is still in your control.

Think of all the civil rights icons you learned about in school; all of these people were victimized in one way or another, but they came out on top because of the way they chose to react to that victimization. So, to defend against manipulation, you have to change the way you react to the words and actions of manipulators.

First, when someone does something to set you off, try to approach that situation with calm rationality. Focus on resolving the conflict instead of debating whose fault it is. When you react with anger in response to an accusation, or if you start passing the blame back and forth, you are playing right into the hand of the manipulator. When you change the way you react, you will be creating your own rules for the game that the manipulator is trying to play, and that will keep you from falling into his trap.

Never lead with your emotions. Instead, you should practice thinking things through before you react. In other words, instead of reacting instantaneously, train yourself to respond in a calculated way. When someone upsets you, refrain from lashing out angrily, and try to figure out what their motivations are. You can manage your reactions by using the same techniques that are used in anger management therapy; take a deep breath and weight the situation before speaking out.

It may not seem so, but the simple act of taking a deep breath can do a lot to center you and to help you react better in any stressful situation. When you take a breath, it puts some distance between your reaction and the trigger situation, and that small window of time is enough for your brain to deliberate on things and to create a better response.

You also have to understand that things only have the meanings you give them. When a manipulator calls you names or yells at you angrily, it's completely up to you to decide whether you'll let it roll off you like water, or whether you will internalize it. It's true that people only treat you the way you let them.

You can change your reaction by changing the questions that run through your mind when you are in a negative situation. If someone is attacking you, the questions running through your mind could be: Why is he doing this? Who does he think he is? You can try to change those questions so that you start thinking: How can I quickly resolve this? How can I keep my dignity here? When you ask yourself the right questions, you have a better chance of finding a proper way to react.

Be assertive

Someone can only successfully manipulate you if you are not willing to stand your ground and be assertive. Some psychologists have pointed out that being assertive is the middle ground between being passive and being aggressive. Aggressive people bully others to get what they want, and passive people let others walk all over them, so they don't get what they want. Assertive people, on the other hand, stand strong and ask for what they want in a firm and diplomatic way.

When you are assertive, you communicate in a way that's respectful towards the needs, feelings, and opinions of others, but you are unwavering in advocating for your own needs. You make requests that are reasonable, and you try to avoid infringing on the rights of others. In case of a dispute, you seek a compromise that is objectively fair to everyone. You draw clear boundaries, and you let people know when they are crossing those boundaries.

The most crucial aspect of assertiveness is being a good communicator. Assertive people have voices that are relaxed but firm. They speak fluently, and they come across as sincere. When they have to work with others, they are cooperative, and they contribute in a constructive way. They don't raise their voices when things get heated; they stay steady, unshaken, and unfailingly logical.

Assertive people are also good at using non-verbal cues to communicate effectively. They maintain eye contact with the people they are talking to. They have open body stances and good posture, which helps project strength and confidence. They smile when they are pleased, and they frown when they are displeased.

Assertive people are very direct, and they know what they want from the very beginning. As a result, it's very difficult for you to manipulate them. Manipulators like to use mind games and other little tricks to conceal their ill intentions, but assertive people will cut through all that by enforcing straight and clear two-way communication. When ordinary people suspect that they are being manipulated, they may keep those suspicions to themselves, but assertive people will come out and ask the manipulators what their intentions are; this throws the manipulators off balance and forces them to back off or switch gears.

Being assertive means having the skills to communicate with both aggressive people and passive people. They don't let anger or fear keep them from putting their point across when they are dealing with aggressive people. However, when they are dealing with passive people, they also don't let

other people's meekness, deter them from demanding what they are entitled to.

Assertive people are also well attuned with their own emotions. When they are upset, they don't let their own negative feelings derail them from asserting for themselves in a rational manner.

Feed yourself

The idea that the food we eat affects our self-esteem has been around for a very long time. There is a lot of scientific evidence that shows a correlation between the type of food we eat and our levels of confidence, as well as our general mental wellbeing. The food you eat has an effect on your mood, your levels of anxiety, and how you feel about yourself as a person.

When we lack the right balance of nutrients in our bodies, it affects the levels of certain hormones, and as a result, we experience a shift in our moods. That explains why we tend to be more active and stimulated when we consume sugar, coffee, or foods with high levels of carbohydrates. There are also other foods that make us feel lethargic when we eat them.

Some researchers have found out that when we fail to take in enough vitamins, fatty acid, and certain mineral, and omega three oils, we could experience depression. Because of their ability to keep depression at bay, these foods are referred to as "mood-boosting foods."

Carbohydrates are usually broken into glucose, which is used as energy in the brain and in the muscles. If we don't eat enough carbohydrates, we will lack the energy to concentrate and to make good judgments, and that can affect our self-esteem and make us more susceptible to manipulation. On the flip side,

eating lots of carbohydrates lead us to gain weight, and that can have a negative effect on our self-esteem. So, if positive self-esteem is your goal, you need to eat the right amount of carbohydrate; don't kick them off your diet, but also don't overindulge in them. Try to eat carbohydrate from whole-food sources instead of refined sources. Unrefined carbohydrates release energy slowly and give you a mood boost for much longer while providing you with much-needed fiber.

Foods that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids prevent low moods and can help keep you from getting depressed. Based on that, some scientists have argued that eating more fish can help improve your self-esteem. As you plan out your diet, you can make sure that you have at least one portion of fish a week. As a point of caution, avoid eating too much fish if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Foods that are rich in vitamin B, such as spinach, broccoli, meats, eggs, and dairy, have the ability to boost your energy levels and your mood, so they can contribute towards you having a more positive outlook. Vitamin D food sources such as eggs, cereals, and oily fish can increase serotonin levels in your brain and make you feel good about yourself. Of course, you can also get vitamin D from the sun, so letting in the light or taking a walk outside every now and then can be good for your self-esteem as well.

Excessive sugar, too much caffeine, and a high amount of alcohol can affect your self-esteem in a negative way. When you have a sugary snack, it increases your blood sugar levels and causes a spike in energy, but that is just momentary. After that, you will experience a "crash." That, combined

with the feeling of guilt that comes from consuming "empty calories" can dampen your mood and lower your self-esteem.

Caffeine also has a similar effect. It will stimulate you, for a moment and improve your mood, but once it starts wearing off, your mood will go down.

Alcohol has the effect of improving your confidence and lowering your inhibitions, which is why it's referred to as a "social lubricant." However, it is also a depressant, which means that it will make you feel anxious and irritable the following day, and that is bad for your self-esteem. By lowering your inhibitions, alcohol can also make you more susceptible to manipulation.

Become autonomous and take control

To increase your self-esteem and to become less susceptible to manipulation, you have to become autonomous and to take control of your own life.

Researchers have found that autonomy is more highly correlated with happiness than any other factor out there. People who are autonomous tend to be more satisfied than those who are wealthy. That is because autonomy represents the core value that makes us human; the ability to exercise free will.

In many social sciences, autonomy is defined as the quality of being able to make decisions according to one's own free will. Since we are social beings, it can be argued that we don't have absolute free will because the things we do are constrained by the rules of the societies we live in, but the important thing is that autonomy should be characterized by a feeling of

freedom. In other words, it's about being able to do things within being coerced by either internal or external pressures. To put it simply, autonomy is having your own identity, and being the only one that controls it.

It's very easy to lose your autonomy when you are in a relationship with a controlling person. Even if you are part of a couple or a family, autonomy means that you do things because you want to and not because you are obligated to do them. It means that there should be a clear distinction between you and your partner and that everyone should have their goals and ambitions, independent of each other. If you are in a relationship where you are subservient to the other person, then you lack autonomy.

To maintain your autonomy and improve your self-esteem, be very careful about who you choose to date, and the people you choose to associate with. Even if you are committed to the person, you have to know at all times what your values are, what you want out of life, and who you are as a person. You need to hold onto those foundational values, and you should be wary of anyone who tries to make you compromise on them.

You have to retain control over your life, no matter how much it's intertwined with someone else's. If you can't define yourself, someone else is going to do it for you, and then you will become a mere extension of them. In other words, they will succeed in completely dominating and controlling you.

You can take control of your life by setting aside some "me time" for yourself. It's okay to take care of your family, friends, or partner, but if you let them have all your time, then you lose control over your life, and your

identity will disappear. Set some time aside for yourself, and make sure that everyone respects it.

You also need to draw clear personal boundaries and to learn to say "no" to people. When someone asks you to do something, make an objective assessment of the request; if it adds no value to your life, then turn it down. Manipulative people will want to turn you into their "errand boy," so from the very first time you meet anyone, make sure that you don't let them use you.



Conclusion

Throughout this book, we have covered many different topics regarding manipulation and what they are or could look like and how to avoid them. But the question of why people manipulate others is still being answered today, with interesting answers. To begin this subject let's look at antiquity. People have been manipulating each other, according to historical records and the earliest bibliography, since the dawn of humans. From as far back as the first Roman emperors, people have been using tricks to play on simple innate human emotions to get what they want from others. By other promising false things, or playing on primal human fears, people have attained a certain great power, via using these simple psychological tricks to their advantage.

A lot more is going on when two people meet for the first time than most people pick up on. Many people are so preoccupied with themselves and other thoughts that they would never notice the subtle cues that people are continually giving off, broadcasting their feelings and thoughts. When you know the tricks of the trade when it comes to picking up nonverbal communication and body language, you will be able to read a great deal about people before they even open their mouths to introduce themselves. When you can read the room and size people up, you already have an advantage over anyone else who might be trying to vie for that person's affection, political support, or sales transaction. It's all about taking the time it takes to learn and practice in the real world once you've decided to undertake the art of dark psychology. It's impossible to become comfortable with these techniques without observation and practice. You will find that the more confident you are with your strategies, the more comfortable and more

natural they will happen, leaving your targets entirely in the dark about what's going on under the surface.