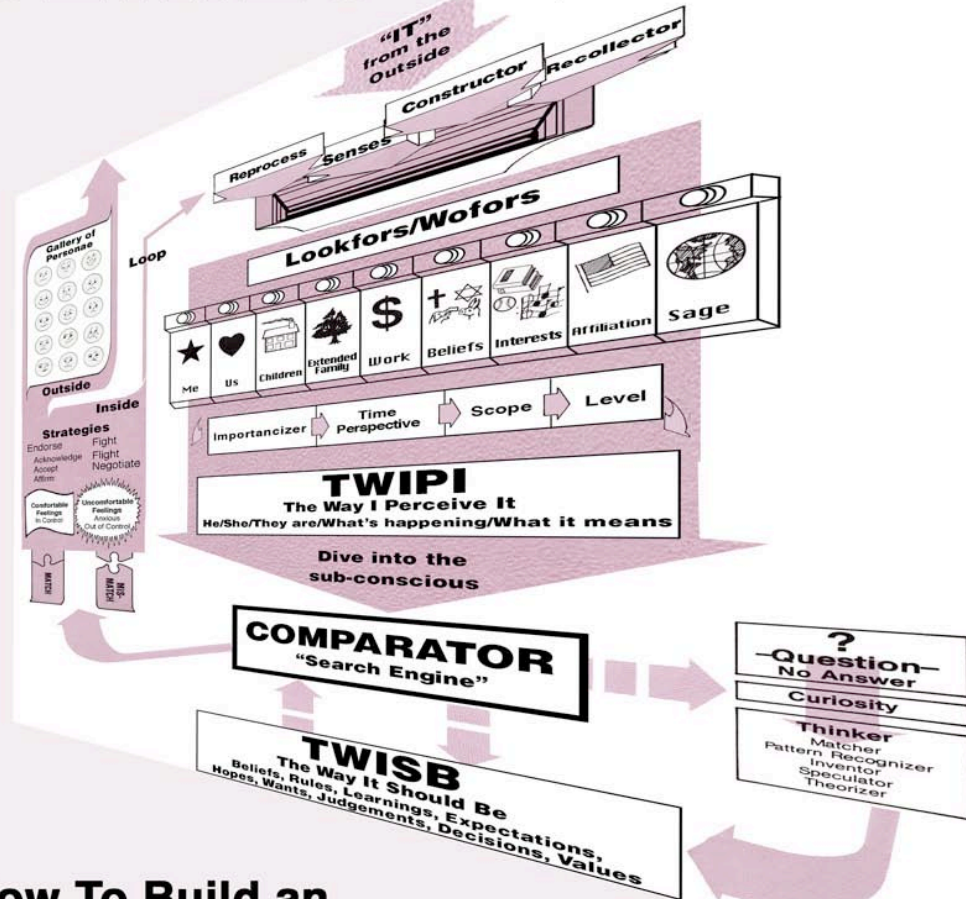


METAMATING SERIES

by: Ken Johnston



How To Build an
Extraordinary Relationship

Professional Version

Metamating

<http://www.HowToBeHappier.com/>

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(Nobody likes to read this kind of stuff. We wish we didn't have to do it.)

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See also: www.Sagery.com

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Forward

From the author, Ken Johnston:

I recently received the following e-mail from a young person who was asked to read the pre-publication manuscript for this book.

Dear Ken,

You are an absolutely brilliant idiot.

You have written a magnificent book that will change my life. But, I almost didn't read it. It was so boring that I skimmed the text and didn't do any of the exercises. Then I got to Chapter 13 of Book Two. You waited until the end of the book to give me the punch line. Only at the end, did I find out why I should even read the book.

As soon as I read chapter 13, I immediately went back to page one and studied every nuance. I think the problem is that you are an "old" person, who grew up in the era of written literacy and from what I've read, people in your generation read, think, and write in a linear fashion.

I grew up with TV, video games, and the Internet. I need the punch line before I want to hear the story. I'm non-linear, and so are virtually all the people who will read your book. You've written a book for young people. It isn't people your age who are building relationships; it's people my age. If you want to reach them, you need to put chapter 13 of Book Two at the beginning of the book. Tell them the punch line. Let them decide if they want to hear the story. I know it's non-linear, and probably sounds foreign to you, but try it. You'll get more people to read the book, and they'll read every word.

Other than that, I can only tell you that the book will change the rest of my life. Thank you for writing it.

(Name withheld by request of the writer)

He said he didn't want to be known as the guy who called me a "brilliant idiot," or called me an "old" person from a linear era.

But, I want to recognize him, because I think he was absolutely right. I am an old person from a linear era, and I thought I should write the book, and then summarize what I'd written. Chapter 13 Book Two is written that way.

Now, dear reader, the reason I tell you this story is that my young friend did me (and maybe you) a really big favor. If you are a young person read this forward, which is repeated as Chapter 13, Book Two.

If you, like me, are an “old person, and want to hear the story before the punch line, skip over the pages that follow and begin with the Introduction, starting on page ix.

Ken Johnston

PS: You will notice a number of strange words throughout this book. I use these words to describe functions that occur in your mind. These functions have not been given names by science or other students of the mind, so, I created words to use, and often I used words that suggest the meaning. For example I use the names “Importancizer” (giving importance to something) and “Comparator” (comparing one thing with another).

Sometimes I used acronyms, such as “TWIPI” (The Way I Perceive It) and “TWISB” (The Way It Should Be” according to at least one part of my mind).

Until real scientists name these functions, I guess you and I will have to be stuck with this odd vocabulary. I'm sorry that you are put to the task of using and recalling this rather unusual set of words.

See also: www.Sagery.com

Summary and Conclusions

If you prefer the “linear” method, skip this section and go to the Introduction. If you do read this, notice that the phrase “you have learned” will be scattered throughout, since this is a summary of skills previously taught.

Psychological principles that are well established today, in 2004 include the following.

Happiness

There is a great deal of evidence, and unbiased research that supports the conclusion that Happiness (Subjective Well-Being, or SWB), is based on these four perceptions, assessments, and judgments:

A person will judge their life to be happy if they:

- Have frequent strongly felt and long-lasting good feelings
- Have infrequent and mild bad feelings of short duration.
- Have a positive assessment of how happy and fulfilling life has been
- Feel optimistic about life in the future

A happy person naturally (perhaps genetically influenced), is happier because he or she has more positive and optimistic “self-talk.”

Self-talk

An unhappy person (because of neurotic thought patterns or generalized pessimism), can be taught to be happier by managing his or her “self-talk.” For example, unhappy people can dispute or argue against their unduly harsh judgments, and replace these negative assessments with more positive assessments. By changing his or her self-talk a pessimist can be *taught* to be more optimistic.

Each person creates his or her own experience of the world, events, and people in his or her life, by the unique thoughts and assessments the person uses. Each person has a choice of seeing the world, events, and people in a positive way or a negative way, or anything in between. Experience of life depends on a person’s thoughts and assessments.

The most widely used therapies in use today are based on the principle that thoughts produce feelings and feelings produce behaviors. These various therapies are described as cognitive therapies. The therapeutic interventions for people suffering from misery and unhappiness involve helping them change their “self-talk.”

Individuals find many sources of positive self-talk that they can use to replace the negative thoughts that bring them discomfort. Millions, for example, depend on inputs from Oprah, or Dr. Phil, on television. Religions offer comforting thoughts that reduce the pain caused by an individual’s negative self-talk. Cults offer the unhappy individuals a replacement set of thoughts (offered by the cult leader), to replace negative self-talk. Thousands of self-help books and courses offer positive

thoughts that people can use to make themselves happier, e.g. “The power of positive thinking” and its progeny.

The Net of It

If you are naturally a positive, optimistic person, who is fulfilled by what you are doing, you are having a happy life.

If you are naturally a negative, pessimistic person, who does not find fulfillment in what you are doing, you are having an unhappy life.

If you are having an unhappy life, you can learn to be happier. To become happier, you must change your self-talk. You are being offered pre-packaged self-talk from every imaginable source.

If you are a negative, pessimistic person, having an unhappy life, you’re also likely to be somewhat cynical, or doubtful, or pessimistic about the value of the pre-packaged self-talk that others are suggesting you use. So, it’s likely you are still unhappy.

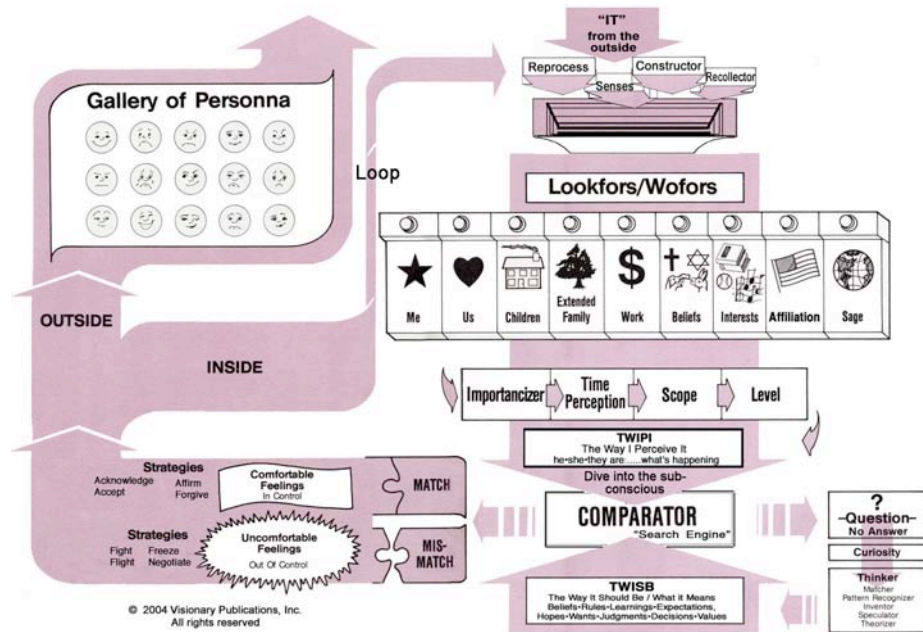
Some teachers are offering generalized strategies for changing your own self-talk, such as disputing negative assessment, to free you from having to adopt pre-packaged self-talk from other sources. But, again, you’re likely to be cynical, or doubtful or pessimistic about using a different strategy than the one you find comfortable, and thus you may not adopt the recommended strategy.

There is some evidence that pessimists have a clearer perception of the world than optimists. There is evidence that optimists must sometimes distort their perception of the world, to maintain their optimism. Experienced pessimists often rebel at adopting the optimists’ distortions.

As a result of all of the above, lots of people are living unhappy lives because they cannot or will not adopt the pre-packaged self-talk offered to them, or adopt a new strategy of disputation to repair something they don’t see as broken, and which may produce a distortion.

How That Relates to Book Two

I can finally tell you why the “Sage Model” is such a breakthrough. I would have told you earlier, but I have to use the “Sage Model” to explain its own incredible power.



The “Sage Model” empowers you to make any changes in your self-talk that you choose to make. It allows you to be as happy as you choose to be, by deciding *yourself* exactly what changes you want to make in your self talk. You don’t have to adopt someone else’s pre-packaged self-talk. Or, choose a disputation strategy you might find uncomfortable.

For the first time, you gain the power to manage, modify, or adapt any of your perceptions, assessments, feelings, strategies, or personae, all by yourself. You suddenly have the power to create your life exactly the way you want it to be. You have the amazing ability to make yourself as happy as you choose to be.

As you now know, the perceiving section of your mind creates your own personal version of “what’s happening,” based on the Importance, the Time perspective, the Scope and the Level that you attach to any thought to create your own unique perception (The Way I Perceive It, or TWIPI)

Then, your Comparator — selecting for similarities or differences — searches like a search engine, through all of your unique stored experiences to make an assessment of what this thought means to you. What comes up for you is the Way It Should Be (Twisb). It might be a rule, a learning, an expectation, a hope, or any of a dozen other means of assessing the thought. And, each of the different ways you could assess the thought would produce a different result. So, you produce your own self-modified perception and assessment of “what’s happening.”

This assessment produces a match or a mismatch with the perception and that produces either a good or bad feeling.

Then, the feeling leads to a strategy: fight, flight, freeze, or negotiate for bad feelings, or affirm, acknowledge, accept, or forgive for a good feeling.

Then, the strategy dictates a persona, and you respond to the outside world with your unique attitude, gestures, voice tone, facial expression, etc.

Review and Summary

You now know that you have over thirty different points in your process that combine to produce your self-talk, your thoughts, and assessments.

If you change any one of them, everything else will change automatically.

Some of them are easy for you to change, modify, or adapt. Others are virtually impossible. You'll quickly learn — if you haven't already — which are the easiest for you to change, and which are difficult or impossible.

The advantage of having thirty different things to change is that you are sure to find one or two that you'll change easily to get the outcomes you want, and the happiness you choose to have.

After you find the one, two or three that are your favorites, you'll develop automatic responses that you'll use. If you like, you can ignore all the rest.

The Process Reviewed

First: proceed normally until you have a bad feeling.

Then: using your Sage-part, or your conscious mind, interrupt the bad feeling and use your question handling and thinking apparatus, to ask four questions:

1. What's happening? (E.g. I'm creating a bad feeling.)
2. How am I creating the bad feeling? (My perception and assessment don't match.)
3. Is this what I want for my life? (Does this feeling I'm producing fit my life's goals, and my values?)
4. If not: Which of the following Sage choices will I choose?
 - Act — if action is appropriate to my desired outcome and my core values. (The action may also be to change my self-talk.)
 - Ask — if asking or negotiating will help me achieve my desired outcome in harmony with my core values.
 - Accept — if acting or asking won't be productive.
 - Forgive — if another has provoked my distress.

Notice that bad feelings are cut short by immediately moving into question mode.

Notice that bad feelings are always resolved with reference to desired outcomes and core values (otherwise known as outcome or value-driven choices).

Notice that you, and you alone, make the choices. *You* get to construct your own experience of your life, without reference to any other proposed self-talk from the outside.

Notice that you make every choice in harmony with your core values and the outcomes you desire. So, if you are a confirmed pessimist you won't have to adopt the optimist's distortions to stay positive. You can stay as realistic as you choose.

The Thirty Points (Refer to the Map)

Let's review the thirty points where you can make changes in your mind, and then recap the change strategies from which you can choose.

Four Sources of Inputs to the Mind

Your *senses*, sight, sound, touch, taste, feel bring you inputs in the present moment. Using these inputs keeps you in the present, and away from imagining the future, or recalling the past, or looping on thoughts you've already processed.

Your *Constructor* — which imagines future scenarios, or even possible past scenarios — is useful for rehearsing future events so you can anticipate and pre-resolve any future difficulties. More importantly, it helps you gain confidence by imagining outcomes that you desire. It's hurtful and unproductive if your Constructor imagines future scenarios that you would be helpless to change or unable to handle.

Your *Recollector*, which brings up events, situations, or memories of the past, is productive when it recalls good memories, because “confidence is the memory of past successes.” And, your happiness depends in part on having lots of good, strong, positive feelings. The Recollector is hurting you when it brings up painful memories, unless you are using those memories to use Sage questions and choices to resolve past hurts.

Your *Reprocessor* loops on a thought you've already processed. You use this input productively when you use it to enlarge or expand a happy feeling. Your happiness depends, in part, on having frequent, strong, good feelings. Looping can expand and extend a good feeling. You use this input in a hurtful manner when you loop or dwell on a painful or negative thoughts or assessments. Your happiness depends on keeping bad feelings short, infrequent, and mild. Looping on bad feelings is a hurtful source of unnecessary pain.

As soon as you become aware of bad feeling, caused by misuse of one of these inputs, your conscious mind or your Sage-part can switch immediately into the present, making senses available, and into question mode, asking the Sage questions.

The Nine Parts of You

You learned how to bring all of nine, separate and distinct parts of you into harmony, by using the Sage-part to hold parts meetings, and using win-win resolutions to parts' conflicts. You now can have as much inner harmony and peace of mind as you are willing to have.

You learned to use the optimal part for every situation. This keeps you from using the Me-part in communicating with your significant other, when it would be more productive to use your Us-part.

This book taught you about your Us-part, to make it possible to have an extraordinary relationship, to the extent that you choose.

Four Aspects of Perception

The four different aspects of perception are: Importance, Time, Scope and Level.

You learned that you'd be happier if you give less *Importance* to thoughts that produce bad feelings. You also learned you'll be happier if you give more importance to thoughts that give you good feelings.

You learned that focusing *Time* increases the power of good feelings, and stretching time takes the sting out of bad feelings.

You learned that a *Scope* of one can focus all the power of bad feelings on you, and that bad feelings are reduced when you choose a larger scope. You learned that a highly focused scope enhances good feelings for you; you diminish the happiness you can get from a positive thought by expanding the scope.

You learned that you could raise the *Level* of a thought, statement, or transaction to avoid fighting and take control of the transaction. You learned that dropping a level further focuses sensations or feelings that make you happier.

The Twipi (The way I perceive it) is so completely modified by the four inputs, the nine parts, and the four aspects of perception that it may bear little or no resemblance to the reality of what's happening. We hope you learned not to get 'stuck' on your perception of what's happening, because it may be totally distorted.

The Comparator: A Personal Search Engine

You learned that your comparator might generally be searching for similarities or differences from your perception. By itself, the comparator could be the source of much pessimism if it always searches for "what's wrong" with what's happening. You've learned that it is simple to fix this — if it's troublesome — by asking, "What's right about it?" anytime you get a bad feeling

Your Twisb (The Way It Should be)

You learned that there are many, many different ways you can evaluate or assess a perception. You've learned that if you use "rules" to assess a perception, you can become overly rigid and inflexible. If you use "learnings" as the basis for assessment, you might have made a "wrong learning" if your learning wasn't made at the optimal Scope. You've learned the dangers of assessing your perceptions based on expectations, and that low expectations produce many happy surprises, while high expectations produce many disappointments. It's up to you.

You've learned that if one basis for assessment gives you bad feelings that lead to poor outcomes, you can choose another basis. Or, if you want to be totally happy, you could use a generalized "one size fits all" basis, like: "The way it is, is the way it should be."

Three Kinds of Feelings

There are thousands of different words for various feelings; however, you've learned that feelings are generally bad, good, or neutral. You've learned that feelings are the key to your happiness, and it is useful to attend to how many of each you have, how strong they are, and how long they last.

Strategies: Fight, Flight, Freeze, Negotiate, Acknowledge, Affirm, Accept Forgive

You've learned that you have a choice over strategies. You can avoid fighting — even if attacked — if it doesn't suit your desired outcomes or your core values.

You've learned that you can even use an affirming strategy on a bad feeling, to avoid fighting and resolve conflict.

You've learned that until you discovered the Sage Model, you pretty much just automatically grabbed the strategy that you mastered while growing up, and it was never chosen based on desired outcomes or core values. You've learned you now have more choices.

Two Basic Personae

You've learned that even though there are dozens of personae, they can be categorized as authentic (the "real you"), or learned. Some of your personae have been copied from others in hopes of achieving something better than your authentic personae would achieve.

You've learned that you'll be happier, and have more loving relationships if you could always use your authentic personae.

You've learned that manipulative personae, like sulking, pouting, whining, and sensuous, may not get you the outcomes you desire, or be in harmony with your core values.

In Conclusion

Self-talk (thoughts and assessments), is the basis of your happiness — with yourself, with your significant other, and with your relationship.

The truth of this is demonstrated by the best science, the most well accepted psychologies, and by the many thousands of books, articles, people, and institutions that offer you their “new and improved” pre-packaged self-talk to use instead of your own.

For the first time since Freud named the Id, Ego, and Superego, and Eric Berne named the Parent, Adult, and Child, you have access to a vastly more complete map of your mind.

One huge benefit of learning the Sage Model is that it makes it possible for you to change any of more than thirty different things in your mind to get the outcomes you desire. And, you don’t need to become a psychologist to do it.

For the first time, each person can take responsibility for creating his or her own self-talk. You won’t need to search for the answers “out there,” and try to guess whose pre-packaged self-talk thoughts would be best for you.

The Sage Model will lead you to define what you want for your life, and identify your core values. Then, the Sage questions will guide you to the answers you need to achieve your desired outcomes in harmony with your core values.

So, the next time someone asks you, “What’s new?” you’ll have an answer for them.

Introduction

The goal of this book is to teach you how to create a happier and happier relationship. The concepts work for you if you already have a partner, and it will help you find and attract a partner, if you do not yet have one.

If You Don't Have a Partner (if you do, skip on)

Here is what the book offers you:

1. Learn the Relationship Process

The first step is to learn the relationship process. You'll discover a new way to look at the process of starting and developing a relationship. You may find that you hold some attitudes, thoughts, or perceptions that stand in your way of finding what you're seeking. You'll learn and understand the roles that attraction, courting, infatuation, bonding, and coping play in creating the kind of relationship you want.

2. Choose Realistic and Productive Expectations

One of the major problems that people have in creating the relationship they seek is the problem of unrealistic or unproductive expectations. Throughout our lives we're faced with unrealistic portrayals of relationships. We see them on television, in movies, in novels, and sometimes we see other couples acting them out. By the time we reach adulthood, we're often confused as to how relationships really work. You'll learn the fundamental processes at work and see the role that each plays.

3. Troubleshoot Any Blocks or Stuck Points

Book Three is a troubleshooting guide to help you discover any blocks or stuck points that may be giving you difficulty. It will help you find any unrealistic expectations you may have, and allow you to choose more realistic and productive ones.

4. Learn and Practice an Effective Coping Strategy

You'll learn that the key to a happier and happier relationship lies in your coping strategies. You'll learn a powerful and productive coping strategy that will give you the tools you need to build a happier and happier relationship. You'll come to understand how important it is to maximize the good feelings you get from and with, your partner, and to resolve the bad feelings you get from and with your partner.

You'll learn powerful techniques that will enable you to resolve bad feelings, and maximize good feelings.

5. Become a Really Good partner

Using the tools you'll get from this book, you'll become a really good partner. You'll know how to be the kind of person who will be a really great catch for the partner you are seeking.

6. Practice on Everyone You Meet

You can practice the skills you learn from these books on everyone you meet. This practice will give you the proficiency you need to be ready when you find your partner.

7. Become Irresistibly Attractive

As you learn the process, you'll understand how a person who masters it becomes irresistibly attractive. As you learn and practice the coping strategies, you'll discover that you are becoming more and more attractive to others seeking a partner. As others learn the process and become clear about what they are seeking in a partner, you may discover your partner among those.

If You Already Have a Partner (if not, skip to last paragraph)

You have everything you need to create the kind of relationship that you want. Here is what this book will teach you.

1. Learn the Relationship Process

First, you'll learn the relationship process. You'll discover the roles that attraction, courting, infatuation, bonding, and coping play in building a relationship.

2. Choose Realistic and Productive Expectations

What you learn of the relationship process will allow you to choose realistic and productive expectations about your relationship. It is unfortunate but true, that many people allow unrealistic expectations to rob them of much of the joy and satisfaction that's available in their relationship.

3. Learn and Practice an Effective Coping Strategy

You'll discover that the secret to a happier and happier relationship lies in the coping strategies that you use. You'll learn to maximize positive feelings, and to resolve bad feelings. You'll learn how important these strategies are and the payoff they will have for you in your relationship.

4. Become a Really Good partner

Most people who seek a happier and happier relationship think that the answer lies with their partner. They often think that their partner must change, or there is no hope for their relationship. This book shows you that the secret lies within *you*. *You* are the key to your relationship. As you become a really good partner, you'll discover the magical effect that this will have on your partner.

5. Practice on Your partner

You already have a partner with whom to practice the skills you'll learn. As you learn and develop your skill at coping with the normal and ordinary difficulties of sharing a relationship, you'll find that your relationship gets better and better with each step. If you are fortunate enough to have a partner who also learns and masters the skills taught

here, you'll discover the incredible joy and satisfaction that is possible in a mutually warm and loving relationship.

6. Create a Happier and happier Relationship

As you practice the strategies in this book, you'll gradually be building something very special. Your feelings toward your partner will evolve to new levels. With time, love, and patience, you'll discover that you have created a happier and happier relationship.

Install an Automatic Process for Change

Book Two includes a special ingredient that makes it unique — an “automatic change process.” Most self-development programs require that you use effort and hard work to make changes in yourself. They require lots of practice and self-discipline. This book offers another alternative.

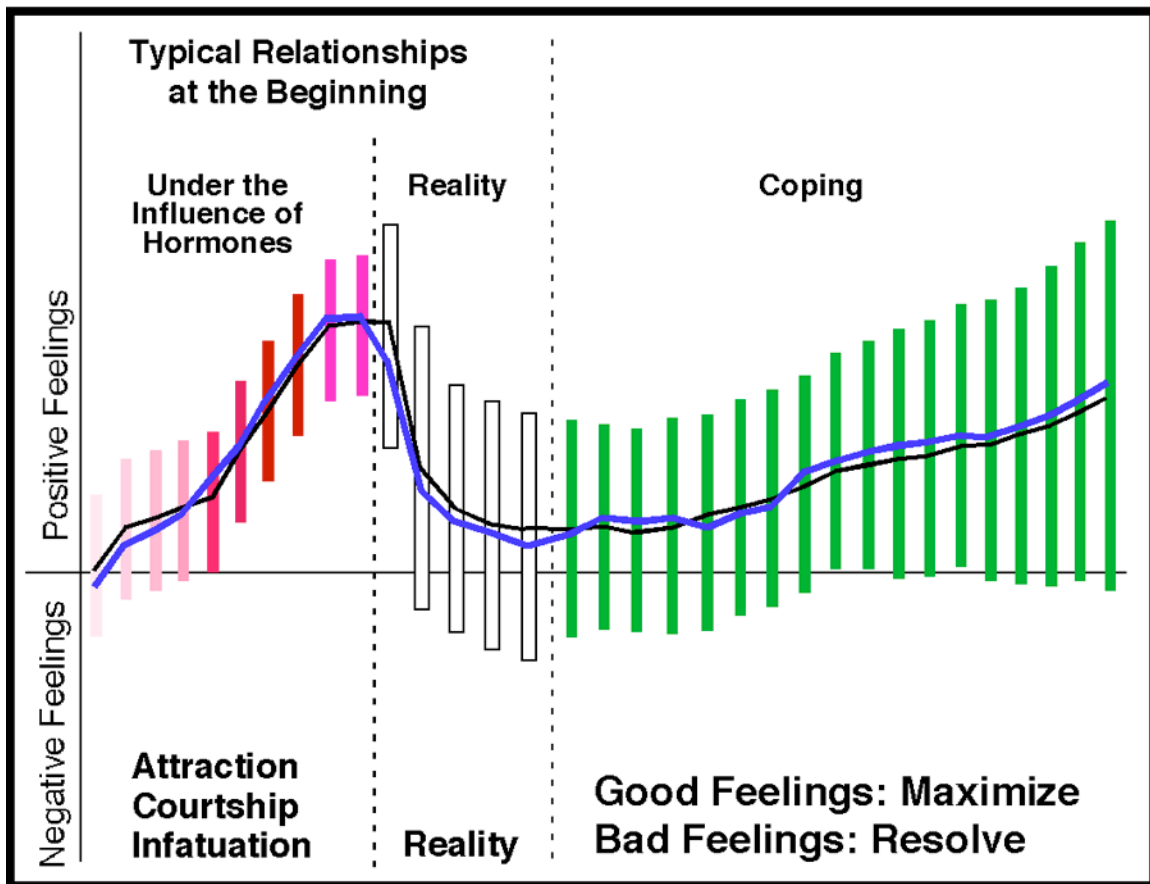
The Sage Model, which is taught in Book Two, offers the possibility of a process for change that requires much less work and effort. It has been described as a sort of “autopilot,” that gradually takes over and does the work for you. You'll find that this “autopilot” makes learning and practicing the strategies taught here, simpler than you might ever imagine.



Book One

Beginning the Relationship

For A Couple: A Happier and Happier Relationship



Chapter 1: What You Do With Feelings

You may wonder why so many relationships turn sour. Current estimates are that more than 50% all marriages will end in divorce. The odds are even worse for relationships that don't reach marriage.

Analysis of many broken relationships reveal some important patterns. The success of a relationship is often determined by the way in which one or both of the partners handle their feelings about their partner.

How *do* people handle their feelings?

Possible Patterns for Good Feelings

Analysis reveals that there are three major patterns that you'll use with good feelings. You can:

- Maximize them
- Take them for granted, and do nothing special about them
- *Discount* them.

Discounting means you'll find a way to make them go away or give them no importance. Let's examine these choices one at a time.

Maximize Them

The best thing you can do is to maximize good feelings. In order to do that, you can: *notice them* when you get them, *store them up*, and *review them* again and again. You can allow them to build into a reservoir of loving bonds that bind you to your partner.

Take Them for Granted

The most common thing you might do with good feelings is to simply *take them for granted*. That is, you feel them when they come, but make no effort to mark them or notice them. They are not carefully stored and nurtured. No time is spent on re-experiencing them or reviewing them in your mind. Time passes and they fade away.

Discount Them

The most destructive thing you can do with good feelings is to discount them. There is a variety of ways you can do that.

- a. You can *fail to feel them* when you get them, i.e. don't allow them to come into your conscious mind; it is as though they never happened.
- b. You can *think a negative thought* as soon as you have a good feeling, and thereby make it go away. For example, Joe might get a good feeling and immediately hear an internal message that says, "This won't last," or "I don't know why I am feeling this; she is really a turkey."

Here are some things we know about bad feelings.

Patterns for Bad Feelings

There are two things you can do with bad feelings:

- *Maximize them* so they get worse, or stay the same
- *Resolve them* so they lessen, or go away

Maximize Them

The most destructive manner for handling bad feelings is to maximize them. You can do this in a variety of ways.

- a. *Don't take any action* on a bad feeling except to store it up and add it to an ever-growing list of bad feelings about a person, or your relationship.
- b. *Actively distort* your perceptions of the situation, or the person who stimulated the bad feeling, and make it much worse than it really is.
- c. *Regularly review your storehouse of grievances or hurts* that you collect, and feel really, really bad about them.

Resolve Them

The most positive thing you can do with bad feelings is to resolve them when they come up. There is a variety of ways you can do this.

- a. You can *take some action*, i.e. you can do something positive about whatever gave you the bad feeling.
- b. You can *ask for what you want*. This is one form of action you can take to resolve the situation that you feel bad about.
- c. You can *accept the situation or behavior* that stimulated the bad feeling.
- d. You can *forgive* the other person for something that you can't accept. Forgiveness is a powerful tool for resolving bad feelings.
- e. You can *discount* bad feelings by simply failing to feel them. This is not a recommended practice because it is generally accepted that feelings are best dealt with rather than discounted, since discounting doesn't make them go away. However, discounting bad feelings is far less harmful than storing them up and harboring them.



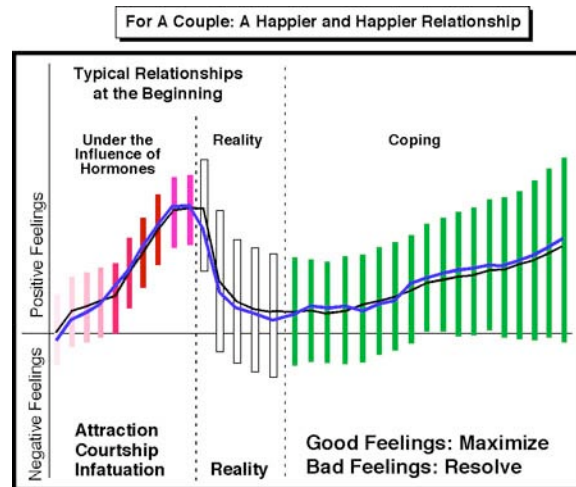
Chapter 2: Patterns for Handling Feelings

There are nine possible combinations of patterns for handling feelings. Each combination results in a different outcome for the person and the relationship.

The nine diagrams that follow show graphically how each combination works. Each diagram has two parts: the formation of the relationship, and the coping patterns (how feelings are handled). The formation of the relationship is the same in each of the following diagrams. This may not demonstrate reality for everyone, but they show the most common pattern. Here's the first diagram, so you can see how it works.

A Happier and Happier Relationship

Each vertical line represents positive and negative feelings you might have for someone. The top line reflects the most positive feeling you have for the person. The bottom of the line shows the most negative feeling you have for a person. The trend line is simply a line connecting the midpoints of the feeling line.



Each relationship starts with *attraction*. You find something that attracts you to the other person. You have some good feelings and typically also have some negative feelings.

The next step is *courting*. As courting proceeds, you create more positive feelings about the person and you tend to be less negative about them.

The bright red lines represent the beginning of *infatuation*. Notice that as infatuation grows, the most negative feelings you have for the person are still in the positive range. This is what people mean when they say, "Love is blind." When you are infatuated, even the person's faults are lovable.

As infatuation peaks out, *reality* sets in and you begin to see the other person more realistically; the flaws and blemishes you see again create some bad feelings. Still, your

overall feelings are mostly positive, and they outweigh the negative feelings. As reality is established, the formation of the relationship is complete.

Nature, with its genes and hormones has brought us this far. Virtually every relationship, no matter how good or bad it will eventually be, goes through some variation of this pattern. The key to whether the relationship will be loving and satisfying over the long term, lies in the *coping* patterns of how feelings are handled.

Coping Patterns

Each diagram contains a different coping pattern. Each shows a different pattern for handling feelings. In this diagram the individual is maximizing good feelings and resolving bad feelings.

As you look through the remaining eight diagrams, notice that the beginning pattern is always the same (Attraction, Courting, Infatuation, Reality). After that point, the choices for coping with good or bad feelings are indicated as follows:

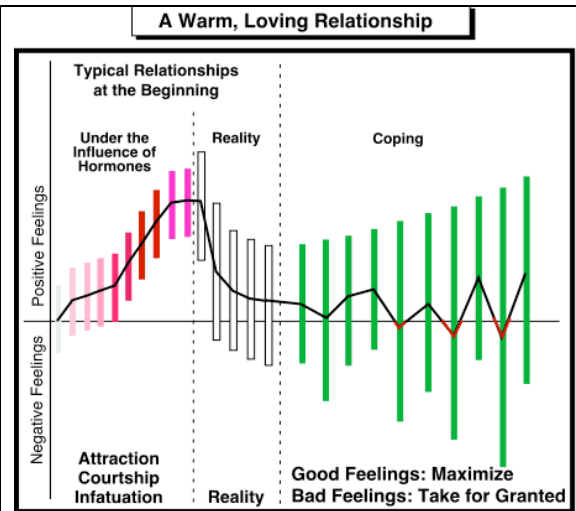
Good Feelings Bad Feelings

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Maximize good feelings | • Resolve bad feelings |
| • Take good feelings for granted | • Take bad feelings for granted |
| • Discount good feelings | • Maximize bad feelings |

In the previous diagram, notice that all of the chosen actions were maximizing good feelings and resolving bad feelings. This is what it takes to create and maintain a magnificent relationship. In the next two diagrams notice that the good feelings are maximized, but bad feelings are either taken for granted or maximized, producing differing kinds of relationships. As you look through the remaining diagrams, notice the effects of other patterns. Some will result in long-term relationships; some will result in divorce or alienation.

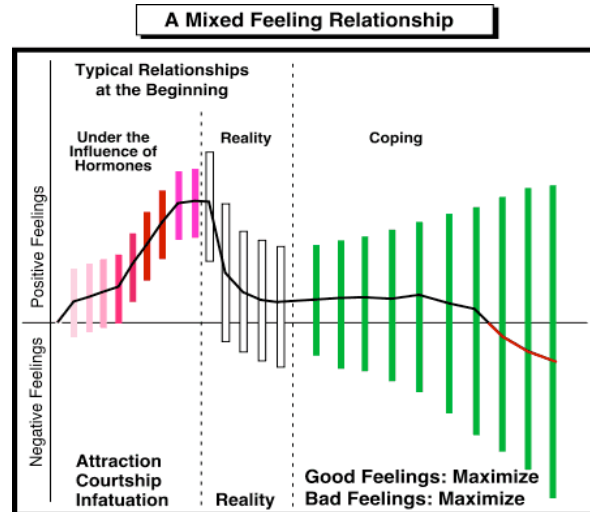
A Warm, Loving Relationship

In this warm, loving relationship, good feelings are maximized through marking and affirming. The individual builds a reservoir of warm, loving feelings. Bad feelings are mostly taken for granted, allowing time to moderate, but there is no effort to resolve them. There are some negative periods (indicated in red), but largely the effect is positive.



A Mixed Feeling Relationship

In this relationship there is volatility as both good and bad feelings are maximized. They mark — pay attention to and remember — both the negative and positive feelings. The result is a relationship with moderated, mixed, overall feelings.

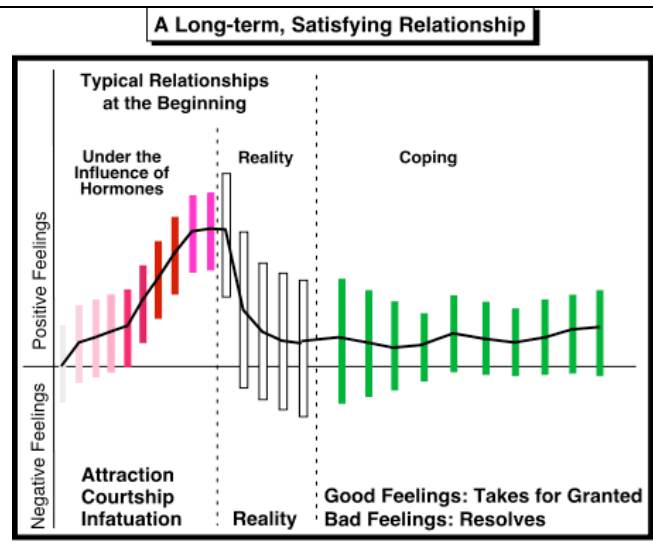


Taking Feelings for Granted

In the next three diagrams, good feelings are taken for granted, however, bad feelings may be resolved, taken for granted, or maximized.

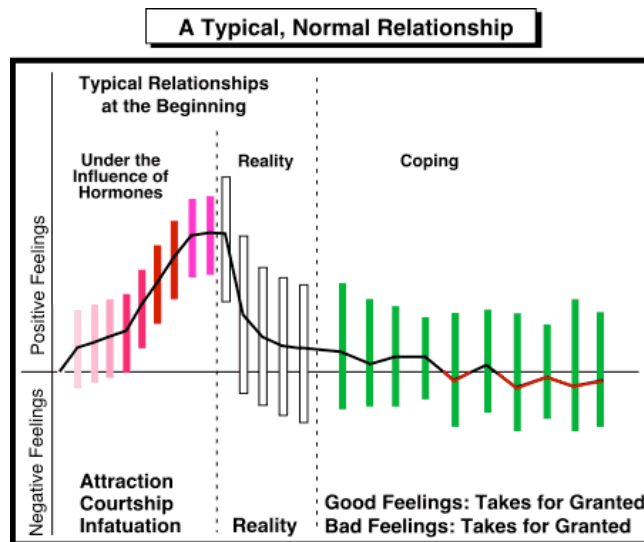
A Long-term, Satisfying Relationship

In this kind of relationship, the individual actively works at resolving bad feelings, but mostly takes good feelings for granted, making no effort to mark them (notice or remember), or loop on them (replay in the mind).



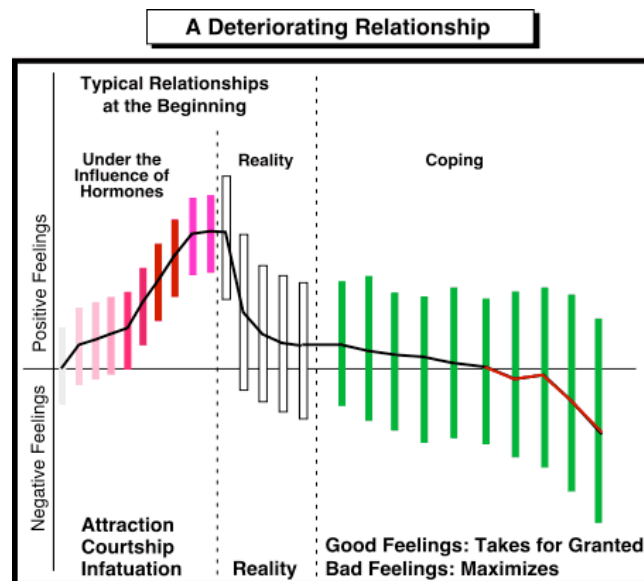
A Typical, Normal Relationship

The typical, normal relationship may take both the good and bad feelings for granted. The most recent feelings will predominate, whatever they are. However, there is a gradual, downward trend on the overall perception of the relationship. This is due to the human tendency to give more weight to bad feelings than to good feelings.



A Deteriorating Relationship

In a deteriorating relationship, good feelings are taken for granted and bad feelings are actively maximized. People harbor, nurse, and loop on (replay) the bad feelings, which results in a relationship that becomes gradually more and more negative.

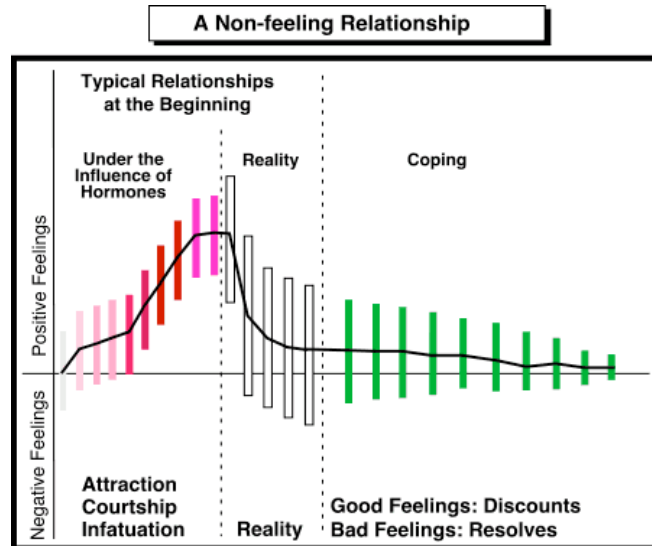


Discounting Good Feelings

In the next three examples, good feelings are discounted, and bad feelings are resolved, taken for granted, or maximized.

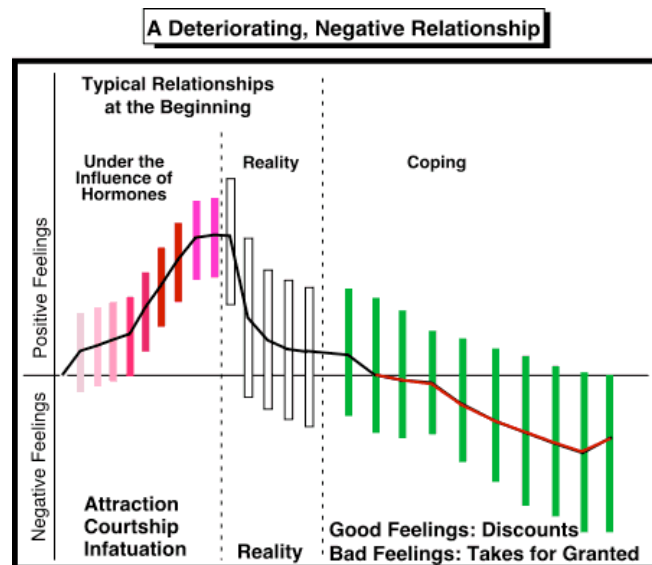
A Non-feeling Relationship

People in non-feelings relationships will discount and ignore good feelings, but still try to resolve bad ones.



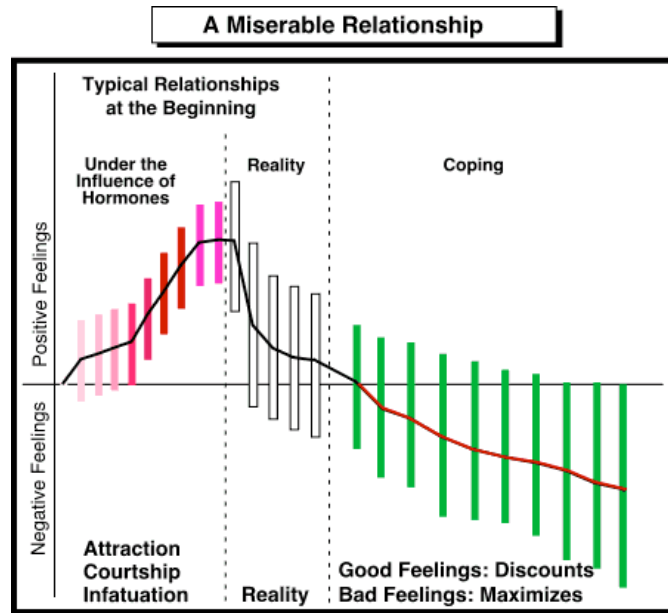
A Deteriorating, Negative Relationship

This is an example of a deteriorating, negative relationship, where good feelings are discounted, and bad feelings are taken for granted.



A Miserable Relationship

A miserable relationship is created when good feelings are discounted, and bad feelings are maximized. As you can see from the diagram, the relationship is heading steadily downhill, probably ending in some kind of termination.



Conclusion

As you look through the charts, you may be able to see yourself in several of them. In fact, as relationships change over time, and people choose to “work on them,” the relationship may move from one of the examples, to another. However, you can see how important the skill of dealing with feelings is, in terms of the long-term viability of the relationship.



Chapter 3: The Phases in the Relationship Process

The process of pairing is a combination of what we as human animals are genetically programmed to do, mixed in with what thousands of years of civilizing have taught us to do. In the most basic way, we're very similar to many other kinds of animals and birds that do the same things. We seemed to be programmed to pair up in twos, we remain relatively monogamous, and we stay bonded until our offspring are grown (or even longer).



Pairing

Genetic by Nature — Civilized by Custom

Modern Americans and native tribes from the most remote jungles are identical in the basic steps. The tribal culture and the modern American culture each add widely varied customs to the process, and in many ways they appear quite different. Yet, the basic steps are the same.

One thing that's important to note is the difference between the physical and cultural windows involved in pairing. A window is a period of time. For example, in launching rockets to the moon, we speak of a "window" of time within which we can launch. If we launch before the window opens, or after it closes, we will miss the target.

In pairing, we have a physical window, which seems to range from about twelve years (on the early side), to about seventeen years (on the late side). We seem to be genetically programmed to want to pair up and bond during this window of time. We, in the developed world, have cultural windows during which it is thought to be proper to pair up and bond. In the United States, the cultural norm seems to be about twenty years (early side), to thirty or older (on the late side).

The difference between these two windows means that we're physically very interested in attracting and finding a mate during a time period when our culture pressures us to hold off and be patient. This is the root cause for so much difficulty during adolescence, and for the vast numbers of teenage pregnancies without marriage.



Five Stages

The pairing process has five stages. They typically follow each other in sequence, although the time each takes is highly individual. One person may go from attraction to infatuation in a matter of days, while another person may require many months, or even years.

Attraction

Attraction is the beginning stage. Attraction is a physical sensation. It can be very mild and pleasant, or it can be an incredible WOW!!!!!!! sensation. Attraction can be immediate, or it can grow gradually with time. It doesn't seem to matter what form it takes; even the mildest attraction, which took a long time to develop, can be effective in beginning the process.

Attraction can be such a powerful sensation that people get it confused with love. Young people especially have difficulty know what is happening to them. When the physical window first opens and a young person experiences attraction, the feeling is so new and it feels so good, that it is easy to understand how they think it must be love. As the years pass, and they find the experience repeated again and again, they grow to understand that the feeling is attraction, and that is *all* it is.

Courting

Attraction leads to courting. Courting tends to look very different from one culture to another, but the basics are always the same. Courting is composed of behaviors and

actions that one person takes toward another as a result of attraction. If the attraction is mutual, then courting responses are given in return.

Courting actions normally begin with an indication of attraction. Somehow, one attracted person takes an action that communicates the feeling of attraction to the other person. In a very reserved culture, this might be a little more than eye movements or a tilt of the head. In a very demonstrative culture, courting may begin with a pinch or a touch.

It is common for attraction to be one sided, and when that happens, courting gestures may not be returned. This is quite frustrating, but very normal. When attraction is mutual, then a gesture from one person leads to a response from the other person. A returned gesture of attraction generally leads to another. The tendency is to keep making each gesture or action slightly stronger and more direct as a way of continually verifying that the attraction is still mutual, even at the higher level.

When courting actions are continually met with responses that are positive, then finally both parties are out in the open, their attraction is understood to be mutual and at such a high level that there is no longer any risk of misunderstanding.

When courting reaches this level, the couple begins to become a pair. At this stage, each looks for indications of becoming exclusive. In the teen-age world, this stage may be known as “going together.” It is this stage that our culture starts to frustrate the natural process. Parents seek to limit the young twosome from being exclusive. Our culture teaches young people that they will get more experience by dating a wide variety of people. Cultural influences aside, the process continues if either or both move toward restricting their interests to just the one significant other.

If the twosome does become exclusive, and they limit their interests to each other, then the process continues with more courting behaviors. The advanced behaviors lead to resolving dominance issues, and to testing the limits of the attraction. In the teen world we see actions like teasing and testing. The teasing is a process of testing the bond to see how strong it is. It is also the way of resolving the dominance issue. Other tests may also be employed to see how strong the attraction is, and to find its limits.

Testing will typically include sexual advances. Young people often think that sexual advances stem from powerful sexual needs. Yet, the reality is they are part of the testing process within courting, and serve as much to advance the relationship, as to actually achieve sexual union.

Infatuation

Mutual attraction, and mutual courting lead to infatuation. Infatuation is a truly incredible experience, marked by highly intense feelings. It is normal for a person experiencing infatuation for the first time to conclude that, finally “This must be love.”

Infatuation is not love — not in the mature sense of a bond, which will keep a twosome together. Infatuation is infatuation, and love is love. Love will come with bonding, and bonding is different from infatuation.

Infatuation isn't love, but that doesn't mean it isn't wonderful. The incredible outpouring of songs and poems that celebrate infatuation tell the story of its power. Infatuation must be the single most powerful feeling experience that human beings have. It is WONDERFUL!!!!!!

It is during infatuation that the physical window for sexual union opens. We're genetically programmed to stop resisting sexual advances, and to throw caution to the wind. Sex seems "right." Sex seems imperative. Sex seems to be "natural" and natural it is. Unfortunately, in many cases, especially concerning young twosomes, the cultural window is still firmly shut. Culture, parents, and all forces say "No!!" The body, nature, and infatuation say, "YES!!!!!"

Infatuation is both beautiful and sad. It is beautiful because it feels so incredibly fantastic. It is sad, because it cannot last. The intensity of the feelings, the intense mutual attending, the incredible hormonal rushes, the exclusivity of its focus all contain the seeds of its ultimate demise. It cannot last, because people cannot go through their lives and do all that must be done, while in a state of infatuation. Infatuation creates intense bonds that are the cornerstone of future bonding.

Bonding and Love

Bonding is a force that binds two people together through the results of shared experiences. When any two people share an intense experience, a bond results. When two people share many intense experiences, they have a strong bond. The more intense experiences shared, the stronger the bond.

If Sally and Tom share many intense experiences, and the experiences are positive, then the bond formed is one of love.

So, with this definition, "love" is the name for the feeling produced by the bonds which result from many shared intense positive experiences.

If Agnes and Harold share many intense experiences, and all of the experiences are painful and negative, they too will form a bond. We call that kind of bond "aversion." Each time they see one another they will get in touch with the feeling produced by the negative bonds — aversion.

Infatuation is by itself an extremely intense experience. During infatuation, couples normally share many experiences. Those experiences are made intense by the intensity of the infatuation. So, infatuation provides a fertile window during which ordinary experiences are made intense and positive by the effects of infatuation. Those intense, positive experiences shared while under the influence of infatuation — and retained long after infatuation fades — provide the bonds that produce the feeling of love.

Coping

Coping is a process for handling difficulties, and making difficulties into positive, bonding experiences. Without coping, difficulties can become negative, tense experiences. Negative, intense experiences do not produce love, and if they happen often,

they can accumulate into a force larger than the bonds that form the basis of love — or worse, they can produce aversion.

“What difficulties?” the infatuated couple exclaims. “We don’t have difficulties. Everything with us is wonderful, and even if we quarrel, we have a wonderful time making up.” That’s what happens during infatuation. That is part of the wonder and beauty of infatuation. But remember, infatuation must and will fade. Then there will be difficulties (see Book Three, Section Three for reading about the difficulties that the end of infatuation brings). It is those difficulties, plus the normal, ongoing difficulties of life that create the need for coping.

If a difficulty is successfully coped with, it forms a positive, intense experience that is shared — another bond — to unite the couple more firmly. If a difficulty is *not* successfully coped with, an intense, negative experience is shared that moves the couple further apart.

Coping is a skill that can be learned. A person who is skilled at coping can turn any difficulty — no matter how painful and intense — into a positive bonding experience that brings the couple closer together. Without the ability to cope, bonding is an up and down matter. Frequently, infatuation brings many positive bonding experiences, and then as infatuation fades, the inability to successfully cope bring successive, intense, negative experiences that move the couple further and further apart. Thus is written the story of too many unfortunate couples.

To Sum it Up

“Pairing” is the process of building a warm, satisfying relationship where both partners fall in love and stay in love, which requires bonding and coping.

Infatuation is an aid to positive bonding, but it is not required. Courting is an aid to infatuation, but it is not required. Attraction is an aid to courting and infatuation, but it is not required. What *is* required — for a couple to fall in love and stay in love — is bonding and coping.



Chapter 4: The Phases in Detail — Attraction

The following chapters provide a more detailed description of each of the phases. This may assist you in determining where you are. If you already know (or don't care for more detail), skip to the next chapter: "Courting."

Attraction

Attraction is a physical response. You feel it. You look at someone, or hear his or her voice, and the reaction is immediate. In one case it can be mild. In another, it can be quite strong, and in yet another it can be *intense*.

Somehow (and nobody quite knows how), we're each "imprinted" at an early age — possible as young as three and possibly as old as eight or nine — with the imprint that lead to attraction later in life. You seem to have a mental picture of the person who is just "right" for you. Not only is there a picture, but there is an imprint for the "right" sound of the voice, the tone, the pace; not only picture and sound, but odor, taste, and feel.



Early Imprinting

Your senses are on the lookout for matches with your "right" person. Your internal screen automatically scans each person (of the right sex for you), and you are alerted when you see, hear, or meet (or smell, touch, or taste), someone who matches some of the characteristics for which you are imprinted. The closer that person comes to matching your imprint, the more intense the feeling you get.

A complete match is not necessary for attraction. Just one or two key variables may be enough to give you the feeling of being attracted. That is quite enough to start the process toward courting, infatuation, bonding, and coping.

But what a wonderful, delightful and exciting event it is to discover someone who matches many of the variables — especially important ones. (You probably have one or two key variables in your imprint that are extra important to you.)

How wonderful it is to discover such a person when you are without a partner, and your cultural window is open. How great the disappointment to find that this marvelous person is already taken, or is not attracted to you. That, however, is the way the game often goes. It seems that such people are easy to find when you already have a partner, or when you are too young.

The frustration comes from finally being available — with an open window — and not immediately finding a person who “rings your bell.” The frustration can even be greater if you *do* find the person, and he or she is not available, or is not attracted to you, i.e. you do not have the characteristics with which that person was imprinted.

Attraction Variables

Here are some of the variables that are important to different people. A few of these may be critical variables to you, but each is critical to someone.

Hair: length, type (curly, straight, long, short), color, texture	Gestures: head, hands, and arm movements
Facial features: shape, width, length	Posture: carriage, roundness, straightness
Skin color: texture and feel	Tension level of the body: relaxed, tense
Body shape: sexual features, legs, neck, lip	Height: tall, short, medium
tension, taste	Weight: light, heavy
Feel of the skin and flesh: hardness, softness	Energy level: calm, intense, easy-going, hard driving
Voice tone: timbre, pace, softness, hardness, high or low	Gait: walking, running
Sense of humor: laugh, giggle	Confidence level: cocky, shy, confident, hesitant, timid
Smell: skin, hair, breath	

Now for some fun. Take a few minutes to find out what you are imprinted for. Bring to mind two different people to whom you have felt attraction. Go over the list above and see which items were similar between the two. Then take a third person and go over the list again. If you have items that match on three people, the odds are good that those items are part of your imprinting. If there is a resounding “yes” for you on any one item, then that item is important to you.

Good news and bad news about attraction: the good news is that you’ll be attractive to some people — for one or another of your characteristics — no matter how attractive or unattractive you think you are. Your vote doesn’t count. People will be attracted to you (or not) regardless of what you think about your attractiveness. The bad news is that you’ll find yourself attracted to some people who match your imprint, but you’ll not match theirs. You can’t help it. They can’t help it. That’s just the way it is.



Chapter 5: The Phases in Detail — Courting

If you already know about courting (or don't care for more detail), skip to the next chapter: "Infatuation."

What is courting and how do you do it? Courting is a set of actions or behaviors that escalate feelings of attraction into infatuation. Courting is what you do to express your feelings of attraction. The goal of courting is to create a special kind of relationship, the pairing relationship.

The key issues to be dealt with in courting are these:

1. Exclusivity: being a twosome, not involved with others
2. Intimacy: trust and openness
3. Dominance/submission: who decides, and about what?
4. Physical intimacy: sex
5. Commitment: promises and intentions
6. Declaration: communicating your commitment

Courting Behavior

You have two different kinds of courting behaviors, natural and acculturated. Natural behaviors are those that seem to be in our genes, and they are the same no matter what culture you examine. Acculturated behaviors are those that have arisen over many generations of "your people." You're a part of some culture. It may contain elements of your nationality, your religion, your language, your socio-economic level, and your region.

Differences

This means that an American from New England will have some courting behaviors identical with those of a person from Sweden, China, or India. That same American from New England will also have some courting behaviors that are *different* from those of an American from Georgia. This book will not attempt to cover the different cultural courting behaviors. They are too diverse and too wide-ranging. The important thing for you to know is that there are cultural differences in courting rituals. So, if you find a possible partner whom you like, and the possible partner is from a different culture (religion, ethnic groups region, country, social level, etc.), you can expect that person to court differently than those from your own culture.

We will speak mostly about the kinds of courting behaviors that seem to be part of our genes. All birds, fish, and animals that mate have courting rituals. A few rituals may be learned by observation, but for the most part each animal, fish, and bird has a genetic program for how to court. The courting rituals have a place in the pairing process. The rituals determine whether or not mating will take place, and prepare both parties for the process.

Example

Let's take an example to illustrate the two levels of courting behaviors. Imagine a shipwreck, a desert island, an American boy of nineteen from Des Moines, Iowa, and a native girl of eighteen from the depths of the jungles in the Amazon. The two do not speak the same language, and have no experience of any kind with the culture, life style, religions ethics, mores, politics, beliefs, or expectations of the other.

Advance the situation a few weeks. The two have joined to find shelter, food, and safety. After working to solve a number of jointly faced problems, the two have formed many bonds. The bonds they have forged provide the basis for attraction, and they both feel the stirrings of attraction. Courting behaviors can now be expected.



So, the boy sends a signal. He draws a heart with an arrow in it, on the sand. She doesn't get it. The message was a cultural message. It would mean something to a fellow American, but means nothing to this girl from the Amazon jungles. She sends a signal. She takes two palm fronds and entwines them, and gives them to him. He draws a blank. The message was cultural. It would mean something to a boy from her jungle lands but means nothing to a boy from Des Moines.

He watches her, and when she notices, he tilts his head and his eyes catch hers. She gets the message. She blushes, giggles and averts her eyes. He gets the message and his pulse quickens. He stands up, lifts his head high, picks up a stone and throws it far into the distance. She claps and throws a stone a shorter distance. He laughs, makes signs like swimming, and beckons her to follow him to the water. In

the water, he splashes her. She splashes back. He splashes more vigorously; she dives under the water. He follows, and when she emerges he ducks her under the water. She shrieks and pushes him away. He swims a little distance away and studies the clouds. Soon, she swims underneath and pulls him under. He laughs and chases her again.

You don't need words or agreed upon customs to court. This same set of courting activities would be understood regardless of custom or language.

Purposes for Courting

Courting behaviors serve a variety of purposes:

1. To communicate feelings of attraction
2. To communicate interest in the other person as a possible partner
3. To provoke from the other person a response equal to or greater than that communicated
4. (Male) To demonstrate strengths speed, power, (capability to dominate)
5. (Male) To demonstrate problem solving ability, crisis-handling capability (capability to defend and protect)
6. (Female) To demonstrate willingness to defer (sometimes)
7. (Female) To demonstrate willingness to be defended and protected (when desired)
8. (Female) To demonstrate willingness to nurture and please

Notice that the genetic programming is not in tune with the popular trend in the United States towards equality between the sexes. This difference between genetic and cultural programming can cause difficulties in modern American couples working toward an equalitarian relationship. Their left-brain reasoning and cultural beliefs move them in one direction, and their genetic programming takes them in another.

This presents no real problem to the thoughtful couple. The thoughtful couple will allow the process to proceed as modified by their beliefs, and moderated by their goals. We do many things socially that oppose our genetic programming, and we have no real problems with it. For example, we restrain our basic urges to take what we want, fight if frustrated, and touch what pleases us. Let those who seek equalitarian relationships understand that the courting process isn't quite built that way, and let them see that as one more hurdle that must be overcome.

Testing and Provoking Responses

One other important element needs to be explained: the idea of testing and provoking responses. It helps to imagine a series of different levels of feelings.

Let's invent a scale of feelings where zero is no interest, one is a little interest, and so on up to ten, which is full infatuation.

Boy sees girl. Boy jumps to level one right away. Boy initiates some courting activity. It might be indirect — he does something to attract her attention, or it might be more direct — he looks at her and smiles. Girl sees boy, and finds him attractive. She jumps to level one also. She then responds to his initiative. She'll attempt to communicate a response equal to the level of her feelings. She'll send a level one response. Normally, a response from one will escalate the feelings of the other. So, let's say that our boy goes to level two. He needs to communicate this new level. So, he'll send a flirt, or attract attention equal to the level he feels. And, so it goes. When one gets ahead of the other, the one ahead will attempt to provoke a response equal to or greater than the level the other individual feels.

On it goes until he reaches level four. Level four might require a touch to express. So, he touches her. Since he has no sign from her that she is at that level, he might make it seem accidental, or part of something else (like a game of tag). Once he gets a touch back, he's ready to escalate again. If she won't touch back, or does not yet want to touch (being at a lower level of feeling), he'll attempt a variety of strategies to get her to respond at his level.

There seems to be a part of the courting process that seeks to keep the escalation growing and seeks to keep the responses matched. The process gets out of whack when one person gets too far ahead of the other. When one gets too far ahead, the person with the lesser level can feel overwhelmed by the person ahead. The person ahead can feel frustrated and tormented by the apparent resistance or reluctance of the other.

Risks

Courting is risky. Somehow, people find themselves embarrassed to be expressing a level of feeling much higher than has been confirmed between the two. This gives rise to testing and teasing. Harry has kissed Sandy, and Sandy has kissed back. They both feel good about each other. Things are progressing splendidly. Now, Harry puts his hand on her breast. Now, for Sandy, the question is whether this is a genuine escalation for Harry, or is it a test? Harry might well be at a higher level of feeling, ready to advance the relationship, or Harry might simply be testing to see if Sandy is at a higher level.

The issues are too complex to speculate about in text form, so we won't follow all the alternatives that could ensue between Harry and Sandy. They will serve as an example of the difficulties of courting, i.e. when is a signal a legitimate escalation, and when is it a test?

If Sandy thinks Harry is testing, then she may respond with indignation to Harry's well-intentioned communication. If she responds favorably to Harry's

escalation, and he is only testing, Sandy could find herself communicating a deeper level of feeling than Harry really has.

Teasing is a test or escalation wrapped in the pretense of not really meaning it. The pretense allows the test or escalation to go unanswered without risk of rejection.

Okay, so you have a series of issues to resolve, and you have a series of behaviors that are used to resolve them, and you have levels of feelings, and you have testing and teasing to confuse the whole affair. It almost makes you wonder how anyone gets through it; it seems so difficult. Well don't worry. Everyone works his or her way through it, sometimes many times.

Here are some thoughts that can make courting as smooth and easy as this complex step can get:

It Helps to Talk About It

After you and your partner have clearly begun courting, bring it up for discussion. Read through this chapter together, and discuss your reactions. Here's a checklist of things that might be discussed.

1. Is your window open or closed?
2. What are your thoughts on exclusivity? At what stage? Let it evolve, or make a decision?
3. What is intimacy to you? How open are you willing to be? What level of trust do you expect? How slowly shall intimacy evolve? How slowly shall trust evolve? What kinds of things destroy trust? What kinds of things damage intimacy?
4. How fast do you each escalate? How will the slower one ask the faster one to be patient? How will the faster one handle the need to be patient? How does it feel to be ahead? How does it feel to be escalating more slowly?
5. How do you want to handle sex? Can you Just let it evolve naturally? At what point will it be too much too soon? Can we reach agreement on how to limit sexual escalation to a rate both can be comfortable with? Would you prefer an agreement in advance so that sex doesn't become an issue critical to the relationship? Does talking about it take out all the mystery? Would you prefer to ignore it? What might be the consequences of ignoring it? Is it too early to talk about sex?
6. What does it mean to dominate? What does it mean to be submissive? Can we discuss it? How do you want your partner to be? How comfortable could you be in the role your partner described? What kind of relationship do you visualize? A traditional role prescribed relationship? An egalitarian relationship? What does that mean to you?

7. What does commitment mean to you? When do you expect it? What is tied to? Are you resistant to it, or eager for it? What responsibilities come with commitment? Who is responsible for what?
8. How public can you be in declaration? How public do you want to be? How would it be for you? When do we declare that we are a couple? What is good about early? What is good about later?



Chapter 6: The Phases in Detail — Infatuation

If you already know about infatuation (or don't care for more detail), skip to the next chapter: "Bonding."

The courting rituals are behind you now. You've each declared yourselves — at least enough to know that your feelings are being returned. You have put all others in the background and declared yourselves to the world. You are a twosome now, and everyone knows it. (Later, in the troubleshooting section we will deal with the special case of being mutually infatuated, when one or both of you are committed to someone else.)

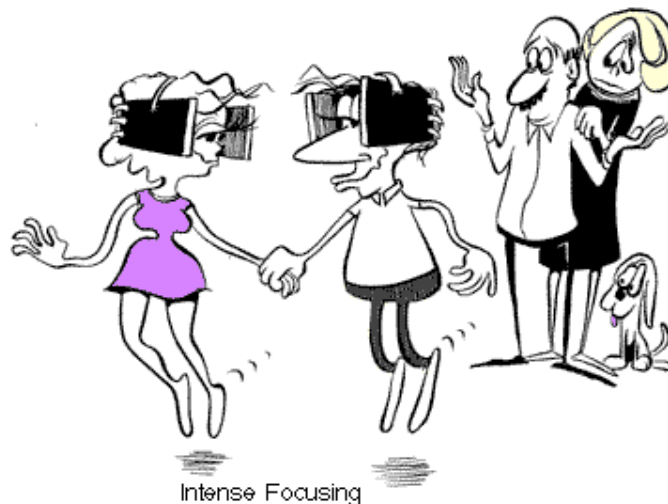
Infatuation

Ah, infatuation! How wonderful. When you enter into mutual infatuation, life is beautiful. This is the stuff that provokes poems and songs. How painful it can be to be there alone, however. If you get there and your partner doesn't follow, you discover the meaning of heartbreak.

What will you experience during infatuation? Depending on your personality makeup and your emotional range, you may experience these things at a high or low level of intensity. For one person infatuation might be the most intense experience of his or her life. For another, it is all there, but much calmer. No matter whichever you experience, it is still wonderful.

Focusing

You'll experience intense attending. Your partner will attend to you and you will attend to your partner. Whatever your partner does or says is important. Whatever you do or say, your partner finds it compelling.



You will experience intense focusing. No one else will matter. Friends, family, work, hobbies, and everything else that used to be important, suddenly doesn't seem to be

very important any more. Yet, everything your partner does, says, or wants is *incredibly* important. Life seems to narrow down to just you two, and to *right now* — plus your dreams of a blissful future full of more infatuation — until the day you die.

You'll lose more and more of your ability to do reality testing. You may know for certain that it won't last. After all, no one else's infatuation ever seemed to last, and yet, somehow, you imagine that your love will be different.

You'll be willing to take more risks with other relationships and things you used to value. After all, nothing is as important as your partner and you. Money isn't as important as it once was. Your career — your future — is nothing compared to your partner.

Matching

Matching, matching, matching. Everything between you will match, and those things that don't will disappear into nothingness. You like everything your partner likes. Your partner likes everything you like. You believe the same things. You hope for the same things. You agree to the same things. You hate the same things.

Hormones

You may experience incredible hormonal rushes. You may find that you can go on and on without sleep. You can stay awake all night, and work like crazy the next day, only to be ready to do it again.

Time Shifts

You may experience a shift in time perception. Time with your partner will fly like an instant. Time away from your partner will drag like time has stopped.

Bonding

You'll experience event after event that bonds you together. A certain song. A certain place. A certain moonlight. A picture. A tree. A film. A poem. A dress. A bracelet. A ring. A hundred small things, which once you wouldn't have noticed, now become incredibly important. It is the shared intensity of good feelings about these seemingly little things that provide the bonds that collect into love.

You are now in love. No doubt about it. No one could tell you different. And — you are right. That is love. That is what it is all about. Those hundred little shared experiences shared with the intensity of infatuation become the bonds that are true love.

I hate to interrupt this reverie, but I want to point out the distinction between the *infatuation that makes the bonding intense*, and the *love that results from the bonding*. They are different. The infatuation will diminish and normality will return, but the love will still be there. The love is different from the infatuation.

Some Difficulties

Now, there are a few things that happen during infatuation that can become a problem if you aren't aware of them. The process of infatuation unleashes some

hormonal reactions that can be quite hard to handle. Along with the bonding, comes (in some people) a natural need to act out “bond defenses.” Somehow, some people find themselves feeling intense jealousy during this period. Normally, the jealousy is unwarranted, and without reason. You’ll note however, that reason and the application of normal judgment is somewhat impaired by the intensity of the infatuation.

Luckily, in most people, this excessive jealousy diminishes with the fading of the intensity, but for a few, it continues.

Other hormonally stimulated reactions that sometimes occur are such things as territorial defense and rejection of all external authority. This means that some people will experience intense feelings about their shared space and will seek to reject other spaces.

Jay and Carol

Example: Jay and Carol were teenagers each living in their own homes. As they became infatuated and fell in love, the one place they could find to be together was in Jay’s car. Within that tiny space they had a place that was theirs. A place they could think of as their own. Much of their time was spent there, and they were strongly bonded to the events they shared there.

As their relationship developed, Jay became more and more comfortable being with Carol in his car, and less comfortable being other places. Carol wanted to spend some time in her home with Jay and her family and friends. Jay felt uncomfortable in her home. Carol wanted to expand the places that they went and the people they were with. Jay resisted.

Carol felt trapped and frustrated. She searched for answers to the question, “Why does Jay want to spend all our time in his car?” She might have understood better if she had known about how infatuation sometimes triggers the need for a single-shared space for some people. Jay might have been more flexible if he had known that his compelling need to be in his car was only a side effect of the hormonal rushes that are stimulated by infatuation. Without understanding the problem, it eventually came between them. Carol couldn’t accept Jay’s need to be with her in his car, and Jay couldn’t understand why Carol always wanted to be someplace else.

Fred and Alice

Fred and Alice shared a different problem. Fred and Alice were also young people, each of whom lived with their parents. As they became more and more of a couple, Fred found it more and more difficult to accept the wishes of Alice’s parents. Alice’s parents were understanding and accepting people, but they had some reasonable ground rules for Alice to follow. They set times when Alice was to be home, and ground rules about how frequently she could go out in the evenings.

As Fred and Alice became infatuated and fell in love, Fred became increasingly upset about Alice following her parents’ ground rules. It seemed vitally important to Fred

that Alice should free herself from her parents control and fall more under Fred's influence. Both would have been better able to cope with this difficulty if they had understood that the urge to be free of outside authority was a common and natural byproduct of the hormonal effects that come with infatuation.

Fred's frustration stemmed from not being aware of the differences between the natural window and the cultural window. The body, the mind, and the hormones all prepare young people to be independent and self sufficient as a couple far earlier than the cultural needs for education and preparation for the adult world allow.

Understanding the problem does not solve it, but it goes a long way to helping young people accept the normality of the problem. By understanding the forces involved, they can better accept the realities of the situation and avoid blaming the problem on each other or on outside forces, such as the authority figures involved.

If you experience any of these side effects of infatuation, accept them and understand them. Do what you can to protect your future relations with authority figures, because when you come back down to earth, you'll have to re-establish relations with them. These side effects are not personality or character flaws. They are products of the same hormones and genetic programming that brought you the wonders of infatuation and the intensity of bonding that produces genuine, mature love.



Chapter 7: The Phases in Detail — Bonding

Let's examine bonding very broadly, and then narrow it down to the special bonding that takes place between two people forming a relationship.

Bonding

Whenever you have a strong feeling of any sort, that feeling is stored away in the part of your mind that's outside of your awareness. All of the components of that experience are stored along with the feeling.

Bonding Experiences

For example, Billy goes to the circus. He feels excited and thrilled when he watches the lion tamer. He stores the entire experience along with the feeling. A bond of good feelings is formed between Billy and his recollection of the circus.

Years later, Billy sees an ad for the circus. The memory of the experience flashes back through Billy's awareness. He can see inside his mind the visual images he stored of the lion tamer. He can, if he chooses to be aware of it, smell the smells, hear the sounds, and feel the feelings he felt when he was at the circus. Billy has formed a bond with the circus. The circus is connected with those good feelings of thrills and excitement.

You go through life building a huge reservoir of experiences, each with a feeling connected to it. You are bonded to the parts of the experience by the feeling.

Bonding to Animals

Sally is bonded to her dog. She feels that she loves her dog. Many times, her dog has demonstrated affection for Sally. Sally stores each of those experiences under both "dog" and the feeling she gets of "being loved." Sally is bonded with the dog for all of the times she has felt good because the dog made her feel wanted. Sally is bonded to the dog by the many times that she fed, bathed, and tended to the dog and the feelings of being needed that she got.

Bonding to "Things"

Bonding can be trivial, or it can be very deep. Perhaps you have a favorite pair of shoes you're attached to. It may have given you many experiences of feeling comfortable. You may have an old torn, worn-out shirt that you still wear. Somehow it is very comfortable to you, and you feel attached to that shirt.

Think of all the things that you have, that you value — perhaps not for the value itself, but for its link to the good feelings that are attached to it. We take pictures, because we can use them to bring back good feelings that came from the event in the picture, or the people in the picture.

Missy has an old bracelet that she no longer wears. She won't throw it away because her best friend gave it to her. Every time she sees the bracelet, she feels the good feelings she shared with her friend.

Bonding in Love

A bond is formed with anything that provides us with a feeling. Some feelings are more important to us, and more highly valued. For example, the need to love and be loved is a very important need for most people, and very highly valued. The need to experience a good taste in the soda you drink is far less important, and not highly valued. So, a person who satisfies in you the need to be loved is much more highly valued than a soda that provides you with a good taste when you drink it.

Each experience forms a bond, but of vastly different levels of importance. So, bonds can be formed with anything that provides a good feeling, but the bonds are vastly stronger with the things that satisfy needs that are really important to us.

Positive Bonds

The need to find a partner with which to pair, is one of the most important human needs that we have. That need is very acute when we don't have a partner. When we have a partner, and feel love and being loved, then that need is satisfied and other needs come to the surface.

The bonding that happens between two people is made up of:

1. A very strongly felt *need to find and pair* with a partner.
- 2: The very powerful *feelings of satisfaction* that come with satisfying the need for a partner.
- 3: The incredible *intensity of the feelings* that are magnified by infatuation.
- 4: *Your partner*, the person bonded to you by above components.



So, Infatuation produces powerful bonding. The bonding binds two people in love together, and gives them a huge reservoir of good feelings with which to begin their long-term relationship. As infatuation diminishes, and they both return to the “real world,” they will experience the normal number of difficulties that any two people have in building a life together. The reservoir of love and good feelings will be the bond that keeps them together to work through the difficulties that they will face.



Chapter 8: The Phases in Detail — Coping

Coping is the process by which people handle challenges and difficulties. It's the most important part of having a satisfying, long-term relationship. With successful coping the bond that's formed during infatuation will be strengthened and increased. With poor coping the bond that's formed during infatuation will gradually erode away and be replaced by a larger and larger reservoir of bad feelings. When the reservoir of bad feelings is as large or larger than the reservoir of good feelings then the sight and the presence of the other person will bring out — not the good feelings — but the bad.

Negative Experiences

Billy, who loves the circus from his one experience, goes again. This time for a variety of reasons he has a terrible time. As time passes the idea of the circus will bring out two sets of feelings, some good, some bad.

The next time the circus comes to town, Billy may or may not go again. Certainly, we can predict that if Billy goes again and is disappointed once more, then his storehouse of experiences of the circus will be heavily weighted in terms of his bad feelings. It is now very unlikely that Billy will go to the circus again, for his own pleasure. (He may very well go as a way of giving a good experience to his children, even though his satisfaction will come from their pleasure, not his own.)

It is that way with relationships. If the two lovers who felt such love for each other during infatuation accumulate a large number of shared experiences that are *negative* and *hurtful*, they eventually may not want to share any more experiences.

Coping is the process by which people handle difficulties in such a way that they end up with good feelings, and with a stronger bond. Coping aims at maximizing good feelings and minimizing bad feelings. The goal is to build and nurture a growing reservoir of good feelings attached to your partner. The larger this reservoir becomes, the more positive you feel toward your partner and toward your relationship. Anyone who has had a relationship can tell you that coping is not easy, nor does it come without some work and practice.

There will be some situations where your coping skills don't work, and you may require some changes in your way of acting or looking at things. Book Two contains a series of ways that you can install the changes that you need in order to be able to cope effectively.

The one thing this book cannot provide is the incentive and motivation for you to examine your coping strategy and make the changes that you'll need if you are to cope as well as possible. The motivation to learn skillful coping comes best from the part of you that needs to find someone to bond with, and from the need to love and be loved. Allow those needs — which are so powerful — to motivate you to learn coping skills which can help you meet those important needs in a way that is warm, loving, and satisfying.

Many couples have learned to have warm, loving, and satisfying long-term relationships. The secret isn't in the way it starts. The secret is in the process of coping that continues throughout the relationship.



Chapter 9: When It's Working Well

Once more, as a form of summary, let us go through the cycle.

Sam and Edie

Sam and Edie meet and each feels an attraction for each other. They enter the courting process. Over times they test the strength of the attraction, they demonstrate their feelings for each other, they become exclusive, they become a twosome, they become accepted by outsiders as a twosome.

Their feelings escalate and they experience infatuation. Every shared experience has a new intensity. Everything about the other is just great and they put everything else in the background for a while.

Their shared experiences bond them with a thousand little things that they can laugh about and enjoy together. The enjoyment, the laughing, the intense feelings, their song, their restaurant, their movie, all form the little, intensely felt and joyfully shared experiences that bond them together.

They marry and experience the adjustments of sharing a life together and all the little accommodations that living together requires. They quarrel and laugh about it later, secure in the knowledge that their love is larger than the difficulties. They have problems, but they cope. Each is committed to the goal of making their marriage strong enough to handle anything that can come up. Each crisis is the basis, ultimately, for a stronger bond. Each difficulty is an opportunity for them to overcome it and prove again that their love can bridge any difficulty. They cope successfully and then and only then do they live happily ever after.



Where does sex fit in?

Sex fits in best during infatuation — after you are into it far enough to feel secure that you are twosome — after your relationship is strong enough that you are willing to cope with difficulties.

There are many benefits of waiting until infatuation is secure:

- Sex becomes one of the “special” experiences you share that form a secure bond. That means that every sexual experience you share after infatuation will bring back the wonderful feelings and memories of the intense experiences you shared during infatuation.
- The intensity of the early sexual experiences is enhanced by the strong mutual feelings brought on by infatuation.
- It feels “right.” Sex is then free to become a normal part of the ongoing relationships rather than something that produces feelings of guilt or frustration.

If you begin sex during the attraction stages sex loses its “special” status. That means that you have a long life together in which sex isn’t as useful for refreshing the bonds that you formed during infatuation. There is not necessarily any damage done to the later relationship if sex is begun too early. The loss comes in missing a lifetime of what sex could have been — had you waited.

The same is true of beginning sex in the courting phase. Every delay possible makes the ultimate experience better, and the long term benefits greater. So, beginning during courting is better than beginning during attraction, but the best overall benefits come from waiting at least until infatuation.

Sometimes it happens that infatuation is begun and finished before the “window” that will allow marriage or permanent commitment, is open. That can mean that the initial sexual sharing will have less intensity than it would have had during infatuation. On the other hand, the prolonged delays of people in love, serves as its own intensifier. This means that when sex is eventually shared, it will have a special intensity that it can never have during the attraction or courting phases.

What happens if you skip stages?

The ultimate example of skipping stages is the “arranged” marriage, which happens in many cultures. Sometimes marriage is arranged between people who have barely even met. Excellent marriages can and often do still result.

An arranged marriage puts a lot of stress on coping. Not only do the two newlyweds have to cope with the stresses of a new relationship, but they also have to do it without the bonding that comes from infatuation. Arranged marriages work best in cultures where the relationship rules and methods of coping are fairly fixed and understood by everyone in childhood.

Most couples in the U.S. have the cultural freedom to make any kind of relationship they want. This freedom is a benefit on one hand, and a difficulty on the other. In cultures where everything is already settled, then each partner knows his or her role. They don't need to do the kind of "working it out" that most couples have to do in the U.S.

In any case, arranged marriages have proven for millions of marriages in countries throughout the world that long term successful marriages can be achieved without attraction, without courting, and without infatuation. Bonding will always be available, and coping is the key to long-term success in any case.

Skipped Stages: Tom and Mary

Tom fell for Mary like a ton of bricks. He felt his insides go "flop" every time he saw her. She felt no attraction for Tom, but he didn't put her off. He courted her vigorously. She went through the motions, but she still wasn't excited. He experienced all of the affects of infatuation. She loved all the attention, and gradually grew to like him more, but was alarmed that she felt much less strongly than he did. He proposed, she accepted but asked for a long engagement. She thought that maybe time would help her to feel something. It didn't. They were married and three years later began having children. That was 33 years ago. In telling the story, Mary relates that her love for Tom grew gradually greater and greater. She says today that she loves Tom more than anything in the world, and she feels she has had the happiest marriage of any couple she has known.

So, in example after example, there are cases of couples where one or both have skipped some or all of the stages and yet they have successful long-term relationships.

Coping is the key.

There have even been very successful marriages reported where one of the parties felt not only no attraction — but instead aversion. One woman reported that she felt repulsed every time she saw the man that eventually wooed her and married her. She reported that the repulsion gradually gave way to neutral responses and while she never felt attraction she grew to love him greatly.

If everything works smoothly —according to the "natural way" — that's terrific. If it doesn't, it can still work out.

Coping is the key, so let's get to it. Now that you understand the stages of the relationship, it is time to begin focusing on the key phase. Coping holds the key to a happier and happier relationship.

To understand coping, it is first important to understand how the mind works, and where coping fits in.

Remember, the goal of successful coping is learning to:

- *Maximize the good feelings* you have with your partner, and learning to
- *Resolve the bad feelings* you get from and with your partner.

So coping is aiming at building a reservoir of good feelings that will nurture and satisfy the need you have for a relationship.

To understand about feelings and how they are maximized or resolved, let's examine the Sage model.

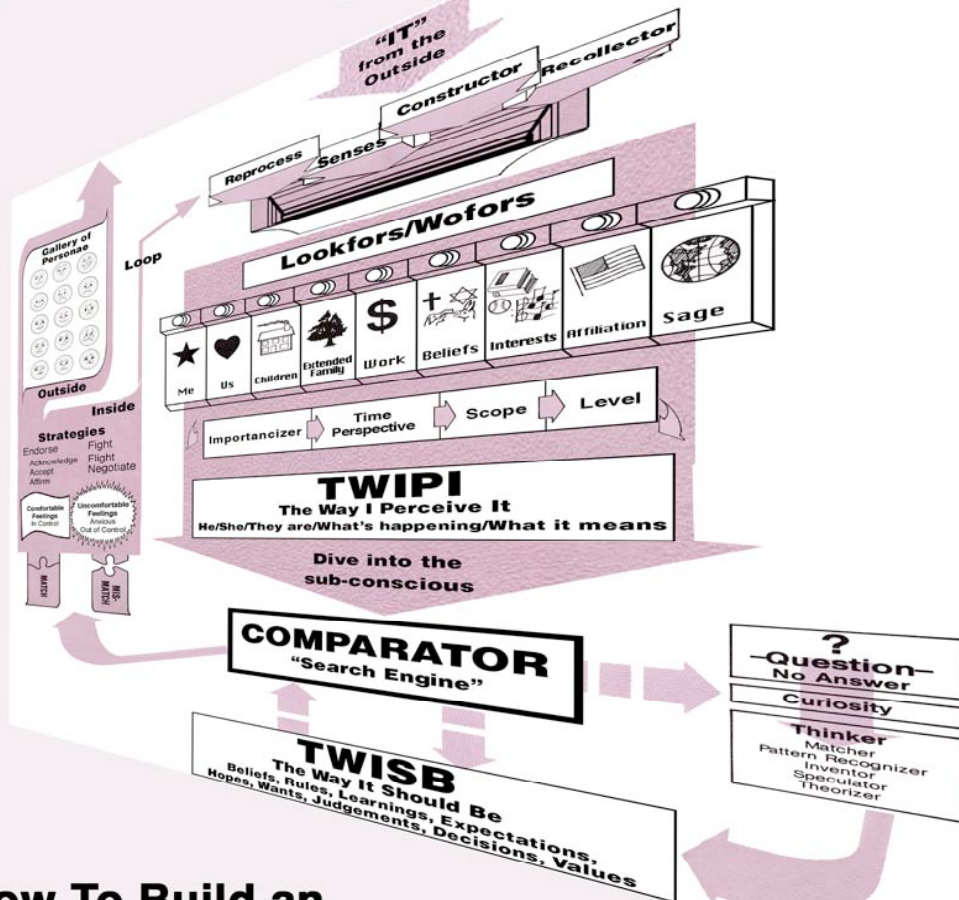


Book Two

Coping: 30 Ways to Change Your "Self-Talk"

METAMATING SERIES

by: Ken Johnston

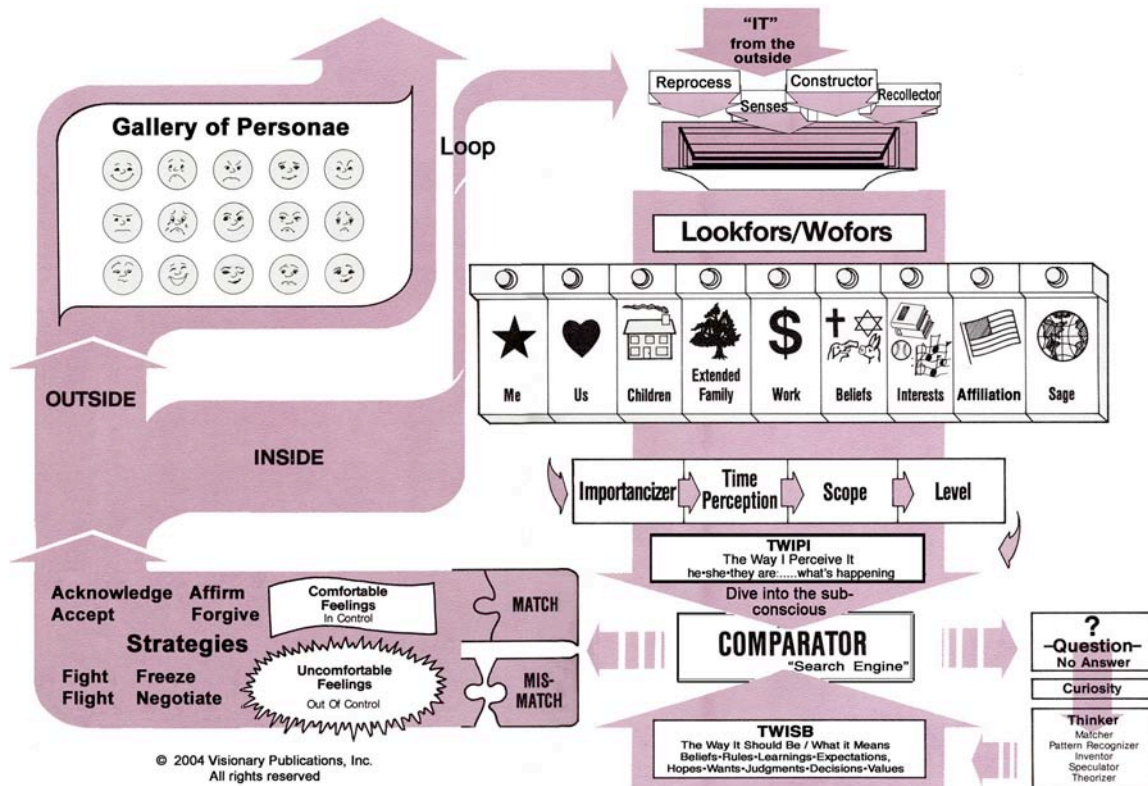


How To Build an
Extraordinary Relationship

Chapter 1: Overview of the Sage Model

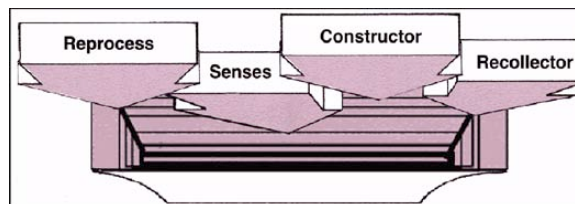
This first look at the Sage Model is a “once over lightly,” to give you a feel for the pieces and how they work together. After you see all the pieces, we’ll take some examples of individual difficulties you might have, and work through the model again with those. Take a look at the model of how the mind works.

The Sage Model



First there is Some Input

Input can come from the outside. For example, your eyes, ears, nose, mouth and skin are constantly picking up inputs from the external world around you. Your mind can choose to focus on one or more sensory inputs to process.



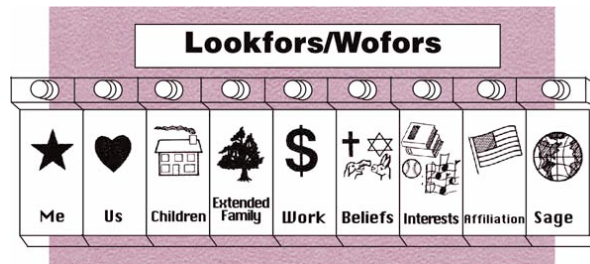
It can be recollected from the past. Your mind might select some past experience to process again. Your “Recollector” digs through your stored up memories and selects one or more to bring into your conscious mind for processing.

Input can be made up, or imagined by your “Constructor.” Your Constructor can create any situation it desires. It can invent things that never happened and bring them into your conscious mind so clearly that you can see them, hear them, and feel them as clearly as though they had really happened, or might really happen in the future.

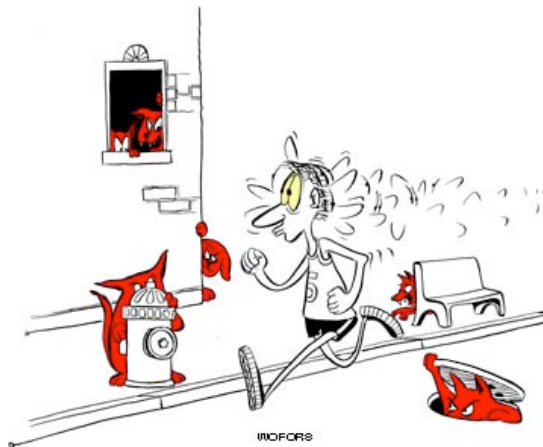
So, inputs come from: the outside, recollections, and imagined situations.

Inputs Are Screened By Lookfors And Wofors

Lookfors are things that your various parts want you to “look for” in order to meet their needs. For example, when you’re hungry, you might have a Lookfor to screen all possible input for any sign of something to eat.



Wofors are things that your parts have asked you to “watch out for.” These are things that represent danger or threat. For example, if you have had a bad experience with a dog, you might have set up a Wofor to watch out for any signs of dogs.

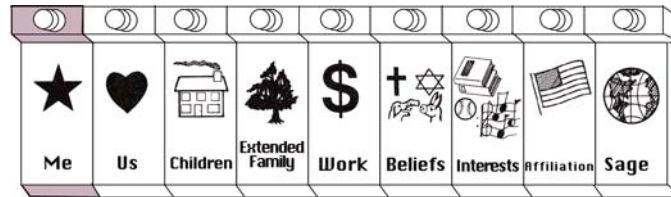


Whatever Input Is Present Is Assigned To a Part

Most people have nine separate and distinctive parts. A part is like a complete sub-self. Each has its own goals, its own beliefs, its own Storehouse of things it has learned. Each has its own feelings about itself. For example, one might feel very confident and okay. Another might feel lacking in confidence, and not okay. One might be strong and fully developed; another might be hardly ever used and be simply awaiting future development. Here are the nine parts.

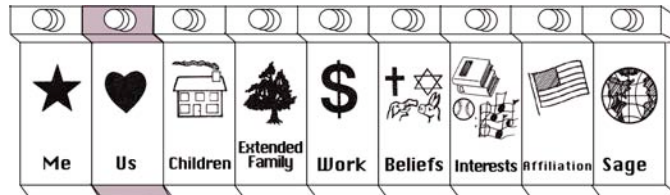
The Me-part

The Me-part is the part of you that is responsible for taking care of you and you alone. It cares only for you and is not concerned about others. It wants what it wants when it wants it. This part is concerned about your physical self and your appetites. It gets hungry, has sexual needs, feels cold or hot, and wants to play or to rest.



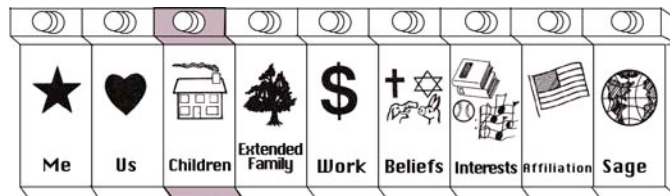
The Us-part

Your Us-part is the part that is responsible for attracting, courting, and bonding with a mate. This part is concerned with the needs of the partner. The Us-part cares as much about your partner's needs as its own. This part is the one that falls in love, gets infatuated, feels attractive, and becomes attracted.



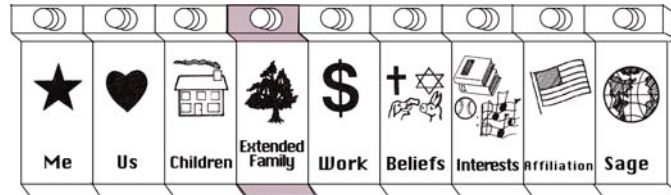
The Children-part

The Children-part is the parent in you. It loves and bonds with children. The Children-part is concerned less with your own needs than it is with the needs of your child or children. This is the part that needs and wants to nurture others. You use this part in caring for the sick, elderly, or those who need your help.



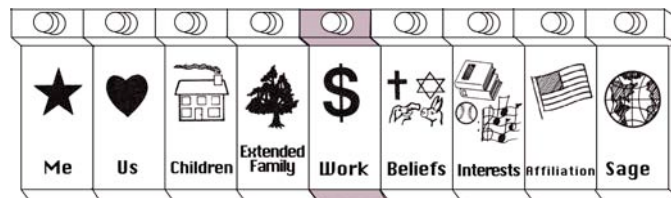
The Family-part

The Family-part is responsible for bonding with your own mother and father, or whoever raised you. This part has a special caring and bonding with brothers and sisters, or with aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins. This part has special loyalties that it reserves for your extended family. Later in life it is this part that becomes a grandparent and has special affection and bonding with grandchildren. It is this part of you that knows that “blood is thicker than water.”



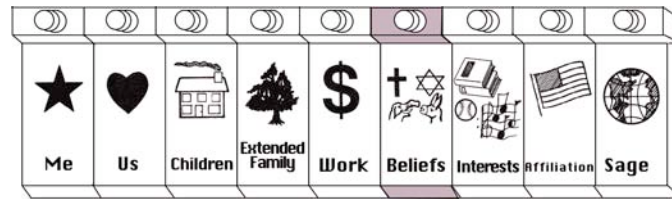
The Work-part

The Work-part is that part of you that works or contributes to society in some way. The Work-part can be an employee, a business owner, homemaker, a doctor, trainer, lawyer, a farmer, an artist, or one of a zillion different kinds of workers. This part is willing to put self-interest aside, and become part of a larger team that is committed to serving others. The Work-part seeks its own kinds of rewards. It enjoys achievement, and it enjoys growth and accomplishment. The Work-part frequently gets great satisfaction from the work itself.



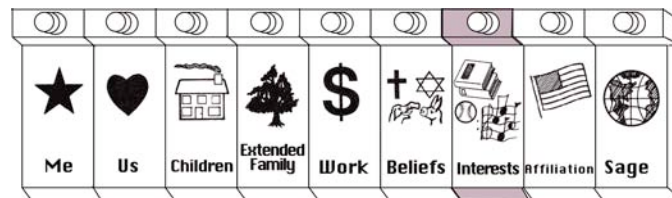
The Beliefs-part

The Beliefs-part is that part that is responsible for choosing your beliefs and honoring them. This is the part of you that takes you to worship in church, temple or mosque. This is the part that supports others with shared beliefs. This is the part of you that has political beliefs and opinions. This part puts your other interests behind those that it believes in. The Beliefs-part is willing to join in protest marches, writes letters to political leaders, and signs petitions. The Beliefs-part is the part that makes contributions to causes that it believes in. This is the part that people use if they choose to become missionaries, or to fight holy wars.



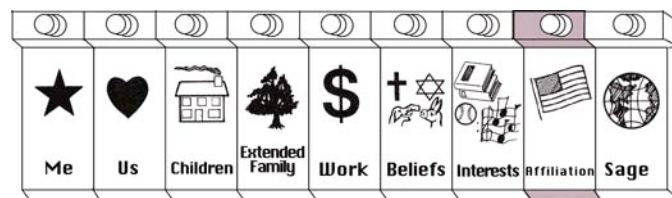
The Interests-part

Your Interests-part enjoys hobbies or learning. If you're curious about something and eager to learn about it, that's probably your Interests-part. The Interests-part may collect stamps, study history, read biographies, tour museums, travel to foreign countries, or climb mountains. The Interests-part may want to watch birds, grow orchids, collect butterflies, and watch public television programming. It has the need to satisfy curiosity and discover the outside world.



The Affiliation Part

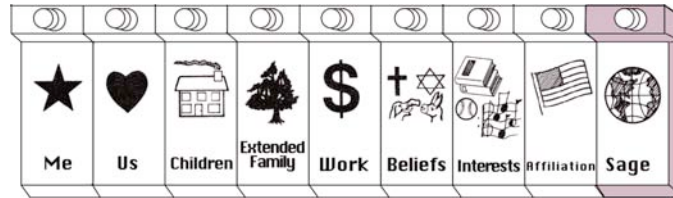
Your Affiliation-part is the part of you that seeks affiliation and has needs to join and be part of packs or groups. It is also concerned with *place* and bonds with others who share that place. Your Affiliation-part creates your sense of home where you live, and the sense of neighborhood around your home. It is your Affiliation-part that's patriotic and has a special loyalty that it shares with others from your homeland. Your Affiliation-part is the part of you that roots for your team (your school, your town, your state, etc). Your Affiliation-part is willing to put all other needs aside and go to war to fight to protect your home, town, state, nation, or pack of nations.



The Sage-part

Your Sage-part is that part of you that possesses your innate wisdom. This part has the potential for growing beyond the special interests of your other eight parts. Your Sage-part sees the world as one people. It cares for the future of the earth, and feels responsible for protecting the environment for future generations. The Sage-part is willing, when asked, to become responsible for resolving conflicts between

your other eight parts, and resolving those conflicts in such a way that all parts get their needs met. The Sage-part respects and appreciates all beliefs. The Sage-part respects and appreciates all nations and all places. The Sage-part feels family loyalty and love for the widest possible family — all mankind.



Each Part Processes The Input Through A Set Of Screens

There are screens that affect perceptions. They are beliefs, learnings, feelings of okayness or not, some sense of dominance or submission, and a sexual screen.

Beliefs

Each part has its own beliefs. These beliefs are often in conflict with beliefs held by other parts, though these conflicts seldom come into your awareness because only one part at a time is energized and activated.

Learnings

Each part collects a body of experiences as it grows. Often those experiences give rise to learnings that are stored for future use. Each new input processed by that part is passed through these prior learnings to see if there is confirmation of past learnings or conflict with prior learnings.

Feelings of Okay-ness or Not-okay-ness

Past successful experiences give rise to positive feelings and confidence. Past unsuccessful experiences by that part may give rise to negative feelings and lack of confidence. Confidence is the memory of past successes.

Each part collects its own positive and negative feelings. So, a given person might feel very okay and confident in his or her Me-part, because that person has had his or her needs met. Yet, this person may have negative feelings and little confidence in the Us-part. This is a common situation for young people who have well developed Me-parts and are just beginning to develop their Us-parts. Each new input is processed through this screen of okay or not-okay feelings.

Some Sense of Dominance or Submission

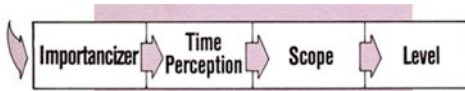
If the input being processed comes from another person (rather than from an idea, or event, or something else), then the dominance/submission screen is energized and the processing will include the effects of your feelings relative to that other person. For example, if you're processing an idea proposed by someone, and you're processing that idea with your Me-part, your conclusions about that idea will be affected by your feelings of dominance or submission toward that other person.

A Sexual Screen Relative to Your Sexual Orientation

A person with a male sexual orientation processes all input through a male point of view. A person with a female sexual orientation might process that same input quite differently. Since sexual orientation doesn't change, people tend to process all input through the same screen, and that screen becomes transparent to us. We don't even notice that we have a sexual screen, or that we are processing things differently from those who have the opposite screen. It is this screen that accounts for much of the difficulty that men have in understanding women, and that women have in understanding men. It also accounts for a large part of the general misunderstandings that men and women have. This sexual screen is one part of what we call a person's "point of view."

The Input is Given Some Level of Importance

After the input is put through the screens by the chosen part, it is then given some level of importance. The Importancizer is the part that decides how much importance to give to any input you process. Such things as your moods, amount of sleep, exercise, meditation and other physical factors affect the Importancizer. In addition, the Importancizer varies from issue to issue, depending on what needs are currently being met, or not met.



For example, on one day an issue might be given little importance. The next day that same issue could be given an extraordinary amount of importance.

A Certain Time Perspective is Chosen

The time perspective that's chosen may vary from a time scale of "right now" to a time scale of a generation or a lifetime. The time scale chosen is one determinant in the urgency you feel about any given issue. If you frequently find yourself "hurrying" even when hurrying isn't important, then it's your time perspective that is causing this effect. The time perspective may be adjusted on any issue simply by becoming aware of it, and choosing a time frame that fits the issue.

You Then Arrive at a Perception of "The Way I Perceive It"

By the time an input gets to your TWIPI (The Way I Perceive It), it has been put through a number of screens that shape it, a number of beliefs and experiences that further shape it, and it no longer is just what it was when it started.



It could now correctly be called The Way I Perceive It (as perceived by your specific part, as modified by that part's beliefs and past experiences, as modified by

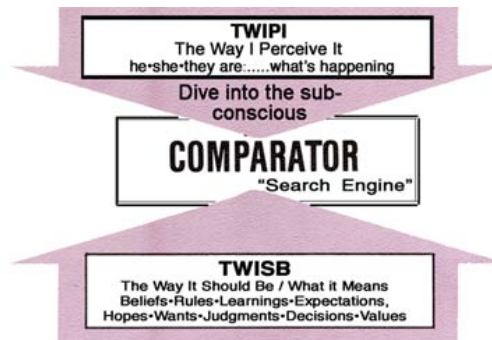
that part's sexual orientation, prior learnings, feelings of dominance or submission and feelings of okay-ness, as adjusted by your Importancizer and with the time perspective that you have chosen to use). So, that's what each input becomes when it gets to your perception of: TWIPI.

The Comparator

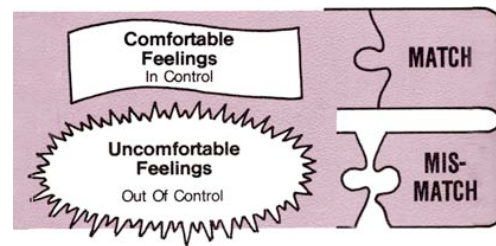
You then put the input (TWIPI) into your Comparator, where it is compared with your evaluation of The Way It Should Be (TWISB). Your TWISB is made up of all past learnings, all beliefs, opinions, past judgments — things you believe are right or wrong. Your TWISB also includes your fantasies, your hopes, dreams, and expectations.

Your Comparator Applies Some Tests

Your Comparator has its own set of tests that are particular to you. It might use a test which requires that the match be perfect, or almost so. If it is not, then it is a mismatch. Or, the Comparator might apply a test relative to whether you tried hard enough, or whether you have pleased or satisfied someone else.



Whichever test your Comparator uses, it arrives at a *match*, saying generally "what is," is what it should be. Or, a *mis-match*, saying, "what is," is different from what it should be. Then you get a feeling. If things match, you get a feeling of comfort and being in harmony. If you get a mismatch, you feel uncomfortable and out of control.

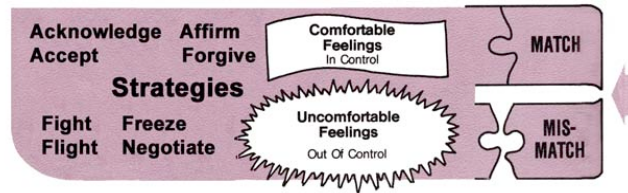


Strategies For a Match

You have some strategies you use when things match. You might use a strategy that expresses agreement or satisfaction. You might use a strategy that acknowledges that things are as you expected. You might use a strategy that endorses or supports things being the way they are.

Strategies For a Mismatch

If there is a mis-match, there are four strategies from which to choose: fight, flight, negotiate, or reprocess.



Unproductive

There are two unproductive strategies for handling a bad feeling.

Fight

You may argue, or disagree. The fight strategy is intended to change the way things are and make them more like you perceive they should be. You may use a strategy aimed at making the other person wrong, so you get to be right.

Flight

You may withdraw. You may act in a way that seems to others you're giving up, or giving in. You may choose a flight strategy that withdraws, but with anger.

Productive

There are two productive strategies for handling a bad feeling.

Negotiate

A negotiation strategy might include giving feedback about the gap between the way you see things and the way you think they should be. You might ask for what you want. In negotiating you might give up a little, and the other person might give up a little to reach an accommodation.

Freeze (Reprocess and Re-perceive)

A productive strategy for a mis-match is to freeze. Stop to think; don't react automatically. This allows you to stay inside and re-process the input and perhaps re-perceive what is happening. This internal strategy may turn a mismatch into a match by changing one of the factors in the processing.

There Are Many Ways to Turn a Mismatch Into a Match

You can discount the problem (gap) and make it disappear.

You can discount:

- the importance of the problem
- a person associated with the problem
- the solvability of the problem
- the problem itself

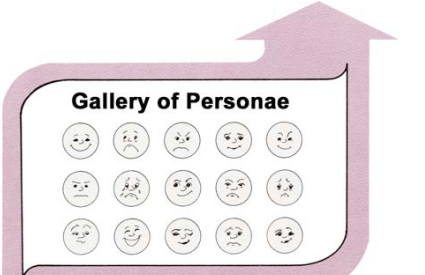
You can change

- the time perspective and discover it doesn't matter
- your expectations, in order to arrive at a match
- the test in your Comparator to allow for a match

You can re-access your Importancizer and decide it's not important.

When you're Through Processing You Select A Persona

You have many personae from which to choose. You can put on a happy, sad or angry face. Your personae are more than just "a face." They come complete with body postures, gestures, and everything that is included in body language.

<p>You have personae that sulk, whine, and pout. You have personae that are positive and forceful. You have every combination possible. Most people restrict their personae to a few, and they are normally tied in with the strategies they use to handle matches and mismatches.</p>	
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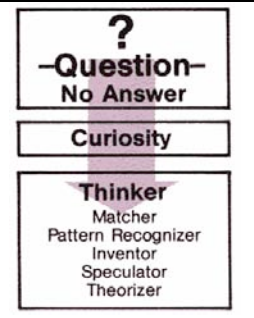
Then You "Go Outside" and Respond

When you have finished processing and have a firm match or mismatch, you select a persona and respond to the outside world in some manner.

All of the processing and screening and searching and comparing and feeling and selecting a strategy and persona, happen in fractions of a second. It all is so fast that it seems to take no time at all.

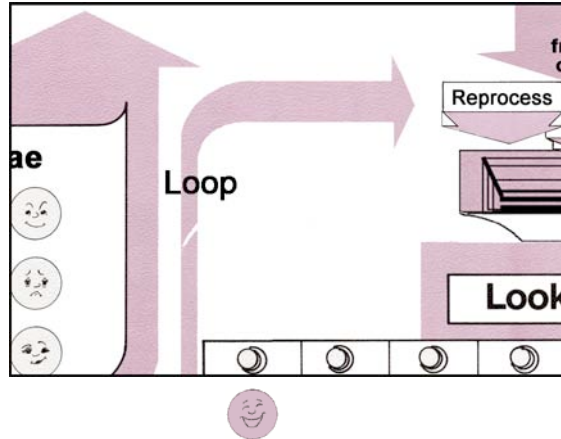
A Special Case: The Question

When the input is a question that's asked by someone else, or one that you ask yourself, it's processed by one of your parts.

<p>You end up with a perceived question. Your Comparator searches for an answer. If you find one, then there's a match, and a good feeling. If no answer is found — and if it is deemed important — it's turned over to your curious "thinker" where possible answers are considered. Your Comparator tests each possibility and tries to get a match, creating a feeling of relief and comfort. You select a strategy from those that handle known answers, and it is stored in memory to be used in the future.</p>	
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Another Special Case: The Loop

When the strategy for a selected mis-match is to stay inside, a loop is generated. It's called a loop because it goes round and round through the process, again and again until interrupted or until some output is created. If a good feeling results, then fantasy or arousal or pleasure may occur. If a bad feeling results, then the loop may escalate into anger, or rage, or jealousy or envy, etc.



Chapter 2: What Does The Sage Model Teach Us?

There are three major things the Sage Model teaches: you create your own good or bad feelings, you choose your own strategies, and you produce your own internal conflict and tension.

1. You Create Your Own Good Or Bad Feelings

The Sage Model graphically demonstrates that feelings, good or bad, are the result of the many co-existent processes going on in the mind. They are created by the way you perceive (the importance you give things, the time frame you select, the scope you choose to use, and the level at which you choose to think).

Feelings are shaped by the choice you make of which part you'll use to process inputs. Feelings are shaped by the questions you ask, the way they are formed, and the choice of operator (why, which, what, how, etc.).

You create your own feelings by the tests you use when you compare the way you perceive things against the way you want, or expect, or believe that they should be.

You create your own feelings based on the contents of your storehouse of past experiences, and the way that storehouse shapes the contents of your TWISB. You create your own feelings by the beliefs you choose to adopt, and the impact they have on your perceptions of how things should be.

2. You Choose Your Own Strategies

You choose your own strategies. Some of them get you what you want, and some others get you what you don't want.

The Sage Model demonstrates that you have strategic choices, and that you have the ability to choose which you'll use. The Sage Model offers a new method for choosing the strategies that you use.

3. You Produce Your Own Internal Conflict And Tension

The Sage Model graphically demonstrates the sources of internal conflict and tension. You learn that everyone has internal conflicts and dissonance, and that they are used to shape the choices that you make. The Sage Model also offers a new way of resolving these conflicts. You learn that it is possible to have a new approach that provides peace of mind and inner harmony, and at the same time have a way of meeting all your needs and getting what you want.

A. Parts Conflicts

Conflict between parts is one important source of dissonance and internal conflict. For example, one part may want to work, and another may want to play or pursue another interest. One part may want to attend to the needs of the children, while another may need rest, or peace and quiet.

Without awareness of the Sage Model, these needs are met one at a time, with one part getting what it wants while the other part creates a growing tension or dissonance until it gets what it wants.

B. Conflicting Beliefs

Another source of internal conflict is between conflicting beliefs, learnings, rules, etc. in your TWISB.

A person might have two deeply held beliefs that conflict. For example, someone might have one belief that it's important to have a warm loving relationship, and also hold a belief to "Never trust a woman (man)."

Each of us is filled with many conflicting beliefs. Conflicting beliefs, or conflicting learnings, produce inner tensions and dissonance and sometimes keep us from getting what we want.

The concepts taught through the Sage Model offer a whole new approach to dealing with beliefs. It offers a new set of "meta" beliefs which, when installed, will provide a way of resolving conflicts. These "meta" beliefs are beliefs about beliefs. For example, one Meta belief about beliefs is "Beliefs are chosen." This puts the responsibility for what you believe on *you*, and gives you a choice of the beliefs that you'll adopt. Another Meta belief is the belief about beliefs that "The purpose of a belief is to make us happy, give us peace of mind, and enable us to get what we want in life."

By understanding the purpose of beliefs, we become able to choose those that satisfy the purpose, and give up those beliefs that create pain, hurt, or dissatisfaction.

C. Failure to Test Strategies in Terms of Desired Outcomes

Another way we create inner conflicts and dissonance is failing to choose our strategies based on the outcomes they produce. For example, the woman who wants a loving relationship might find herself reacting to her thoughtless partner with anger and criticism. The result of her strategy achieves the opposite of the outcome she desires. Instead of bringing her closer to her partner, she is further apart.

The Sage Model helps to demonstrate that strategies must be chosen based on the outcomes produced. The Sage Model also offers a method of assuring that you choose strategies wisely, by requiring that the desired outcomes be chosen and specified.

Without being clear about the outcomes desired, it's too easy to choose strategies based on habit or belief. For example, a person may choose an unproductive strategy because they "believe" that this particular strategy is the "right" way to handle a certain situation, regardless of the outcome they actually get.

Another cause for unproductive strategies might be a “belief” about what kind of a person one is. For example, someone might hold the belief “That’s the way I am.” This belief discounts the person’s ability to choose strategies based on outcomes.

D. Failure to Be Clear About What You Want

Most people are unclear about what they really want. They don’t know the outcomes that they want, and so they fail to *choose* the ones they want, i.e. “If you don’t know where you’re going, any road will get you there.”

The Sage Model demonstrates that we are totally responsible for creating what we are, and what we get in life. It also offers a solid strategy for choosing what you want, and a method of assuring that strategies are tested for the outcomes you really desire.

Notice the Path of the Guru, or the Missionary

People have sought wisdom, peace of mind, and inner harmony in many ways. Virtually all of the ways we’ve heard about involve maximizing use of one part, and extinguishing all of the other parts in order to avoid inter-part conflicts. This means that all other parts are given little or no importance. For example, consider the guru in a cave. All creature comforts and basic needs are discounted. There is no spouse, no children, no family, no beliefs, no interests, and no loyalties.

Some systems have included no beliefs (or all beliefs), and others have included a specific set of beliefs with the conflicts resolved. Most strategies seek one, and only one, desired outcome — usually philosophical and unreachable — enlightenment, transformation, oneness with the universe, etc.

In less extreme cases, we find the workaholic who maximizes the Work-part and discounts other parts, or the super mother who maximizes the Family-part, or the alcoholic who maximizes the Me-part, or the zealot with the Affiliation-part, or the missionary with the Beliefs-part, and so on. These choices are made as an attempt to achieve peace of mind, by reducing inter-part conflicts. This strategy fails because the discounted needs of the parts are always in abeyance, waiting for their opportunities to get their needs met.

Now, the Sage Model shows us that there is another way — Sage-part resolution of inter-part conflicts, while assuring that each part gets its needs met. There is no need to extinguish all other needs; they can all be met with win-win resolutions. Also, beliefs may be maintained. With the installation of Meta beliefs (beliefs about beliefs), the Sage-part can resolve belief conflicts and paradoxes.

Outcomes don’t have to be unreachable. They can be reachable, material and satisfying. They provide the Sage-part with the rudder to steer you to the realization and achievement of your unique potential.

So, the Sage Model offers promise of a new kind of inner harmony and peace of mind, a state that enables each part to be satisfied, and in addition, develops the Sage-part as well. As the Sage-part is developed, the higher needs of humankind can be satisfied as well. Wisdom, philosophical thought, and appreciation of the wonders of the universe become available.



Chapter 3: What Your Sage-part Will Do For You

There are many things your Sage-part can do for you.

1. Maintain the Fundamental Values You Choose

You have a number of fundamental values, which guide you in your pursuit of your full potential. Some of these may be explicit and clear to you. Some of them may be less clear. Once you have clearly chosen and specified these values, your Sage-part will take the responsibility for making choices that are in harmony with your fundamental values. Fundamental values are those values, which each part must honor. They are larger than the values that any individual part may have. For example, you may hold the fundamental value that you're honest and have a high level of integrity. One of your parts, however, may want something and be willing to lie to get it.

Once you have chosen to be truthful and have a high level of integrity, your Sage-part will monitor the actions and behaviors of your individual parts, and assure that they do not violate any of your fundamental values.

2. Determine What Each Part of You Wants

When you empower your Sage-part, it will help you determine what each of your parts wants and what each part needs. Over time, as your wants and needs gradually change, your Sage-part will help you update your goals, and do what is needed to get your parts what they want (always maintaining your fundamental values).

3. Accept and Respect the Needs of Each Part

Your Sage-part is wise and understanding. It accepts the differing needs of each part, and respects those needs. Your individual parts may not accept each other, and often do not respect the needs of parts with which they conflict. Your Sage-part, however, respects the needs of each part, and accepts that each part has valid needs, and accepts that each of your part's needs must be met.

4. Become Responsible For Assuring Each Part Gets What It Needs

Your Sage-part will, if asked, take responsibility for assuring that each part gets what it needs. As your Sage-part gains experience, and as your parts learn to trust your Sage-part, you'll find that each part is able to get its needs met, without the conflict between parts that you may be experiencing presently.

Without your Sage-part being responsible for getting each part what it needs, each part must do its best to get its own needs met. Your individual parts may come into conflict with each other, and use hurtful tactics to overpower each other. These

power tactics can result in internal conflict, dissonance, and self-destructive behaviors.

As your Sage-part becomes responsible for getting each part what it needs, you'll find the conflicts and dissonance diminishing. When the transition is complete, you'll eventually discover that each part is getting what it needs, and you'll be able to maintain a sense of harmony and peace of mind.

5. Help Your Parts Distinguish Between What They Want and What They Need

Your parts often find it difficult to distinguish between “wants” and “needs.” For example, one part may feel a “need” for acceptance by others and “want” an expensive, flashy new car as a way of getting it. This could be a source of conflict if other parts have needs and wants that would be in jeopardy if you bought the expensive car before you could afford it.

Your Sage-part will accept and respect your need for acceptance by others. That's an important need and must be satisfied. The flashy car, however, is only one way in which that need may be satisfied. If your Sage-part determines that an expensive car would be in violation of your fundamental needs, or, if it would make it difficult for other parts to get what they need (for example, financial security), then your Sage-part will help the needy part find other “wants” that would satisfy the need for acceptance by others.

This is not to say that your Sage-part will keep you from having the expensive car. When you can afford it — without jeopardizing the needs of other parts or your fundamental values — your Sage-part will fully support you in getting what you “want,” if it will truly satisfy what you “need.”

6. Bring win-win Resolutions to Your Internal Conflicts

Your Sage-part will resolve conflicts between your parts. Your Sage-part has the job of getting each part what it needs, without sacrificing the needs of one part to satisfy the needs of another part. The primary tool your Sage-part will use is the strategy of win-win resolutions.

For example, Harold finds himself in a state of internal conflict. His Us-part wants to have Thanksgiving dinner with his in-laws to please and satisfy his wife and to bring harmony to his relationship. His Family-part, however, wants to have Thanksgiving with his own family to satisfy his need to be with his own parents and others in his extended family.

A win-lose resolution would be to simply choose one want over the other. One need gets satisfied, and the other gets frustrated.

A win-win resolution would be one that makes it possible to get both needs satisfied. Harold's Sage-part is creative and inventive. He may choose to attend

both celebrations if that is possible, or he may choose to alternate years between the two celebrations, or he may arrange to host a combined celebration.

As your parts become accustomed to getting their needs met, they'll become more flexible in adjusting their "wants" to accommodate the wants and needs of other parts.

7. Assure That Your Strategies Will Bring You What You Want

One of the key roles your Sage-part will play for you is assuring that what you do, will get you what you want.

For example, Sara wants a warm and loving relationship with Fred. She notices that Fred is deeply absorbed in a televised football game, and she feels the need for some attention and affection from Fred.

By habit, or based on strategies she learned from others, she is about to say something to Fred that is hurtful or critical. She hopes that her comment will cause Fred to turn off the television and attend to her needs for affection.

Her Sage-part is fully aware that the strategy she is about to use will not produce the outcome she desires. Her Sage-part predicts that a critical attack on Fred will result in a fight that may get him to turn off the television, but will distance the couple rather than bring them closer together.

Sara's Sage-part can offer her a number of strategies that will allow both Sara and Fred to get their needs met. For example, her Sage-part might suggest that she join Fred on the couch in a manner that will invite Fred to express the affection that Sara needs, without requiring that he give up the ball game in which he is absorbed.

As your Sage-part becomes skilled at producing win-win resolutions for internal conflicts, it will also become skilled at producing win-win resolutions for situations in which your needs are in conflict with other people's needs.

8. Maintain Internal Peace Of Mind And Self Satisfaction

Odds are good that one part now dominates all of your other parts. It gets what it wants without assuring that other parts get what they need. This causes the other parts to create bad feelings, e.g. guilt, or hurt, or anger, in order to get their needs met. Your parts then use games, manipulations, and distortions in order to get what they want and need. Needs are met on the basis of the "squeaky wheel" principle. All of this contention creates dissonance and internal tension.

When the parts agree to use your Sage-part to resolve conflicts, the conflicts gradually disappear, and each part can be assured of getting its needs met.

Over time, as your Sage-part becomes skilled at resolving conflicts, and your parts learn to trust that their needs will be accepted, respected, and met, you'll

achieve a state of internal harmony and peace of mind that is seldom achieved without the aid and support of your Sage-part.

9. Resolve Bad Feelings When You Get Them

Most people who have not empowered their Sage-part, experience life as a series of bad feelings. These bad feelings are caused by parts not getting their needs met, or by getting needs met at the expense of their fundamental values. These people find themselves run by their bad feelings. They get a bad feeling, so they respond by acting to resolve it. That action often causes another, different, bad feeling as they seek to meet conflicting needs.

For example, Sam has conflicting needs. He feels the need to stay at work to finish something that is important to his work. He also feels the need to be at home with his wife and his children. If he chooses to stay at work, he feels a nagging bad feeling of guilt about not meeting his need to be home with his family. If he goes home to his family, he feels the nagging need to be at work. Without the aid of his Sage-part, Sam is at the mercy of his bad feelings and will have a bad feeling, whichever choice he makes.

To paint an even more complete picture of Sam, we could list all of the other needs that are in conflict and are pulling on him at the same time. We might mention things like his guilt because he hasn't written to his mother recently, and his desire to be with his friends for a drink and a little companionship after work, and his frustration because he hasn't been able to play golf in three weeks, and his desire for that new car he has had his eye on (or his guilt because he bought it, and now won't be able to afford the vacation that his wife wants, etc., etc.).

For Sam, and for many people, life is a constant stream of bad feelings that push, pull, and tear at them. They experience a stream of bad or negative feelings, which cause them to act, and react, and yet the feelings seldom entirely go away.

When your Sage-part is skilled and experienced at resolving conflicts and bringing you closer and closer to what you want, you'll experience life in a very different way. You'll still experience bad feelings. From time to time, as your wants and needs come into conflict, you'll notice that conflict because of the bad feelings that result.

The difference is this. As you get a bad feeling, your Sage-part will be called in, a strategy will be selected, and the bad feeling will be resolved.

Instead of bad feelings being a way of life, a bad feeling will simply be a signal that your Sage-part is needed to find a resolution for the conflict situation. Instead of bad feelings being the norm, interrupted only momentarily by feelings of peace of mind and harmony, you'll find the opposite. You'll find that harmony and peace of mind become the norm, interrupted only momentarily by bad feelings which

signal the need for your Sage-part to discover what the problem is and to create a resolution.

10. Convert the “Gap” Into Energy and Motivation

Once you have empowered your Sage-part, and it has become skilled and experienced at resolving conflicts, you’ll gradually experience more and more inner harmony and peace of mind. In addition to the periodic bad feelings that you’ll use to signal your Sage-part that a resolution is needed, you’ll also experience something called “the gap.”

The “gap” is a name for the tension you feel whenever you compare what you want for your life with what you have at present. For example, Phil wants to be a doctor, have a wife and children, have a nice home, and be able to play golf regularly. At present, he is unmarried and is still in medical school. There is quite a “gap” between what Phil wants and what he has at present.

If Phil is caught up in all of the conflicts that many people experience, he finds himself being driven by all of the bad feelings that he experiences as he attempts to resolve all of the conflicts his parts feel. If that is the case, then Phil might not be fully aware of the power and energy created by the “gap.”

Now, let us assume that Phil empowers his Sage-part and resolves his conflicts and creates a sense of harmony and peace of mind. As he does this, he can become more aware of the tension and energy that are available to him as he brings the “gap” into his awareness.

As Phil becomes aware of the “gap” between what he has and what he wants, he feels a sense of tension. That tension cannot be immediately resolved by any action or strategy he might employ. There is nothing the Sage-part can do to breach the gap between what he wants and what he has. What the Sage-part can do, however, is to use that tension as energy to fuel Phil’s motivation to achieve what he wants for his life.

The “gap,” then, is the source of the energy that you can employ to achieve what you want in life. When you’re caught up in the many conflicts that you can’t resolve, you lose the power that the “gap” has to produce the energy you need to achieve what you want. When you have a way of resolving the ordinary conflicts, you can isolate and use the energy produced by the “gap” as motivation to achieve what you want.

Your Sage-part will be very helpful to you in directing the motivation that you create for yourself from the “gap.” Without using your Sage-part, it’s possible for you to misdirect your motivation, or to diffuse it by not focusing it. You can probably think of people you have known who were very motivated, but still couldn’t harness that motivation to achieve what they want. They allow the day-to-

day bad feelings to cause them to zig and zag and pull them away from what they really want.

Your Sage-part will be charged with the responsibility of directing your energies towards closing the “gap.” It will constantly be resolving conflicts by examining alternatives and making choices that get you closer and closer to what you want. You’ll find yourself gradually moving closer and closer to what you want for yourself.

11. Maximize Good Feelings

Abraham Mazlow, a noted Sage of our time, coined the phrase “peak experience” to describe momentary surges of powerful and exhilarating good feelings. These moments of intense good feelings can be described in a number of ways, such as “joy,” “love,” “well being,” “happiness,” “success,” etc.

In the same way that we use our mental processing to create bad feelings, we also have the capacity of creating good feelings. In our normal lives, we do this often.

You can ask your Sage-part to handle good feelings as well as bad ones. If you choose to do this, your Sage-part can offer you “peak experiences” with some regularity. The Sage-part does this by heightening the intensity with which you experience your moments of good feelings.

The tools for achieving “peak experiences” are available to you in your normal processing of your experiences. The Sage-part can apply these tools in such a way that your normal good feelings are transformed into rather extraordinary moments of high intensity.



Chapter 4: Empowering Your Autopilot

You're learning at two levels at the moment. One level is for your conscious mind, within your awareness. At the "conscious level" you'll learn to follow the mind's process and make changes at any point that you choose, using your conscious mind. As you learn at the "conscious level," be aware that your conscious mind is subject to forgetting, distractions, overload, and sometimes confusion.

You're also learning at the "Sage-part level." Your Sage-part is learning everything that your conscious mind is learning. Your Sage-part is not subject to forgetting, distractions, overload or confusion. Your sage may not have enough information, or experience, or practice, to master its role, yet. So, part of what your Sage-part is learning is how you want it to function and contribute. Once you empower your Sage-part, it will go about finding out what it needs to know in order to do what you have asked it to do.

You can think of your "Sage-part level" as a kind of an autopilot that will work for you to achieve what you want to achieve in life. As the day-to-day issues of your life occupy your conscious mind, your Sage-part will persist and stay attentive to its tasks. You may find yourself being nudged by your Sage-part to be curious about the things the Sage-part will need to know in order to satisfy its responsibilities. You may find yourself doing things, and learning things, that surprise you. As these things happen, it's enough to know that your Sage-part is doing its job, and you're on track to achieving what you want for yourself.

Four Steps for Empowering Your Sage-part

As you go through the following steps, your Sage-part is also learning how the process works. In the future, your Sage-part will know how to do it. As the need arises for you to add or change what you want, your Sage-part will be able to make the changes or additions automatically for you. If you want to follow along with your conscious mind, the process will be defined for you on the following pages so you can initiate the process consciously if you choose.

There is no need to make the process perfect or complete the first time. Simply go with what comes up for you as you step through the process. Once your autopilot is installed, it will revise and add as needed in response to situations or events that occur in your life. There are four steps.

Step 1. Meet Your Parts and Find Out What They Want

In the first step, your conscious mind will meet your parts, and you'll dialogue with each part in turn to discover what that part wants and needs.

Step 2. Edit the List, to Make it Work For You

After you have your combined list of what all of your parts want, you'll use your Sage-part, and your conscious mind to edit the list according to instructions. The purpose of the editing is to put what you want in a form that will enable your Sage-part to work toward getting each part what it wants.

After you have edited your list, you'll go back once more to verify that the revised list is satisfactory to your parts. If it is satisfactory, you're finished. If not, you may need to negotiate, or further revise your list until it is satisfactory to your parts.

Step 3. Meet and Empower Your Sage-Part

After you know what all your parts want, and have edited the wants into the most productive form, you're ready to meet your Sage-part. At this first meeting, you'll reach agreement with your Sage-part on the fundamental values that you want your Sage-part to use in resolving conflicts and making choices.

After you have reached agreement on your fundamental values, your conscious mind will have a dialogue with your Sage-part, in which you formally empower your Sage-part to be responsible for your fundamental values.

Step 4. Have a Parts Meeting and Verbal Affirmation

The final step is to have a parts meeting. This is a step (like a ritual) in which you ask your parts to agree to empower your Sage-part to resolve their conflicts and take responsibility for getting their needs met. You'll also formally ask your Sage-part to agree to take responsibility for getting all your other parts what they need, and resolving conflicts that stand in the way.

When You Want to Revise or Add to What You Want

When you want to revise or add to what you want, hold another parts meeting. As time passes, and you discover the need to further define what you want, your Sage-part will hold parts meetings to assure that the specific statement of what you want for your life is gradually refined and reshaped until it is complete and totally satisfying. You may choose to call these meetings with your conscious mind. Your Sage-part may from time to time make it clear that a meeting is needed, and invite your conscious mind to participate. There are instructions in the pages that follow that will help your conscious mind to organize and follow the process.



Chapter 5: Step 1 — Meet Your Parts — Discover What They Want

Using your conscious mind, you'll meet each part in turn, and ask each part what it wants. You may find that some parts are eager to speak and are clear about what they want. You may also find one or several parts that have little to say right now. Simply accept whatever occurs. In later meetings, after you've developed a closer relationship between your parts, you'll find that all parts will have something they want in life.

How to Bring Out the Part You Want to Meet

Following is a list of cues that you'll use to invite out each part. Your conscious mind will read the cues, and the part you're asking for will come out. You'll know when the part you're asking for is there. You'll be able to tell by the feeling you get. If that part feels right, you'll know. If you feel confused, torn, or tense, then you may be dealing with two parts. If that happens, ask the other part to wait its turn. When you feel it is right, simply ask, "What do you want from me, or the Sage-part? Then, listen, and write down what you hear.

How That Part May Communicate With You

You have three channels of communications between your conscious mind and your parts. You can communicate verbally, or with images, or simply with feelings. Some parts may communicate with you verbally, and others may present images. Still others might choose feelings. For this exercise, you'll want to communicate verbally. Each part can use words, although they might normally be using other channels. If a part presents images, you can convert them to words, and check to see if you're making a correct interpretation.

If a part only presents you with feelings, make an attempt to convert the feelings to words. As you do, ask if your interpretation is correct. If it is, you'll get a good feeling; if not, you'll get a bad feeling, e.g. a frustrated feeling. Take whatever you get, and thank that part for communicating with you. Tell that part that you want to keep the communications lines open, and will be back for more discussions later.

How to Test For Agreement

As you dialogue with your part, and write down what you get from that part, read back what you've written, and be sure that you're getting the message clearly. If you are, you'll get a good feeling. If you get a bad feeling, or mixed feelings, go back and revise or change the message until that part is satisfied and gives you a good feeling.

How to Detect Disagreement

You may find you get a clear message, and then right away you hear a conflicting message. For example, you may be talking to your Me-part, and your Me-part says “I want to be able to rest when I need to rest.” You might hear a counter message, such as “If you rest every time you want, we’ll never get any work done.”

What’s happening is that another part is coming into the dialogue. If that happens, ask the second part to please wait for its turn. Explain that you’re collecting all of the wants from each part, and you’ll be asking the Sage-part to resolve conflicting wants between parts, and assure that each gets what it wants with win-win resolutions. Assure each part that its wants are important and will be satisfied as far as it is possible to do so.

How to Reassure a Part

You may find a part saying it wants something, and right away it might say, “But I can’t have what I want.” Explain to the part that the Sage-part will find a way, if it is humanly possible, for each part to get what it wants.

Explain that it’s best to ask for what the part wants, even if it doesn’t think it will get it. The Sage-part will then know what is wanted, and will make every effort to provide what’s wanted, or a substitute that will come as close as possible to meeting the basic need that part has.

Explain that it’s better to ask for what each part wants than to leave that desire unexpressed and unstated. Explain that bad feelings come from being unwilling to ask for what you want, and you’ve decided to be complete about what you want. Ask the part to do its share by asking for what it wants, even if it has reservations about getting what it wants. The Sage-part will accept and respect each want and need, and do its best to find a way to get that need met.

Some Cues to Use to Bring Out the Part You Want

The first time you meet each part, you may want to use the following cues to help you specify each part you want to meet and talk with. The following list of cues will help you discriminate between your parts, and will help your parts know which one you want to talk with.

Your Me-part

I want to talk with my Me-part. You’re the part of me that is concerned about me and me alone. You’re the one that wants what it wants when it wants it. You’re the one responsible for my basic needs: to eat, to sleep, to rest, to play, and to have sex. You have the need for status, and you enjoy having power and using it. What do you want for me in life?

Some possible examples:

- “I want you to listen to me when I tell you I need something.”
- “I want to get priority when one of my tensions builds.”
- “I will support all of us getting our needs met, if I can get what I need when I need it.”
- “I want the Sage-part to protect me, and all of us, when I want something that is not good for me, or for all of us”
- “If I want something that is risky, or hurtful, then I want the Sage-part to resolve my need through fantasy.”
- “I want to create fun, comfortable, joy-producing accommodations of my basic needs.”
- “I want fun friends to play with, and some guilt free time to play.”

Your Us-part

I want to talk with my Us-part. You're the part of me that wants and needs to have a loving relationship with my partner. You're the part of me that puts my needs aside and defers to the needs of my partner. You want to love, to be loved, to feel the excitement of attraction and infatuation. What do you want for me in life?

Some possible examples:

- “I want to love deeply, and feel my feelings of love fully.”
- “I want to feel loved, needed, and wanted.”
- “I want to hear that I am loved.”
- “I want to see that I am loved.”
- “I want a fulfilling, loving, sexual relationship.”
- “I want my relationship to be all that it can be.”
- “I want couple-friends to share our relationship with.”
- “I want to express my love for my partner so that my partner feels fully loved.”

Your Children-part

I want to talk with my children-part. You're the part that feels the need for children. You're the part that feels loving and caring toward babies and children. You're the part that's willing to put aside my needs to defer to the needs of children, or others that are dependent and need my help. You're the part that reacts to those who are needy, hurt, or helpless. What do you want for me in life?

Some possible examples:

- “I want to fully love and care for my children.”
- “I want to help my children grow up healthy and happy and well prepared for life.”
- “I want to help others who I can help, and who need my help.”
- “I want to share my love with others who need me.”
- “I want to feel joy in my celebration of my relationship with my children.”

Your Family-part

I want to talk now with my Family-part. You're the part that knows that "blood is thicker than water." You're the part that feels love for my mother, father, brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and all of my extended family. What do you want for me in life?

Some possible examples:

"I want to feel warmly loving toward mom, and express that love to her."

"I want to feel warmly loving towards _____ and express that love."

"I want to support, endorse and promote a strong sense of family, a sense of belonging to us, and openly invite all members of our family to be closer."

"I want to be friends with some or all of my family members."

Your Work-part

I want to talk with my Work-part. You're the part of me that needs to work and to contribute. You're the part that has a sense of mission about what you would like to achieve. You're the part that is motivated by achievement, by accomplishment, by responsibility, and by growth. What do you want for me in life?"

Some possible examples:

"I want to be a successful therapist. I want to help people achieve their goals in life. I want to feel the satisfaction that comes from doing my job well."

"I want to make superb quilts. I want to make quilts so beautiful that they are passed on for generations and bring joy and pleasure to others."

"I want to be a successful salesman. I want to represent a company that I am proud of, and assist my customers to buy products they need, and that are products I can take pride in selling."

"I want to be satisfied with what I do. I want to feel good about getting out of bed each morning, and be eager to do my tasks each day."

"I want to write a biography of someone I respect and admire. I want to create a book that will bring that person to life, and make it possible for others to be inspired and uplifted."

"I want to be a successful homemaker. I want to raise my children to the best of my ability, and support my husband in his career. I want to create a happy and loving home for my family."

"I want friends who have similar work interests to mine, so we can share."

Your Beliefs-part

I want to talk to my Beliefs-part. You're the part of me that needs to honor my beliefs. You believe fully in my beliefs and want to lead me to live a life in harmony them. When I honor my God, vote my conscience, or support a cause I believe in, you're the part that is responsible. What do you want for me in life?

Some possible examples:

- “I want to believe in my fundamental values and have values I believe in.”
- “I want to use my beliefs to guide my life and be true to them.”
- “I want to choose beliefs that support me achieving what I want in life.”
- “I want to choose beliefs that empower me to realize my full potential.”
- “I want to choose beliefs that support me in my desire to empower others.”
- “I want to be with friends who share my beliefs.”

Your Interests-part

I want to talk to my Interests-part. You're the part of me that is responsible for my outside interests. You're curious and want to learn new things. You're the part that brought me to read this book. You're the one that needs hobbies and activities. What do you want for me in life?

Some possible examples:

- “I want time to explore those things that interest me.”
- “I want to play the piano more skillfully as I grow older.”
- “I want to play tennis better and better with more satisfaction.”
- “I want interesting and interested friends to share my interests.”

Your Affiliation-part

I want to talk to my Affiliation-part. You're the part of me that needs to be part of a group or pack. You're the part that enjoys supporting my favorite teams, or being part of a neighborhood. You feel attached to a place or places that I live or have lived. You're the part that feels patriotic. You react with strong feelings to anthems, flags, and songs. What do you want for me in life?

Some possible examples:

- “I want to belong to and feel part of the global community of humankind.”
- “I want to invest importance and excitement in the teams I choose to support.”
- “I want to achieve pride, fun, excitement and joy in belonging.”
- “I want friends who share my passions to share my passions with.”



Chapter 6: Step 2 — Edit the List

The next step is to edit the list. The purpose of the editing is to state each of your wants and needs in terms that will allow the Sage-part satisfy them.

Strike All “Don’t Wants.” If Possible Convert to Positive

You may find that you have great clarity about what you don’t want, and are not so clear on what you *do* want. Your Sage-part cannot help you get something unless you know what you want. Knowing what you don’t want doesn’t help. You have to know what you *do* want.

Strike each statement in your list that is phrased as something you *don’t* want. In some cases, you’ll be able to replace it with something that you *do* want. In other cases, it is best to simply strike the negative.

Convert Steps to Goals: Ask, “What Do I Want That For?”

This step requires a little judgment. You need to discriminate between a goal and a step. For example, if you have somewhere on your list “I want more money,” or “I want a million dollars,” those are simply steps. To find what you really want, ask yourself, “What would I do with that money?” You may discover you want a fourteen-room house on two acres, or to be able to take two trips a year outside the country. If you want money so you can have a house, then strike the money, and put in the house you want.

If you want an important job, ask yourself “what for?” You may find that you’re seeking status or power. If so, be direct and say that you want a position that will give you status or power.

Take each of your wants and test them to see if that is really what you want, or rather, whether it may only be a step that gives you something else that you really want.

Check Back With The Part to Get Agreement

As you make a change in your list, either striking an item, or translating it from a step to a goal, check back with the part that asked for that, and be sure that the part agrees with the change. You’re accumulating the list in order to assure that your parts get their needs met. You’ll lose the confidence of your parts if you make changes to the list that your parts do not agree with.

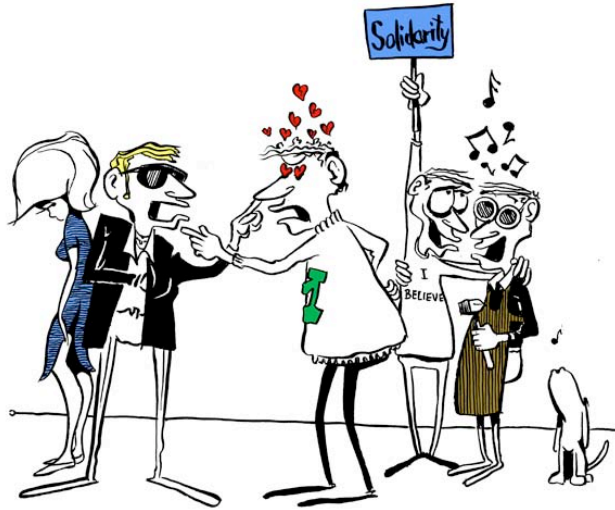
Negotiate if Necessary

If you have difficulty reaching agreement, ask that part “What would it take to satisfy you on this item?” Listen to what you hear. Modify your statement until you reach agreement. You might also ask “What would you have to hear from the Sage-part before you would feel comfortable?” If you get an answer to that, put it down

for your Sage-part list. When you talk to your Sage-part, you can ask if the Sage-part will give that assurance.

Either Reach Agreement or Strike the Item — For Now

If you can't reach agreement, drop the item for now. This is only a start at creating your list of what you and your parts want for you in life. You'll evolve and change and improve your list over time. There is no need to make it complete now, nor any value in making it "perfect."



Get Agreement on Each Item Left on Your List

When you're finished you'll have a complete list, with agreement and support from your parts for each item on the list. You may still have some parts in conflict with each other, but you'll have a list of what your parts want that each agrees reflects what that part wants.



Chapter 7: Step 3 — Meet and Empower Your Sage-part

The next step is to meet and empower your Sage-part. As you get to know your parts better, you'll be able to recognize them and you'll eventually always know which part you're using or dealing with.

Some Clues

For now, it may be somewhat difficult to tell when you're dealing with your Sage-part. Here are some clues:

1. The Sage-part has a sense of humor and can laugh at itself and other parts easily and without malice. The easiest way to identify it is by the smile you may find on your face when you're using your Sage-part. It can laugh at problems and difficulties. Your Sage-part can also laugh at larger issues, like human frailties, and the human condition. If the part you're talking to is relaxed and can laugh, it is your Sage-part. If the part is deadly serious and up tight, then it's one of your other parts.
2. Your Sage-part brings a calming influence to your mind and your body. As you empower your Sage-part, your muscles may relax, your breathing get deeper, and you may move toward being calmer. (Obviously, if you're in state of escalated emotion and you switch to your Sage-part, your pulse isn't going to drop from 105 to 70 in just a few seconds. But, you'll find yourself moving toward a state of inner calm.)
3. Your Sage-part has a broad perspective and philosophical approach to things. That means your Sage-part will adopt a long-time perspective, a broad scope, and a balanced view of things. You can test this by asking yourself a philosophical question, e.g. "Who am I?" If your answer is that you're the center of the universe, you can be sure it isn't your Sage-part. If your answer is more like: "One of many billions of people who have lived on this speck in the universe," you can be sure you're dealing with your Sage-part. (The answers are seldom this extreme. They're simply suggestions of the possible end points on a long continuum of answers.)
4. Your Sage-part has a sense of awe and wonder about the world. Where one or more of your parts may feel able to totally control things, your Sage-part knows that there is more to the world that you'll ever know.
5. Your Sage-part has a special set of feelings that it uses, which may not often be used by your other parts. For example, it feels humble in response to its awe and wonder about the world. It feels noble when it has resolved a conflict that enables you to go forward toward what you want in life. Your Sage-part sometimes feels indignant when dealing with one of the many inequities or unfairness in life.

You now have a number of tests your conscious mind can use to determine when you're using your Sage-part.

You're ready to empower your Sage-part now. There are many ways to do that. This is simply one of them. As you get more familiar with your Sage-part, you may find other ways that work for you.

Empowering Your Sage-Part

You empower your Sage-part by communicating the following ideas to your Sage-part, while using your conscious mind:

1. Until I learned about you, I (my conscious mind), have been attempting to get the needs and wants of my parts met, all by myself.
2. I now recognize that I am limited in my ability to meet all of my needs, maintain my fundamental values, and meet my long-range goals, while enjoying inner harmony and peace of mind.
3. Now that I understand your role, and your unique capacities, I ask that you take responsibility for meeting our long range goals, resolving short term conflicts, and maintain harmony and peace of mind.

Your Sage-part may simply say 'yes,' or respond with visual images of how it can be for you in the future, or simply give you a good feeling.

If you feel an uncomfortable feeling, then your Sage-part may have some reservations or considerations. Or, your conscious mind may have some doubts about delegating the responsibility. Your Sage-part will make clear what must be cleared up before your Sage-part will take responsibility.

Whatever the issues may be, you can resolve them with dialogue and questions. For example, you might ask, "What needs to be resolved before you're willing to be responsible?" Or, "What assurance from me do you need before you'll say 'yes'?"

When you have empowered your Sage-part, you may find yourself feeling very good, yet, still a little curious, and wondering how it will all work.

You and Your Sage-Part Select Your Fundamental Values

The next step is to work with your Sage-part to select and agree on your fundamental values. Fundamental values are those that override the individual values, beliefs, and goals of each of your parts. The purpose of specifying them is to give your Sage-part clear guidance on how you want your Sage-part to guide you and to resolve inner conflicts.

Again, this is only your initial effort on this issue. As time goes on, and events require, you and your Sage-part will be forced to add, change or flesh out this list.

If you're unclear about what your fundamental values are, you might decide to choose the following list, suggested by one of great Sages of our time.

- **Self Creation**

Self-creation means that you accept that you create your own experience of life. You do it by the thoughts you have, how you perceive them, how you process them, what you expect, want and believe, the strategies you choose and the persona you use, and finally, most importantly, by the questions that you form.

To hold self-creation as a fundamental value is to recognize and accept that you're already creating your own experience of your life. Once you accept that, then you can decide to be responsible for that creation. Once responsible, you can choose to make it as joyous, gratifying, satisfying, and delightful as you're willing to have it be.

- **True to Myself**

True to myself means that you recognize you're a unique individual. You have unique goals, dreams, ambitions, wants and needs. You have your own values and beliefs, chosen to bring you what you want in life, and to guide you to satisfaction with yourself. By selecting this as a fundamental value, you're asking your Sage-part to respect your uniqueness and individuality. You're asking that conflicts and challenges be resolved with full respect for who and what you are. You're choosing to be YOU: the best YOU that you can be. You're asking your Sage-part to use and develop your full potential.

- **Freedom From External Domination and From Internal Strife**

Freedom means that you're asking your Sage-part to guide you to realize your full potential while remaining *free* of domination by any outside person or force. You're also asking for freedom from internal strife and dissonance.

- **Health in Body, Mind, and Spirit**

By choosing *health* — in body, mind and spirit — you're asking your Sage-part to guide you to achieving what you want in life while protecting your physical, mental and spiritual health. Given this responsibility, it will be up to your Sage-part to manage such things as nutrition, diet, and exercise to assure continuing good physical health. Your Sage-part will become responsible for your mental health by resolving inner conflicts, reshaping paradoxical or conflicting beliefs, and choosing strategies that get your needs met, and take you closer and closer to what you want in life.

- **Any Others You Choose to Add to This List**

You may have other fundamental values you choose to formalize at this time. If so, add them to the list.

Ask Your Sage-Part to be Responsible For Your Fundamental Values

When you have completed your list, if your Sage-part is in agreement with the fundamental values you have chosen, you need only ask this question “ Sage-part, will you accept responsibility for using these fundamental values as you resolve my inner conflicts, shape my beliefs and expectations, and guide me to achieve what I want in life?”



Chapter 8: Step 4 — Have a Parts Meeting

This final step is to have a parts meeting. Call all of your parts together and go through the following steps.



Present Your Fundamental Values to Your Parts

Explain to your parts that you and your Sage-part have agreed on the fundamental values that the Sage-part will use. Read through them, and after each one, feel the agreement and support you get from your parts. If one or another of your parts has difficulty with one of your values, you can resolve it through dialog. Discuss what you mean by that value until you achieve that feeling of harmony and peace of mind that tells you all of your parts agree.

Present Your List of What Your Parts Want, to Your Sage-Part

Read through the list of what your parts want, and present it to your Sage-part. This is simply a formality because your Sage-part has been monitoring the process as you went along. Ask your Sage-part to agree to fully accept and support each of the parts in achieving what they want.

Get Agreement on the Integration of Wants, From Your Parts

Now is the time for all parts to agree to support the integrated list of wants. Earlier, when you were building the list, you asked each part in turn what it wanted. You did not allow disagreements from other parts. At this point, one part may have some reservations about something that another part wants or needs. If so, allow your Sage-part to suggest how it will be possible for both parts to get what they need, without conflicting with each other.

It is possible that you may want to restate or slightly alter one or another of the items on your wants list, to fully satisfy any parts in disagreement. Do whatever negotiations are required at this point to assure that all parts agree with the complete list. Each can be asked the question “If you can be assured of getting what you want, will you support the other parts getting what they want?” With appropriate assurances from the Sage-part, you’ll find that all of your parts can agree on a single integrated list of wants that they will each support.

Verbal Affirmation

The verbal affirmation is merely a formality. It is however, a powerful tool for energizing your Sage-part, and serves as a “rite of passage” to mark this change in the way you choose to run your life.

Ask Your Sage-Part to Take Care of Getting Each Part’s Needs Met

“Sage-part, will you commit to be responsible for making the decisions and choices I need to make in order to get each part what it wants in life?”

Your Sage-part will answer, “Yes!”

Ask Your Sage-Part to Be Responsible For Resolving Conflicts

“Will you commit to be responsible for resolving conflicts that arise among my parts as they each strive to get what they want and need? Will you resolve these conflicts with win-win resolutions that allow each part to get what it needs?”

Your Sage-part will answer, “Yes!”

Ask Your Sage-Part to Get You What You Want in Life

“Will you monitor what I do and say and choose to assure that I always move toward being the person I want to be, and get out of life what I want to get?”

Your Sage-part will answer, “Yes!”



Chapter 9: What You Can Expect From Now On

You have initiated a transformation in your life. You've taken the first step on a path that will gradually reshape your life. At the end of the path, you'll find yourself being the person you want to be, and achieving those things in life that you want for yourself. You'll find an inner peace and sense of harmony that will bring you a sense of satisfaction that few people achieve.

You've only started down the path, however. You have some learning to do, and some practice is required. Your Sage-part must learn and become adept at resolving conflicts with win-win resolutions. Your Sage-part must learn and become adept at taking control whenever you have a bad feeling, and then resolving that bad feeling in such a way that you move closer to what you want for yourself.

The rest of this book is concerned with training your Sage-part in the skills that it must have to accomplish what you have asked of it.

Here is What You Can Expect:

1. For some time in the future, your conscious mind will have some difficulty in letting go, and allowing the Sage-part to do what you have asked it to do.
2. For a while, you'll have bad feelings that do not cause an immediate shift to the Sage-part. You'll find that some bad feelings stay with you a while, until finally your conscious mind empowers the Sage-part to take over.
3. You'll experience a new and different uncomfortable feeling. This will be your Sage-part's way of telling you that it wants to take charge and either resolve a conflict, reshape a hurtful belief, or guide you in a strategy that takes you where you want to go.

So, you have set in motion a gradual shift. For a while, until all of your parts get accustomed to their new roles, you'll tend to react as you always have. Gradually, one learning experience at a time, each new bad feeling will reshape your patterns towards what you have chosen.

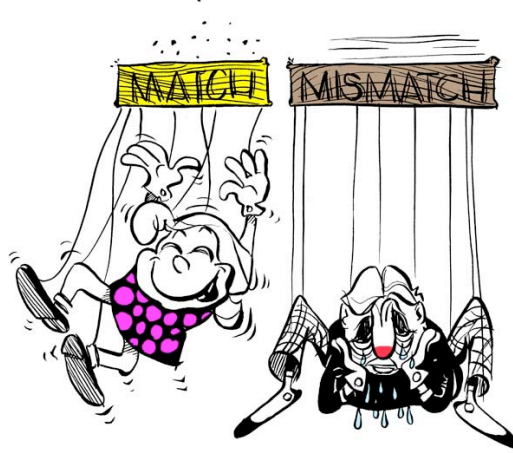
A helpful analogy is that of learning the piano. When you first begin, there are a lot of wrong notes, and progress is slow. However, as you proceed your skill builds and the results get better and better.

One important difference between this transformation you have undertaken, and learning to play the piano, is that this process can proceed with little or no self-discipline and hard work. You have installed an automatic process, which, with a little initial practice will become more and more automatic as you go.

Give All Mismatches to Your Sage-Part

Now, you get to the payoff for the work you have done so far. From this point forward in your life, you'll have a new strategy for handling mismatches. In the past, mismatches caused bad feelings, and bad feelings caused you pain,

discomfort, anxiety, or depression, and often prompted you to act in ways that did not bring you what you want in life.



From now on, mismatches will have a new purpose. Their purpose is to stimulate some thought or act on your part that allows you to move closer to what you want to achieve in life. The way this is done, is to use each bad feeling that you get as a cue to empower your Sage-part.

Consciously First — A Few Times To Practice The Process

Here is how the process might work for you.

First, you'll practice going through the steps that your Sage-part will use each time you create a bad feeling.

Next, you may find yourself having a bad feeling for quite a long time before you empower your Sage-part and resolve the mismatch.

And every time you finally do call in your Sage-part, and resolve the mismatch — and consequent bad feeling — you'll be building a success pattern that will make it easier and faster the next time.

Finally, the process will become so automatic, that it will happen at the first sign of a mismatch, and your Sage-part will be operating as an autopilot for you. When you're operating automatically, your conscious mind may not even be aware of the Sage-part stepping in to handle the mismatch.

So, let's begin by going through the four steps, one at a time, with conscious awareness of the process.

The Four Questions

The moment the Sage-part is empowered to handle a mismatch, the Sage-part will ask four questions, and answer them one at a time. The questions are:

1. What's happening?
2. How am I creating this bad feeling?
3. Is this what I want?
4. How can I move toward what I want?

1. What's Happening?

I feel angry, or I feel sad! or I feel inadequate! or I feel worried! or I feel anxious! or I feel jealous! or I feel needy! or I feel uncomfortable! or whatever your words are for what you feel.

2. How am I Creating This Bad Feeling?

This question stimulates the Sage-part to examine the process you're using to create the bad feeling. You'll use the Sage Model, and check off each part in the process you're using. At first, this will be a slow process because you're new to the Sage Model. As you gain some practice, you'll find two things occur. First, you'll be able to use the Sage Model quickly, and secondly you'll discover that there are certain patterns that repeat themselves over and over again.

Eventually, you'll immediately recognize the repeating processes you're using to create negative experiences of your life. As this happens, you'll find you use these negative processes less and less.

Some Typical Kinds of Answers You Might Get

"My Constructor is creating scenes that have not happened, and I'm reacting to them as if they were real and I am feeling jealous."

"My Recollector is remembering a past experience which made me angry, and I am feeling that anger again right now."

"I am reacting to something he said, and I am distorting it in my TWIPI by saying 'He always says that,' and then I am getting angry about it."

"I am reacting to something my Me-part needs, and I want it right now. I am putting an immediate time perspective on it, and feeling frustrated because I cannot have it right now."

"My Children-part wants me to pay attention to the kids, and my Me-part wants to have some quiet time for myself, and I am having an inner conflict about it, and feeling irritable."

"My Me-part wants to play, and my TWISB makes me feel guilty when I want some time to relax and play."

“My partner wants my attention, and I am using my Work-part to process the input. As a result, I am not giving my partner what my partner needs, and I am feeling guilty.”

A Quick Checklist

Until you get familiar and comfortable with the Sage Model, you might find the following checklist useful if you're stuck for an answer to “How am I creating this bad feeling?”

Source of the Input: Outside (senses), Recollector, or Constructor?

What part or parts am I using to process? Me-part, Us-part etc.?

How do I perceive the input? How much importance, what time perspective, what scope am I selecting, what level am I choosing?

What is my perception of the way I see it (TWIPI)? What is the thought about what's happening, e.g. “He always does this to me.”

What Comparator test am I using? Similarities or differences: what's good or bad about it?

What messages am I getting from my TWISB? The way it should be, or the way I want it to be, or the way I expect it to be, or the way I hoped it would be?

What strategy have I been using to handle this feeling? Attacking, criticizing, or discounting, withdrawing, or negotiating and asking for what I want?

3. Is This What I Want?

This question compares what is happening with you to what you want for yourself. Sometimes the answer is “yes,” and sometimes it is “no.”

A Few Examples of When the Answer Is “No”

“I am feeling anger towards my (spouse, child, job, mother, etc), and that is not what I want for myself.”

“I am feeling inadequate and that is not what I want to feel about myself.”

“I am feeling anxious about the future, based on negative scenarios my Constructor has created, and that is not how I want to feel about the future.”

A Few Examples of When the Answer Might Be “Yes”

“I am feeling a sense of loss because I have lost my (partner, my job, my parent, etc.) and that is a natural feeling that I accept, although I don't like it.”

“I am feeling indignant because of some injustice I witnessed. I accept that feeling and want to feel the way I do about injustices.”

“I feel a sense of discomfort when I think about how things are for me now, and how different that is from what I want things to be for me. I accept that discomfort and will use it stimulate changes that I choose to make.”

4. What Can I do to Move Toward What I Want?

This question turns it over to your Sage-part to give you an opportunity to use each bad feeling as a turning point. Each turning point allows you to take a step towards what you really want, rather than use your energy on upsets that you don't want.

This question puts your Sage-part in charge of your response to this situation or event. You can be confident that your Sage-part will make the wisest possible choice for you.

Your Sage-part will choose from the Sage options:

ACT ASK ACCEPT FORGIVE

When action is required to move you toward what you want: ACT

When negotiation is required to resolve a difficulty with another, you ASK for what you want!

When your Sage-part determines that you can't change what's happened or what's happening, you ACCEPT it.

When you don't feel able to accept what has happened, you FORGIVE someone else or yourself.

Instructions: Sage-part Options for Things to do to Resolve Bad Feelings

Read each of the following situations. Imagine yourself in that situation. Then decide which of the Sage options you would choose.

Remember, your Sage-part choices are: ACT, ASK, ACCEPT OR FORGIVE

SITUATION 1: You're looking for something that you want in your closet.

You're having difficulty finding it because the closet is overcrowded and not well organized. You find yourself feeling frustrated and irritated. Your Sage-part comes on to deal with the bad feelings. What will your Sage-part choose?

SITUATION 2: You're watching television with your partner. Your favorite program is coming on next. Your partner suggests watching a different program. You feel a conflict. One part wants to watch your favorite program. Another parts wants to please your partner. Your Sage-part comes on to deal with the conflict. What will your Sage-part choose to do?

SITUATION 3: You have planned an outdoor activity that you particularly enjoy. When the time comes for the activity, a drenching rain pours down. You feel very disappointed and frustrated. Your Sage-part comes on to deal with the bad feelings. What will your Sage-part choose to do?

SITUATION 4: You're dining in a restaurant. You're having a good meal and enjoying your dinner companion. As your waitress brings your dessert, she

spills coffee on your lap. Your clothes are soaked, and perhaps stained. You feel wet, uncomfortable, and irritated. Your Sage-part comes on to deal with the bad feelings. What will your Sage-part choose to do?

SITUATION 5: You're driving on a busy road. A young man, driving a junky hot rod weaves around traffic, cuts you off, and forces you to stop suddenly. You feel fear at first, and then, as you're unhurt, you feel anger. Your Sage-part comes on to deal with the bad feelings. What will your Sage-part choose to do?

SITUATION 6: You find yourself in an overload situation. You have ten things you need to do, and you don't have time to do them all, or even enough time to many of them very well. You feel overwhelmed and frustrated. You don't feel like doing anything at all. Your Sage-part comes on to deal with the bad feelings. What will your Sage-part choose to do?

SITUATION 7: Someone close to you wants you to do something for them. You're already busy with something that is important to you. You feel torn, and you feel irritated. Your Sage-part comes on to deal with the bad feelings. What will your Sage-part choose to do?

SITUATION 8: You're preparing for a party at your place. Your partner is hurrying around to get everything ready. Your partner drops a bottle of red wine in the middle of the living room floor. The stain is spreading. You feel concerned about the carpet, and angry about the carelessness. Your Sage-part comes on to handle the bad feelings. What will your Sage-part choose to do?

SITUATION 9: you're having an argument with your best friend. As tempers escalate your friend says something that is cruel, mean and hurtful. You find yourself feeling hurt and angry. Your Sage-part comes on to handle the bad feelings. What will your Sage-part choose to do?

Practice

The following is an exercise for switching to your Sage-part on bad feelings.

This is a personal exercise using your memory of past events. You'll first make a list of six times that you can recall that you experienced very strong bad feelings.

Next, you'll go over the list, one at a time, recalling the situation and the events that occurred. In each situation, you'll bring on your Sage-part at a critical point in the experience, and have your Sage-part choose what to do.

In some cases, you'll find that your Sage-part chooses exactly what you did in that circumstance. In other cases, you may find your Sage-part would choose a different way of dealing with the situation than you chose at that time.

Step 1:

Make a list of six events, situations, or times when you experienced very strong bad feelings.

SITUATION 1: _____

SITUATION 2: _____

SITUATION 3: _____

SITUATION 4: _____

SITUATION 5: _____

SITUATION 6: _____

Step 2:

Go back and re-experience the situations, one by one.

In each case, go inside and re-experience the situation. When you're able to see what you were seeing then, hear what you were hearing then, and feel what you were feeling then. Bring on your Sage-part, and observe what your Sage-part would choose to do, if that situation were happening right now.

What would your Sage-part choose for you to do?

SITUATION 1: _____

SITUATION 2: _____

SITUATION 3: _____

SITUATION 4: _____

SITUATION 5: _____

SITUATION 6: _____



Chapter 10: Creating Win-win Conflict Resolutions

Now that you have learned how to handle bad feelings when you get them, it's time to take a look at how to resolve conflicts. Win-win conflict resolutions are virtually always possible. Sometimes they are simple, and sometimes they take a little creativity.

Required Steps

1. What does each part want?
2. Can I create a way for each part to get what it wants?
 - a. If yes, then you have resolved the conflict.
 - b. If no, then you need to go further.
3. Can I create a way for each part to get what it wants, sometimes?
 - a. Can they alternate, and take turns getting what they want?
 - b. Can I change the time frame: one gets what it wants now, the other gets what it wants afterwards, or next week, or next year.
4. Can I go beyond what the part wants in order to determine what it needs?
 - a. What need is being satisfied by what the part wants?
 - b. Can I find a different way to satisfy that need?
 - c. Can I arrange a way for one part to get what it wants, and the other part get a substitute that still satisfies the need?
 - d. Do I need to convert both wants into the needs that they satisfy?

Some examples:

Sally is having an internal conflict. Her Work-part wants her to do some technical reading that she wants to do for her job. Her Us-part wants to spend time with her husband while he's available. Unless she resolves the conflict, she will feel guilty about whichever she chooses. Her Sage-part is brought in to resolve the conflict. Her Sage-part might suggest these options:

- a. Spend time with her husband now (because he is available and inviting her attention), and wake an hour early to do her technical reading.
- b. Spend time with her husband now, and when he gets interested in something else, do her technical reading then. If he doesn't get involved in anything else, then wake early to do her reading.

Once Sally chooses which she prefers, the conflict is resolved, and she can proceed with what she has chosen in a state of inner harmony.

Another Example:

Fred is having an argument with his wife. He finds himself in a state of inner conflict. His Me-part wants to “be right,” and wants to “win” the argument. His Us-part wants to stop arguing and have some good quality time with his wife. His Sage-part is called in to resolve the conflict.

1. The Sage-part determines that what the Us-part wants is in harmony with what Fred wants for his life — a warm loving relationship.
2. The Sage-part determines that what the Me-part wants (to be right) is in harmony with what Fred wants for his life, but the specific want (that of proving his wife wrong), is not what Fred wants for his life.
3. The Sage-part simply changes the level. Instead of being “right” by proving his wife wrong, the Me-part can be “right” by doing what is best for the relationship.
4. The Sage-part suggests that Fred shift the level of the discussion by saying something like “I think we’re both right, and rather than spend this time arguing, I want to spend it by telling you I love you.”
5. The Us-part gets what it wants and needs, and the Me-part gets to be “right” by doing the right and wise thing.

Practice Win-win Conflict Resolutions

Think of a situation that happens in your life where two or more parts are in conflict. It is sometimes helpful if you go back in your mind to one time when you felt this conflict strongly. Feel what you were feeling, think what you were thinking, hear what you were hearing, see what you were seeing.

As you re-experience the situation, ask yourself the following questions:

1. What feeling did you have?
2. What did one part want?
3. What did the other part want?
4. Does any other part want anything?
5. How would it be possible for both parts to get what they want?
6. If you can’t find a way for both parts to get what they need, then ask these questions:
 - a. What need is the part trying to satisfy by what it wants?
 - b. What need is the other part trying to satisfy?
 - c. How would it be possible to get both parts what they need, even if it isn’t exactly what each part seems to want?



Chapter 11: Teaching Your Sage-part to Break Hurt Loops

A hurt loop is a repetitive internal processing of the same idea, thought, recollection, or event. Often the feelings get worse and worse, the longer you're in the loop.

Eventually, your Sage-part autopilot will keep you out of hurt loops. Until that occurs, however, it is useful to know how to break them.

How Do You Know When You're in One?

You can tell you're in a hurt loop when you get a bad feeling and it stays with you for some time. The following situations are examples of hurt loops.

Phil

Phil worries about his work. Sometimes when he goes to bed at night, he finds it difficult to sleep. His Constructor creates terrible scenarios about things that might go wrong at work. He gets a bad feeling. He replays the same scenes, each time making it worse and worse. His bad feeling grows. His body reacts with adrenalin and his pulse rises. He stays awake for hours. Phil is in a hurt loop.

Agnes

Agnes gets angry at her boy friend. He does, or says something that she doesn't like. She thinks about it over and over. Each time she thinks about it, she gets angrier or more upset. Her TWIPI distorts the event by making what he did seem worse and worse. Her TWISB gets more and more self righteous and indignant. She may see her boy friend, but she won't get out of her loop. She pouts, or sulks, and it may take her days to get over her bad feelings. Agnes is in hurt loop.

Harold

Any time Harold is in a social situation, he reviews the events in his mind after it's over. His Recollector recalls the interactions he had with people. His Constructor creates imaginary things that people might have thought about him, or said to others about him. He feels foolish and inadequate. He reviews the events over and over, each time feeling worse about himself, and feeling more embarrassed about what he did or said. Harold has a pattern of hurt loops. The bad feelings he gets from them keep him stiff and uncomfortable in any social situation.

There are an endless number of examples of hurt loops. Most people have one or more that they fall into regularly.

Use it as a Turning Point — What Will You Do?

Your Sage-part can get you out of hurt loops, and eventually will be able to keep you out of them altogether.

The Sage-part asks the Sage-part questions:

1. What's happening? "I'm feeling (identify the feeling). I'm in a hurt loop."
2. How am I creating this feeling? (Your Sage-part will know.)
3. Is this what I want? (No; occasionally yes for loss or frustration with injustice)
4. What can I do to move toward what I want? (Specific actions)

The final question is the key question for breaking a hurt loop. What will I do? The key to breaking a hurt loop is to interrupt it with questions.

"Is there something I can do, and want to do about this?" If the answer is "yes," then the Sage-part will decide on a plan of action. If there is nothing that you can do, or want to do about it, then your Sage-part will either decide to accept it, or forgive it.

Once you have chosen either to act, or ask for what you want, or have chosen to accept it or forgive it, then the situation will be resolved.

Sometimes you may find yourself going back into the loop, even after it is resolved. If so, have your Sage-part reaffirm your earlier choice.

If the loop still returns, then your Sage-part can break it simply by changing any one of the elements in the loop. For example:

- a. If you're using your Constructor, switch to your Recollector and think about a pleasurable past event, and vice versa.
- b. If you're using your Me-part to feel wronged, switch to another part. Think about your hobby, or your work, or your partner, etc.
- c. If you're distorting in your TWIPI, then choose to change the importance, or the time perspective, or the scope, or the level.
- d. If you're using hurtful tests in your comparator, then switch to more productive tests.
- e. If your TWISB is pressing you with shoulds, oughts, and have to's, then ask your Sage-part to examine the belief, expectation or whatever to see if it is in harmony with what you want in life.

Any change you make to the steps in the loop will break the loop. Certainly the best and easiest step is simply to switch to your Sage-part, and examine the loop again to see what part has needs that aren't being met. That will give your Sage-part something to do, and the loop will be broken.



Chapter 12: Maximizing Good Feelings

Resolving bad feelings is one half of the challenge of creating a truly magnificent relationship. The other half is learning to maximize good feelings.

Resolving Bad Feelings

You can keep your relationship from growing sour by resolving bad feelings. You make your relationship truly *magnificent* by developing and nurturing the good feelings that you feel toward your partner and your relationship.

The strategy for maximizing good feelings is nearly the opposite of what you need to do to resolve bad feelings. With bad feelings, you want to limit the amount of time that you feel bad. With the good feelings, you want to *increase* the amount of time you spend feeling good.

With bad feelings, you want to avoid storing them up and saving them. With good feelings, you want to store them up, and build a huge reservoir.

So, the goal is to build an ever-growing reservoir of good feelings toward your partner and your relationship.

If you do this naturally, then this section will add little to what you do. If you do not do this naturally, then you'll find this section to be very valuable to you.

Process for Maximizing good Feelings

The process is broken down into small steps here, for ease of learning. Here are the steps:

1. First learn to recognize and feel the good feelings you have toward your partner.
2. Energize the storehouse of good feelings you've accumulated in the past and make them accessible to you by making a list of those you remember.
3. Identify the negative feelings you've stored up by making a list of those that you remember. Then give the list to your Sage-part to resolve, either by
 - asking,
 - acting,
 - accepting, or
 - forgiving.
4. Practice positive looping on the good feelings you've stored up.
5. Learn to mark any new good feelings you create for yourself about your partner and your relationship.

1. Learn to Recognize Your Feeling of Love For Your Partner

Go inside and recall a moment in your life when you felt very loving toward your partner. Find a time that was not sexual (to avoid confusion with your sexual feelings). Re-experience that experience. See what you saw, hear what you heard, feel what you felt. Replay the experience over in your mind. As you do, focus your awareness on the feeling you were having. Find where the feeling is in your body. Notice what happens to your breathing and your pulse.

Your goal is to recognize what you feel when you're feeling love for your partner.

2. Build a List of Experiences You've Had When You Felt That Feeling

Go back in your mind and seek out five different times that you can remember. Write them down. If you have more, then list as many as ten different times.

If, while you're doing this, you become aware of negative counter-messages, then make a separate list of those negative thoughts or feelings. It might not happen to you, but it does for many people. What you're looking for are thoughts, or comments that come to your mind while you're re-experiencing the loving moments in your life. These are called counter-messages, and they serve to counter, (reduce) the feelings of love you have stored up.

3. Give Your Counter Messages or Recollections or Bad Feelings to Your Sage-Part.

If you don't get any counter messages while searching out your good feeling experiences, make another search of your memory for any bad feelings you have about or toward your partner. Make a list of these.

Ask your Sage-part to examine each item on your list of bad feelings, or counter messages. Ask your Sage-part to resolve them, one at a time, by choosing to take one of the Sage actions. Either choose to: take action to clear it up, choose to ask for what you need to resolve it, choose to accept it, or forgive it. Your goal is to resolve each of the items, so that they don't stay with you and reduce your feelings of love for your partner.

One Sage calls this "Taking Out the Garbage." Now that you've learned to resolve all bad feelings you get as they come up, you won't be storing up the bad feelings any more in the future. However, you still may need to go back and clean up your memories of past experiences where you didn't resolve them as you got them.

You may not get them all during this exercise. That doesn't matter. As old bad feelings or counter-messages come to you in the future, you can resolve each one as it comes up. Eventually, you'll have a clean storehouse, one that only stores good feelings.

4. Practice Looping on Your Good Feelings

You already know that looping on bad feelings is harmful. It causes pain and hurt and serves no good purpose.

Looping on good feelings, however, is different. When you loop on good feelings, you increase the power those feelings have, and you add to the power they have to bring you a truly magnificent relationship.

Go over your list of loving experiences, one by one, and feel the feelings again. As each one comes up for you, allow yourself to relax into the feelings. Picture your partner in your mind, first as your partner was when you were having the feelings, then as your partner is now. This will transfer your old feelings to your partner in the here and now. This will refresh your feelings toward your partner, and you'll find yourself aware now of the feelings of love you have for your partner.

You can do this any time you like. Notice how good it makes you feel, and be aware that you can have that feeling any time you choose. Choose it often.

5. Learn to Mark Each New Loving Feeling

Anytime you feel that loving feeling toward your partner, mark it. You mark a feeling by going outside in some way. You can say something, to your partner, or to yourself. Out loud say “I love you,” as a way of marking every new loving feeling you get. You might choose to say something else, or simply smile, or make a gesture, or touch your partner. Any outside action you take serves to mark, or heighten your feeling. You might simply say “Wow” or Yeah.” Anything you do will mark and heighten that feeling.

It's very simple to maximize your good feelings. Now that your Sage-part is aware of the feelings you want to mark, you'll find you'll be aware of those feelings more in the future. As you mark them, you'll find they grow in power. As you build a gradually growing reservoir of good feelings — and you resolve the bad feelings — you'll find yourself creating a truly magnificent relationship.



Chapter 13: Summary and Conclusions

Psychological principles that are well established today, in 2004 include the following.

Happiness

There is a great deal of evidence, and unbiased research that supports the conclusion that Happiness (Subjective Well-Being, or SWB), is based on these four perceptions, assessments, and judgments:

A person will judge their life to be happy if they:

- Have frequent, strongly felt, and long-lasting good feelings
- Have infrequent and mild bad feelings of short duration.
- Have a positive assessment of how happy and fulfilling life has been
- Feel optimistic about life in the future

A happy person naturally (perhaps genetically influenced), is happier because he or she has more positive and optimistic “self-talk.”

Self-talk

An unhappy person (because of neurotic thought patterns or generalized pessimism), can be taught to be happier by managing his or her “self-talk.” For example, unhappy people can dispute or argue against their unduly harsh judgments, and replace these negative assessments with more positive assessments. By changing his or her self-talk a pessimist can be *taught* to be more optimistic.

Each person creates his or her own experience of the world, events, and people in his or her life, by the unique thoughts and assessments the person uses. Each person has a choice of seeing the world, events, and people in a positive way or a negative way, or anything in between. Experience of life depends on a person’s thoughts and assessments.

The most widely used therapies in use today are based on the principle that thoughts produce feelings and feelings produce behaviors. These various therapies are described as cognitive therapies. The therapeutic interventions for people suffering from misery and unhappiness involve helping them change their “self-talk.”

Individuals find many sources of positive self-talk that they can use to replace the negative thoughts that bring them discomfort. Millions, for example, depend on inputs from Oprah, or Dr. Phil, on television. Religions offer comforting thoughts that reduce the pain caused by an individual’s negative self-talk. Cults offer the unhappy individuals a replacement set of thoughts (offered by the cult leader), to replace negative self-talk. Thousands of self-help books and courses offer positive thoughts that people can use to make themselves happier, e.g. “The power of positive thinking” and its progeny.

The Net of It

If you are naturally a positive, optimistic person, who is fulfilled by what you are doing, you are having a happy life.

If you are naturally a negative, pessimistic person, who does not find fulfillment in what you are doing, you are having an unhappy life.

If you are having an unhappy life, you can learn to be happier. To become happier, you must change your self-talk. You are being offered pre-packaged self-talk from every imaginable source.

If you are a negative, pessimistic person, having an unhappy life, you're also likely to be somewhat cynical, or doubtful, or pessimistic about the value of the pre-packaged self-talk that others are suggesting you use. So, it's likely you are still unhappy.

Some teachers are offering generalized strategies for changing your own self-talk, such as disputing negative assessment, to free you from having to adopt pre-packaged self-talk from other sources. But, again, you're likely to be cynical, or doubtful or pessimistic about using a different strategy than the one you find comfortable, and thus you may not adopt the recommended strategy.

There is some evidence that pessimists have a clearer perception of the world than optimists. There is evidence that optimists must sometimes distort their perception of the world, to maintain their optimism. Experienced pessimists often rebel at adopting the optimists' distortions.

As a result of all of the above, lots of people are living unhappy lives because they cannot or will not adopt the pre-packaged self-talk offered to them, or adopt a new strategy of disputation to repair something they don't see as broken, and which may produce a distortion.

How That Relates to Book Two

I can finally tell you why the "Sage Model" is such a breakthrough. I would have told you earlier, but I have to use the "Sage Model" to explain its own incredible power.

The "Sage Model" empowers you to make any changes in your self-talk that you choose to make. It allows you to be as happy as you choose to be, by deciding *yourself* exactly what changes you want to make in your self talk. You don't have to adopt someone else's pre-packaged self-talk. Or, choose a disputation strategy you might find uncomfortable.

For the first time, you gain the power to manage, modify, or adapt any of your perceptions, assessments, feelings, strategies, or personae, all by yourself. You suddenly have the power to create your life exactly the way you want it to be. You have the amazing ability to make yourself as happy as you choose to be.

As you now know, the perceiving section of your mind creates your own personal version of “what’s happening,” based on the Importance, the Time perspective, the Scope and the Level that you attach to any thought to create your own unique perception (The Way I Perceive It, or TWIPI)

Then, your Comparator — selecting for similarities or differences — searches like a search engine, through all of your unique stored experiences to make an assessment of what this thought means to you. What comes up for you is the Way It Should Be (Twisb). It might be a rule, a learning, an expectation, a hope, or any of a dozen other means of assessing the thought. And, each of the different ways you could assess the thought would produce a different result. So, you produce your own self-modified perception and assessment of “what’s happening.”

This assessment produces a match or a mismatch with the perception and that produces either a good or bad feeling.

Then, the feeling leads to a strategy: fight, flight, freeze, or negotiate for bad feelings, or affirm, acknowledge, accept, or forgive for a good feeling.

Then, the strategy dictates a persona, and you respond to the outside world with your unique attitude, gestures, voice tone, facial expression, etc.

Review and Summary

You now know that you have over thirty different points in your process that combine to produce your self-talk, your thoughts, and assessments.

If you change any one of them, everything else will change automatically.

Some of them are easy for you to change, modify, or adapt. Others are virtually impossible. You’ll quickly learn — if you haven’t already — which are the easiest for you to change, and which are difficult or impossible.

The advantage of having thirty different things to change is that you are sure to find one or two that you’ll change easily to get the outcomes you want, and the happiness you choose to have.

After you find the one, two or three that are your favorites, you’ll develop automatic responses that you’ll use. If you like, you can ignore all the rest.

The Process Reviewed

First: proceed normally until you have a bad feeling.

Then: using your Sage-part, or your conscious mind, interrupt the bad feeling and use your question handling and thinking apparatus, to ask four questions:

1. What’s happening? (e.g. I’m creating a bad feeling.)
2. How am I creating the bad feeling? (My perception and assessment don’t match.)

3. Is this what I want for my life? (Does this feeling I'm producing fit my life's goals, and my values?)
4. If not: Which of the following Sage choices will I choose?
 - Act — if action is appropriate to my desired outcome and my core values. (The action may also be to change my self-talk.)
 - Ask — if asking or negotiating will help me achieve my desired outcome in harmony with my core values.
 - Accept — if acting or asking won't be productive.
 - Forgive— if another has provoked my distress.

Notice that bad feelings are cut short by immediately moving into question mode.

Notice that bad feelings are always resolved with reference to desired outcomes and core values (otherwise known as outcome or value-driven choices).

Notice that you, and you alone, make the choices. *You* get to construct your own experience of your life, without reference to any other proposed self-talk from the outside.

Notice that you make every choice in harmony with your core values and the outcomes you desire. So, if you are a confirmed pessimist you won't have to adopt the optimist's distortions to stay positive. You can stay as realistic as you choose.

The Thirty Points (Refer to the Map)

Let's review the thirty points where you can make changes in your mind, and then recap the change strategies from which you can choose.

Four Sources of Inputs to the Mind

Your *senses*, sight, sound, touch, taste, feel bring you inputs in the present moment. Using these inputs keeps you in the present, and away from imagining the future, or recalling the past, or looping on thoughts you've already processed.

Your *Constructor* — which imagines future scenarios, or even possible past scenarios — is useful for rehearsing future events so you can anticipate and pre-resolve any future difficulties. More importantly, it helps you gain confidence by imagining outcomes that you desire. It's hurtful and unproductive if your Constructor imagines future scenarios that you would be helpless to change or unable to handle.

Your *Recollector*, which brings up events, situations, or memories of the past, is productive when it recalls good memories, because “confidence is the memory of past successes.” And, your happiness depends in part on having lots of good, strong, positive feelings. The Recollector is hurting you when it brings up painful memories, unless you are using those memories to use Sage questions and choices to resolve past hurts.

Your *Reprocessor* loops on a thought you've already processed. You use this input productively when you use it to enlarge or expand a happy feeling. Your happiness depends, in part, on having frequent, strong, good feelings. Looping can expand and extend a good feeling. You use this input in a hurtful manner when you loop or dwell on a painful or negative thoughts or assessments. Your happiness depends on keeping bad feelings short, infrequent, and mild. Looping on bad feelings is a hurtful source of unnecessary pain.

As soon as you become aware of bad feeling, caused by misuse of one of these inputs, your conscious mind or your Sage-part can switch immediately into the present, making senses available, and into question mode, asking the Sage questions.

The Nine Parts of You

You learned how to bring all of nine, separate and distinct parts of you into harmony, by using the Sage-part to hold parts meetings, and using win-win resolutions to parts' conflicts. You now can have as much inner harmony and peace of mind as you are willing to have.

You learned to use the optimal part for every situation. This keeps you from using the Me-part in communicating with your significant other, when it would be more productive to use your Us-part.

This book taught you about your Us-part, to make it possible to have an extraordinary relationship, to the extent that you choose.

Four Aspects of Perception

The four different aspects of perception are: Importance, Time, Scope and Level.

You learned that you'd be happier if you give less *Importance* to thoughts that produce bad feelings. You also learned that you'd be happier if you give more importance to thoughts that give you good feelings.

You learned that focusing *Time* increases the power of good feelings, and stretching time takes the sting out of bad feelings.

You learned that a *Scope* of one can focus all the power of bad feelings on you, and that bad feelings are reduced when you choose a larger scope. You learned that a highly focused scope enhances good feelings for you; you diminish the happiness you can get from a positive thought by expanding the scope.

You learned that you can raise the *Level* of a thought, statement, or transaction to avoid fighting and take control of the transaction. You learned that dropping a level further focuses sensations or feelings that make you happier.

The TWIPI (The way I perceive it) is so completely modified by the four inputs, the nine parts, and the four aspects of perception, that it may bear little or no

resemblance to the reality of what's happening. We hope you learned not to get 'stuck' on your perception of what's happening, because it may be totally distorted.

The Comparator: A Personal Search Engine

You learned that your comparator generally might be searching for similarities or differences from your perception. By itself, the comparator could be the source of much pessimism if it always searches for "what's wrong" with what's happening. You've learned that it is simple to fix this — if it's troublesome — by asking, "What's right about it?" anytime you get a bad feeling

Your Twisb (The Way It Should be)

You learned that there are many, many different ways you can evaluate or assess a perception. You've learned that if you use "rules" to assess a perception, you can become overly rigid and inflexible. If you use "learnings" as the basis for assessment, you might have made a "wrong learning" if your learning wasn't made at the optimal Scope. You've learned the dangers of assessing your perceptions based on expectations, and that low expectations produce many happy surprises, while high expectations produce many disappointments. It's up to you.

You've learned that if one basis for assessment gives you bad feelings that lead to poor outcomes, you can choose another basis. Or, if you want to be totally happy, you could use a generalized "one size fits all" basis, like: "The way it is, is the way it should be."

Three Kinds of Feelings

There are thousands of different words for various feelings; however, you've learned that feelings are generally bad, good, or neutral. You've learned that feelings are the key to your happiness, and it is useful to attend to how many of each you have, how strong they are, and how long they last.

Strategies: Fight, Flight, Freeze, Negotiate, Acknowledge, Affirm, Accept Forgive

You've learned that you have a choice over strategies. You can avoid fighting — even if attacked — if it doesn't suit your desired outcomes or your core values.

You've learned that you can even use an affirming strategy on a bad feeling, to avoid fighting and resolve conflict.

You've learned that until you discovered the Sage Model, you pretty much just automatically grabbed the strategy that you mastered while growing up, and it was never chosen based on desired outcomes or core values. You've learned you now have more choices.

Two Basic Personae

You've learned that even though there are dozens of personae, they can be categorized as authentic (the "real you"), or learned. Some of your personae have

been copied from others in hopes of achieving something better than your authentic personae would achieve.

You've learned that you'll be happier, and have more loving relationships if you could always use your authentic personae.

You've learned that manipulative personae, like sulking, pouting, whining, and sensuous, may not get you the outcomes you desire, or be in harmony with your core values.

In Conclusion

Self-talk (thoughts and assessments), is the basis of your happiness — with yourself, with your significant other, and with your relationship.

The truth of this is demonstrated by the best science, the most well accepted psychologies, and by the many thousands of books, articles, people, and institutions that offer you their “new and improved” pre-packaged self-talk to use instead of your own.

For the first time since Freud named the Id, Ego, and Superego, and Eric Berne named the Parent, Adult, and Child, you have access to a vastly more complete map of your mind.

One huge benefit of learning the Sage Model is that it makes it possible for you to change any of more than thirty different things in your mind to get the outcomes you desire. And, you don't need to become a psychologist to do it.

For the first time, each person can take responsibility for creating his or her own self-talk. You won't need to search for the answers “out there,” and try to guess whose pre-packaged self-talk thoughts would be best for you.

The Sage Model will lead you to define what you want for your life, and identify your core values. Then, the Sage questions will guide you to the answers you need to achieve your desired outcomes in harmony with your core values.

So, the next time you hear, “What's new?” you'll have an answer for them.

Congratulations

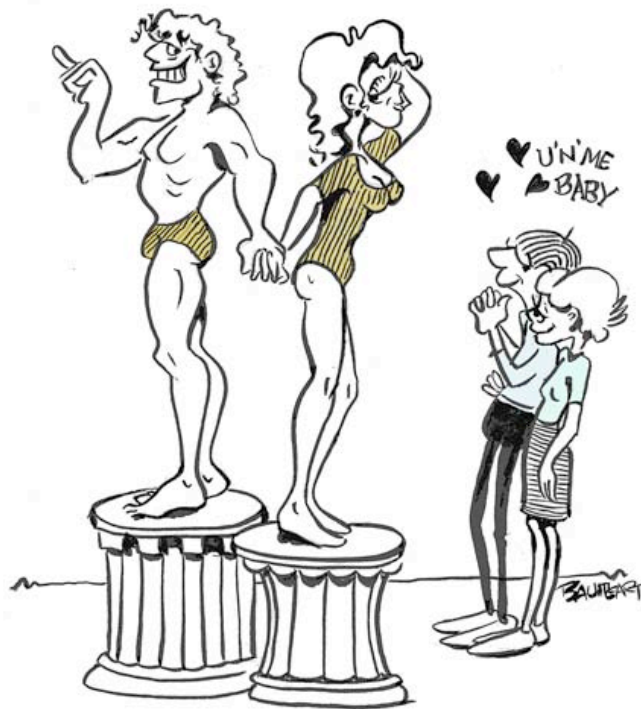
We appreciate your quest. You're a special person. You're the rare individual who is seeking something very special in a relationship. Most people content themselves with relationships that give them less satisfaction and pleasure than they could have. You want something more. All that remains for you is to practice what you've learned.

You've chosen an exciting goal. You've chosen to spend your time in pursuing a truly magnificent relationship. You now have the tools you need to create that truly magnificent relationship — and we hope you do.



Book Three

Troubleshooting Attraction



Preface — How to use the troubleshooting books

Note: There are four books on the subject of Troubleshooting, in the “Metamating” series of books:

- Book Three: Attraction (the book you are about to read)
- Book Four: Courting
- Book Five: Infatuation
- Book Six: Bonding

It's important that you've already read Books One and Two in the “Metamating” series, before you read any of the Troubleshooting books.

Troubleshooting starts by identifying a problem, so that you can do something about it. Sometimes you can solve the problem by just identifying it. But, sometimes you might need to change something.

For example, you might have a strong reaction to something you read. Make a note of it. That reaction probably signals a strongly held belief that may be giving you problems. If you can get your problem solved without changing it, then don't worry about it. If you find yourself stuck on either identifying your problem, or on solving it, then go back and examine each of those strong reactions you made a note of. It may be helpful to review the concepts in Book Two: “The Sage Model.”

When you're ready, use the Table of Contents for this appropriate book, to check off the subjects that are of interest to you, or seem to be troublesome. Read the Introduction that follows, then read any of the troubleshooting chapters that you wish.



Introduction to Attraction

There are four kinds of reactions you could have when you meet someone:

1. Absolute wow: “When I first saw him it was like my innards all melted inside me. I flushed, my knees felt weak and my hands shook.”
2. Slightly positive: “When she was first introduced to me, I thought she was very nice. I felt she would be easy to be with.”
3. Feeling nothing: “We met several times, in a group, and I never noticed him one way or the other. He was there, but I didn’t feel anything about him either attracted or repulsed.”
4. Slightly put off: “The first time he called me, I remember not liking his voice. His manner of speech put me off, and his voice was grating.”
5. Repulsed: “We met on a blind date, and when he came to pick me up I felt repulsed. I hated his nose and chin and I thought to myself ‘How am I going to get through this evening?’”

Chapter 1: You're Not Attracted to Anyone

If attraction is working for you let it. If it isn't, i.e. you're not attracted to anyone, and no one seems to be attracted to you, then take steps to get through attraction into courting and allow the process to begin there. Here are some examples.

Sally

Sally thought she had a problem of not being attracted to anyone. It turned out that she frequently felt slightly positive upon meeting someone. Her expectations were that she would find Mr. Wonderful and get an absolute Wow! kind of reaction. When she discovered that very few happily married couples started out with the big Wow!, she changed her expectations and no longer had a problem.

Phil

Phil thought he had a problem because he seldom even felt slightly positive upon meeting someone new. He thought he needed therapy to find out what was wrong with him because he didn't feel anything at all. All he needed was to discover that some people are imprinted with attraction characteristics that aren't easily uncovered upon first meeting someone. Phil discovered that what really attracted him in a woman was someone who took pleasure in cooking and serving meals for him, and someone who was relaxed and easy to be with when they were quiet together. Those characteristics couldn't be discovered easily in a new person. He had found women before who fit these characteristics but he had worried because there was no big Wow.

Sandra

Sandra had a different problem. She was neutral upon meeting a new man, and would feel repulsed if he gave any sign of being attracted to her. It turned out that Sandra had been attacked as a young girl, and had made a wrong learning from it. Instead of putting up a Wofer to look out for situations where she could be attacked again, she put up a Wofer to watch out for any sign that a man was attracted to her. This meant that any sign of attraction brought back her painful childhood experience to her.

Sandra solved her problem in two steps. First, she recognized the problem and decided to change the learning she had made. She decided to reprogram her Wofer so that it wouldn't react to attraction indicators, but would continue to watch out for situations where she would be vulnerable to sexual attack. More importantly, she learned that attraction or repulsion are only first steps and by no means necessary steps to begin the pairing process. She decided that she would push on through her feelings of repulsion and allow courting to take place. After several tries, she successfully entered into courting and that led to infatuation. She discovered that when she reached infatuation, all the early feelings of repulsion had disappeared. Even if she had not chosen to work on changing her wrong learning, she might have solved her problem by learning that attraction or repulsion are only starting points and not barriers.



Chapter 2: You're Not Attracted to Your Partner

Some people find that they are not strongly attracted to their partners.

Diane

Diane was engaged to be married. When she had first met her fiancé she had felt very little attraction. They had courted, and she felt mildly infatuated. She felt she loved him, and very much enjoyed his company. She was concerned, however, that “He doesn’t turn me on.” She didn’t feel she had a problem until she met a man (married to someone else), who, she said “Really turned me on.”

Diane began to feel that perhaps she was making a mistake by marrying a man who didn’t make her feel Wow! As she learned the pairing process it became clear that she had mistaken attraction and the physical nature of the feelings for love. As she learned that the purpose of the attraction is merely to begin the process, and that it is nice to have but not very important to the long-range success of the relationship, she found it easy to stop worrying about it. She turned her attention to the process of coping and allowed her feelings of love for her partner to grow stronger and richer.

Sam

Sam had been married for eight years. His wife had lost her youthful figure and Sam found himself less attracted to her than he had been when they first met. Sam felt he had a problem. It turned out that Sam’s problem disappeared as he learned about the pairing process and discovered that he had been confusing attraction with love. When he discovered that they were quite different, he also discovered that he was deeply in love with his wife, even though he no longer felt strongly attracted to her. (His wife did not repulse him; he just wasn’t as attracted to her as he had once been). Sam felt relieved to find out that he had what was really important to him. He loved his wife and felt loved in return.

If you have the feeling that you are not attracted to your partner and you feel worried about it, here’s something you can do. Go back to the list of attraction characteristics (Book One, Chapter 4) and see how many characteristics your partner has that you like. You may well find that one or two of the early attraction characteristics no longer fit for your partner. On the other hand, you will undoubtedly find a good number of characteristics that you still are attracted to. Concentrate on the attraction characteristics that still work for you and let the other ones fade in importance.



Chapter 3: You're Attracted to Someone Other Than Your Partner

What do you do if you are attracted to someone other than your partner? That can be a problem. It would be convenient if nature turned off your attraction apparatus once you have a significant other. However, that isn't the way it works. Luckily, it isn't a problem. Meeting people who are attractive to you is actually quite delightful. First of all, you get to feel that feeling of attraction once again. It's a lot like discovering a painting you like, or a piece of music.

The attraction isn't a problem. It can create a problem only if you have some belief or thought that you need to *do* something about it.

Hank

Hank could see a house he liked, admire it and even fantasize living there, and yet he could know that he couldn't have it. Hank could see a car he liked, admire it, even fantasize driving it, and yet he could know that he wouldn't have one like it. Somehow, for Hank it was different with a woman he was attracted to. He would be attracted, admire her, and fantasize about having her, and then he somehow felt compelled to communicate his attraction and initiate courting. The problem for Hank wasn't the attraction. He later saw that feeling attracted was quite a nice feeling. The problem for Hank was that he hadn't decided to resist taking action to communicate his attraction.

Hank thought his problem was that he was unable to maintain a relationship. He discovered that he was indeed able to maintain a relationship. Before he could, however, he first had to learn that attraction is different than love. He then had to decide that he wanted and needed love much more than he wanted or needed to start new relationships. Once Hank understood the difference and decided to pursue and nurture his loving relationship, Hank found it easy to accept being attracted without doing anything about it. Hank said it best when he said, "I'm never going to get what I want and need if I keep starting over before I get there."

If you find yourself attracted to people other than your partner, feel lucky. The feeling of attraction can be quite pleasant. If you're hurting your relationship by acting on outside attractions, and you want to change, read Chapter 4 on how to adopt a new strategy. Some people think they can stop being attracted, and they feel guilty about feeling attracted to someone else. There is nothing you can do to stop an attraction. There is nothing you can do to feel attracted, if you aren't. So, the best counsel is to take what you get and accept it. It's natural to be attracted and there is nothing you can do to change it. What you *can* do is make a good decision about how you'll handle it if you are attracted to someone else.



Chapter 4: You're Attracted to People You Don't Want to be Attracted to

This can be frustrating. The civilized, socialized part of you wants to be attracted to nice, kind, gentle, and loving people with appropriate education and career interests. Instead your body goes wiggly only when you meet the kind of person who is hurtful, rebellious, or self-destructive. Many people have this problem and they wonder which part of them to listen to. Some make the mistake of thinking they are choosing between “the heart and the mind.” Some feel that they must follow their “heart” or their “gut feeling.” If they do, it’s at their own peril. It isn’t a choice between heart and mind. It’s a choice between the kind of person your eight parts wants to be paired with, and the kind of person that your early imprinting (done before you were nine) feels attracted to.

Following your Gut Feel

There are times in your life when it is important to follow your “gut feel” or your intuition. *This isn’t one of them!* Somehow, we don’t know how, you were imprinted very early with all of the characteristics that you would find attractive in a person. You didn’t have a choice in what those characteristics would be. It could have been anything that you were imprinted with. Some people end up with very difficult and challenging imprints. One man gets “turned on” by smelling a woman’s foot. Another, by hair that stands up on end. There is a woman who is attracted to huge men. She is attracted to wrestlers, and although she has never met one, she fanaticizes about Sumo wrestlers. No one knows how she was imprinted with those attraction characteristics. She was very relieved to find out that she could overrule, or ignore her attraction imprinting if she decided to.

Myrtle

Myrtle married three times, and each time to a man who beat her. She had followed her gut feel and married men who “turned her on.” Somehow, she was attracted to the type of man who would mistreat her. She hated being beaten, and she left each of them in turn. But, the next time she was “turned on,” it would be by another man who would beat her.

Carol

Carol had been married twice, and both were alcoholics. She was attracted to people who were hurting and needed help. When she finally discovered that she didn’t have to follow her “gut feelings,” she began to make better choices for herself. She was less a slave to her childhood imprinting, and more responsive to the needs of her Us-part and other parts.

If you have this problem, feel free to do two things. First of all, enjoy being attracted to someone, but if that person is wrong for you in serious ways, resist going deeper.



Second, if you know people that are right for you, but don't "ring your bell," take steps to get to know them better. You will discover that attraction can develop as you spend more time with that person. And, even if it doesn't develop, courting can lead to infatuation and almost everyone agrees that infatuation feels far better than attraction.



Chapter 5: You're Not Attracted to People You Want to be Attracted to

This situation can be a tricky one. Remember that you have nine parts. Each can and may have a voice in choosing the right partner for you.

Parts

Your Me-part will be interested in your partner being considered “good looking,” so that you will have higher status with your friends. Your Children-part might be interested in a mate who loves kids and will be a good parent to your children. Your Family-part might want you to pick a mate who will fit into your family, or whose family will be considered “desirable” by your family. Your Work-part might want you to pick a mate who will help you in your career, and share your work interests. Your Beliefs-part might want to be sure your partner has the same set of beliefs. Your interests-part might want you to choose a partner with similar interests or a similar sense of adventure or curiosity. Your Affiliation-part might want you to pick a mate from the same neighborhood, part of town, town, state, region, or country. Your Sage-part will want you to pick a mate that brings you the greatest amount of love and companionship.

Now, you have to ask yourself, “Which part is talking here?” Once you decide to pay less attention to your “gut feelings,” you’ll have a lot of nominations from the other parts.

Mary

Mary said, “I married once for love. Next time will be for money.” More accurately she might have said that she went with her natural attractions the first time. Next time she wants money. Mary might be listening to her Me-part that values money. Or, she might be thinking about what she can do with the money — what it might mean to her children, or family, or church, or hobbies. It’s hard to know.

My recommendation would be to allow your Us-part to have the greatest voice, and pay only slight attention to the others.

Tim

Tim married a woman he wasn’t attracted to — and didn’t love — because she had a lot of money. He wanted his own business and indeed, he used her money to allow him to build his own business. His Work-part was happy. His Us-part was miserable.

How can you tell which voice is your Us-part? It can be difficult until you get to know your parts well, and learn to one from another. The easiest way to find out is to question the part. Some part of you says, “Z” would be a good choice for you. You then ask that part “Tell me more. What do you have in mind?” The part will let

you know. The message will be the voice with a verbal message or you might get a message in pictures. You might see yourself with “Z.” Pay attention to the messages and you’ll know what the benefit that part sees in “Z.”

If it is your Us-part, you’ll get messages about how happy you’d be if you were in love with “Z.” Or, about how comfortable or exciting it would be to be with “Z.” If you get messages about love, being with, being happy with, then you are hearing from your Us-part. If you get messages about money, opportunity, status, beliefs, then you are hearing from your other parts.

Now, let’s get back to the question. If you aren’t attracted to the people that your Us-part wants you to be attracted to, then it’s safe to ignore your “gut feeling,” imprinted attractions and pursue those that your Us-part feels comfortable about. If you aren’t attracted to the people that your Me-part or Work-part wants you to be attracted to, then you’re best off waiting until someone comes along that interests your Us-part. After all, *it is your Us-part that will live with your partner*. Your Work-part will be at work, and your Me-part will be on to other ways to eat, drink, rest, play or achieve status.

It’s safe to pursue someone (regardless of attraction), if the things that seem appealing about that person are related to love, easy to be with, good companion, comfortable, likeable, etc. It is best to resist pursuing someone (if your Us-part is not attracted to that person) based on things like looks, money, status, or possessions.



Chapter 6: No One Seems to be Attracted to You

It is almost impossible to imagine a person who is not attractive to someone. There is no one so ugly, so stupid, so badly behaved, so ill mannered, so lacking in social graces that they still aren't attractive to someone. As much as we now know about attraction, it seems inconceivable that you could be the one person that breaks all the rules.

Attraction Characteristics

There are at least twenty characteristics of attraction and maybe forty or fifty if you count all the offshoots. So, you think you are homely. Many people are attracted to what you call homely. There are people who will find you attractive, exactly as you look. No one knows why. But, that's the way it is.



So, your hair is the wrong color (for your tastes). Luckily, there are zillions of people who are imprinted to be attracted to just that shade. So, you are too tall, or too short, or too thin, or too thick. Luckily for you (even if you are imprinted for something different), there are people who are imprinted to be attracted to you just the way you are.

So, you think you are too ignorant, or too smart. No problem, there are people who are imprinted to be attracted to you exactly the way you are. They can't help being attracted to you. I'm not saying there is someone who is imprinted to be attracted to each and every one of your twenty characteristics, although, it is quite

possible that somewhere, such a person exists. Out of your twenty or so characteristics, a number of them will be very, very attractive to lots of people.

Let's stop for a minute and look at how you formed your view of your attractiveness. Most theorists say that a person forms a definite opinion about their attractiveness by the age of eleven to thirteen for girls and the age of twelve to fourteen for boys. This suggests that your opinion of how attractive you are to others was formed on the basis of very early inputs. There are different theories about how you formed your opinion and it really doesn't matter. You formed it.

Then, armed with your opinion of your own attractiveness (which may be much lower than is really true), you entered the world of attraction, courting, etc. You were attracted to someone (you didn't know it, but your imprinting was at work), and horror of horrors, that person wasn't attracted to you. Did you simply say, "Too bad that person wasn't imprinted for me?" No, you concluded, "I'm not attractive."

If you decided that you are not attractive, you made two errors. The first error was an error of specificity. You concluded you are not attractive, when all you could fairly and safely conclude is that you are not attractive to *that person*.

The second error was an error of generalization. Suppose someone said to you that you are homely. If you concluded what that person said makes you unattractive, then you are over-generalizing. Even if you mistakenly think that one person can make a judgment that is true for all people. Even if you took your face on tour and won homely contests in every state in the union, that still doesn't make you unattractive. That would mean that you are homely, not unattractive. One down, nineteen to go.

Harold

Now let's take Harold. Let's say that Harold has a face that many would agree is homely. Let's further say that Harold is fat and awkward. We still can't say that Harold is unattractive. We can only say that he is homely, fat, and awkward. Harold still has seventeen or more characteristics that one at a time, or in total can be very attractive to people. We can even ignore the reality that no matter how homely, fat, and awkward Harold is, there are some people imprinted to be attracted to him for those characteristics — just the way he is.

Now, if you have gotten this far and you still think you are unattractive, then you are "right." It doesn't matter what the reality is if you believe you are unattractive, then you will be (as far as you are concerned). You say "But I can prove it! No one ever calls, or comes around. I don't get any messages from people saying 'Hey, I am attracted to you'".

Zelda

Zelda was that way. Since she has been 22, no one — *actually NO ONE* — has ever asked Zelda for a date. On the face of it, that sounds like pretty good evidence.

But, when you know the story, you won't think so. Her therapist thought Zelda was a very attractive woman, but Zelda wouldn't agree. As it turned out, Zelda didn't get asked on dates for several reasons. Zelda had two beliefs and one strategy that were giving her problems.

One belief was that she was homely. Secondly, she believed that the only reason men date homely women was to have sex with them. Every time a man gave Zelda any indication that he was attracted to her, Zelda concluded in her TWIPI that this man was only interested in having sex with her, and would say or do anything to have her.

So, every attraction indication was "perceived" (interpreted) by Zelda as proof of what she knew all along. It was proof that Zelda was homely, and that men wanted her only for her body. Considering the way Zelda processed the inputs, it is no wonder that she kept sending out "go away" messages to any man who signaled his interest.

Zelda's second problem was her strategy for handling the bad feelings she had about being lonely, and about how men were only interested in her body. Zelda's strategy was to stay far away from any situation where she might be embarrassed again. So, she made sure that she met as few new men as possible. So, Zelda didn't get asked on dates. Every day, her loneliness gave her new evidence that she was "right" in thinking she was unattractive.

If Zelda is reading this book, here's some advice for her.

1. Read the information above and re-examine your conclusion that you are not attractive. Discover that you have many characteristics that others will find attractive — even if you don't feel beautiful.
2. Read the part in Book Two, Chapter 1, where it teaches you how to change your TWIPI. You can learn to take inputs at face value, and save your mind reading for charity bazaars.
3. Read the part that explains about men, and how many have a Me-part that likes recreational sex, and enjoys deflowering virgins, and may indeed want to have sex with every female who is willing. Then read on and find out that men also have a Us-part — a part that wants to love and be loved — a part that wants to be attracted, to court, to be infatuated, to bond, and then to cope. It's a part that wants to give his relationship priority over his Me-part and its physical needs, his Family-part, Work-part etc. Recognize that that his Us-part part is not always in control of his actions, just as your Us-part part is not always in control of your actions. But, Zelda, learn that every man has an Us-part, has the need to love and bond, and he may well want you as his partner.
4. Read the part about developing new strategies, and then develop a new one that gets you out in the world. Out where you can find and meet someone

that you are attracted to. Out where you are vulnerable, take some risks, chance getting hurt, and go for the brass ring.

5. Read the part about using different persona. Bring out one of your persona that shows you the way you could really be if you loved and were loved. Display that one. Men with a needy Us-part will spot it and come calling. (For fun, get in touch with the persona that you would use if you wanted to attract a man's Me-part — the persona that knows how to communicate an interest in recreational sex. Then, after you get acquainted with that persona, put it away, and don't use it. That way, you will run little risk of attracting a man's Me-part).

If there is anything in the message for Zelda that you can use, use it. If not, then proceed with the book and look for alternative beliefs you can have about yourself and how attractive you are.



Chapter 7: Too Many People are Attracted to You

People who have never had too many people attracted to them have difficulty in understanding how that can be a problem. If you are troubled with exceptional beauty or handsomeness or exceptional wealth, fame, or power, then you know how troubling it can be to have too many people attracted to you.

Your Persona

The tendency is to not use the persona you would naturally and normally use with a potential partner you're attracted to. When you do use the persona that you would employ if feeling love and being loved, you run the very real risk of breaking hearts.

When it is all too easy to have people fall in love with you, then it becomes necessary to maintain aloofness and coolness that separates you from the potential partners that court you. (If this is beginning to sound like the story of "the poor little rich girl" then let it, because the story is similar.)

If you open yourself up and are natural with each person you date, then you can find yourself leaving a trail of broken hearts behind you. So, the tendency is to stay detached and not open up. This strategy leads to loneliness and lack of fulfillment. It is no consolation that your problem is one that most people think they would want.

The answer to this is to use your parts to screen potential partners. Here is possible strategy that you might use. Pick any or all of the steps that seem right to you.

1. Recognize when your window is open or closed. If you're not really available for a serious relationship, then give up the freedom that others have to rehearse or practice. Plan to keep it light and avoid getting very serious with anyone while your window is closed. When your window is open, then you are ready to use your strategy.
2. Add one step between attraction and your declaration of that attraction. If you meet someone that you feel attracted to, and you have any sense at all that "this one may be right," then hold a meeting with your parts and find out what each part has to say about your possible partner. Naturally, you will want to give your Us-part highest priority in this choice. Be certain in your Sage-part that your interest in this person stems primarily from your Us-part and isn't simply a defensive reaction to your attractiveness.

Don

Don, a very rich and handsome bachelor, found that he only allowed himself to get interested in very rich women. This was a defensive reaction against his fear of marrying someone only interested in his money. Don changed his strategy when he

learned that he had nine parts and each of them had its own views. Don learned to distinguish his Us-part, and then was able to give that part priority in examining potential partners. What Don discovered was that the Us-part was able to distinguish between women interested in him because he of his money, and women interested in him for himself.

In your meeting with your parts, find out if any one of the parts is more interested in this person than your Us-part. If so, then do not proceed unless and until your Us-part gets very interested. This will protect you from having too many relationships that don't turn out to be serious for you. The second protection comes from finding out if any of the parts has any serious objections to the potential partner. Most people don't do this until they are contemplating marriage, but for you it is important to do it while attracted and before declaration. If your Sage-part feels the objection has validity and is a potential stumbling block to the relationship becoming serious, then again hold off until the situation changes and all parts are willing to proceed.

When you find a candidate that's attractive to you —that your Us-part can visualize growing old with and that your other parts have no objection to — then you can proceed.

At that point, having done your best to protect yourself and the potential partner, give yourself permission to display your attraction and use the persona that you would use with someone you want to love and to have love you. (The goal here is “opening up” and being authentic.)

This strategy protects others from being hurt unnecessarily, and protects you from being a person who hurts others. The result is that you will be available to be open and be yourself in the situations where it really counts.



Chapter 8: Your Partner is Attracted to Someone Else

How natural. Of course your partner is attracted to other people. Attraction can't be turned on or off. Any person whose characteristics match your partner's imprinting will be attractive to your partner. Attraction isn't the issue, nor is it by itself a danger. Attraction can lead to courting, courting can lead to infatuation, and if your partner doesn't understand the process, infatuation with another can cause a breach in your relationship.

Couples' Commitment

Couples who read this book together will have the information they need to make a solid contract that covers attraction and flirting (flirting is a mild form of courting). Couples should make a commitment to their relationship and choose strategies that protect the relationship. A strategy that allows the greatest potential security is one that allows for, and includes the natural attractions that each will feel for other people.

Here is an outline of a couples' agreement. It provides maximum freedom for expression of natural experiences, in combination with maximum security for the relationship each is pledged to protect.

Sample Couples Pledge

1. We each understand that the other may, from time to time be attracted to someone else. We each accept that this is natural, and it is not something one can control.
2. We each understand that the other may respond to those feelings of attraction with mild flirting.
3. We each commit that any flirting will be balanced by an accompanying communication relating to our commitment to our relationship. In this way we can freely express our feelings of attraction for another, without in any way leading the attractive person to think there is any chance for anything more.
4. We each commit that any such feelings of attraction will be used as a stimulus to refresh and reaffirm our feelings of commitment to each other.

You may or may not feel comfortable with this sort of agreement. If you do feel comfortable with it, you'll discover that it covers the major concerns and risks that each person in a relationship faces.

Attraction is natural and cannot be avoided. Flirting is also natural, and most people find it to be fun, and find they get good feelings from it. This pledge recognizes those realities. It also recognizes the very important commitment that each person has to the primary relationship, and every experience of attraction is used as a trigger to cause a renewed commitment to the relationship.

The Traditional Approach

The more traditional approach is to promise each other that you will never be attracted to anyone else. That is a wonderful intention, but neither of you has the ability to achieve it. You can ignore attraction. You can repress attraction and convince yourself that you never feel it. Both of these approaches require some mental gymnastics that keep you blocked from your real experience of the world.

The problem with the traditional approach comes when one person feels attracted to someone else. Along with the attraction comes guilt, because you are breaking your promise. If that attraction is communicated through flirting, then the problem gets worse. You feel guilty for violating your promises and you have something secret happening outside of your relationship.

The goal is to keep anything significant from happening outside of your relationship. If attraction and flirting are outside of your relationship, then there is much greater risk to the relationship than if it is permitted within. Also, guilt is not good for a relationship.

Alan and Rita

Alan was married to Rita. Their mutual agreement was fairly traditional. Both were pledged to not be attracted to others, and the idea of flirting was never discussed. Alan met a lady at a party and was strongly attracted. The lady was attracted to Alan and flirted with him openly. He responded by flirting in return, and the attraction escalated rapidly. Alan found himself torn by attraction on one hand, and guilt on the other. Alan sought counseling and expressed these feelings:

1. A strong positive attraction for the lady he met at the party.
2. Awareness that he could pursue the relationship outside of his marriage.
3. Strong feelings of guilt, *which he blamed on his marriage*.
4. Feelings of anger towards his wife (which he couldn't explain).

After learning about the pairing process Alan felt quite different. He then understood that his attraction was normal and that mild flirting was also quite normal and understandable. This understanding *relieved his guilt*, and the angry feelings towards his wife disappeared. Once he no longer felt anger toward his wife, he was agreeable to the idea of making a renewed commitment to his marriage and allowing the energy and excitement of the attraction to be directed to benefit his important relationship.

So, if your partner is attracted to someone else and your relationship doesn't include that possibility, then it might be advantageous to renegotiate the agreement you have between you. You might use this book as a tool to explore this issue as well as other issues that you might find of interest.



Chapter 9: Your Partner Isn't Attracted to You

This problem has a number of possible solutions. First, read Chapter 2 of this book, “You are not attracted to your Partner,” and you will discover that attraction is nice to feel, but not at all necessary to maintain a successful relationship. After a relationship is started and bonds of love have been formed through intense, positive shared experiences, then attraction becomes a relatively small factor.

No Attraction?

So, if your partner is not attracted to you and yet you have a good relationship, then you can relax and not worry.

Another possibility is that you're mistaken about your attraction to your partner. Quite often people “mind read” their partners incorrectly.

Susan and Andy

Susan was quite proud of her figure when she met Andy. Andy told her many times how much he liked her youthful and slender body. As years went on, Susan filled out considerably and she grew to worry more and more about her weight. Every time she looked in a mirror she got bad feelings about her body. Every time she asked Andy if she should lose weight, he agreed that she should. Susan was unsuccessful in taking off weight and she came to think of herself as fat and repulsive. The bad feelings she got from thinking about how fat she felt led to more eating and more guilt and bad feelings.

Susan felt sure that Andy wasn't attracted to her. When she came into counseling she stated with certainty that Andy wasn't attracted to her any longer. “How could he be, with the way I look?” she said. Susan had a number of beliefs about how Andy thought and felt. She was advised to check each one of them out with Andy.

When she checked them out with Andy, she was surprised to learn that she had been doing some pretty poor “mind reading” about what he thought and felt. Her TWIPI was creating problems where none existed. Andy was shocked to discover that Susan felt he was no longer attracted to her. Andy made it clear that her youth and her figure were only a few of the things that he was attracted to. Andy loved her smile, her voice, her laugh, her ways of touching, and many other things about Susan. Susan had finally learned that attraction is based on many things. Once she felt better about her overall attractiveness, and felt secure about Alan's love, Susan gained the confidence that made it easier to reach her weight goals.

Check it Out

So, if you believe your partner isn't attracted to you, check it out. The worst that can happen is that you will discover you're right, and even that isn't a problem

if you understand the role of attraction is simply the beginning point of a relationship.

If your partner feels repulsion towards you, then you have a more significant problem. The book on coping will be useful for you and your partner to work together to discover the basis for the strong negative feelings your partner feels. If the repulsion stems solely from physical factors and does not stem from problems in your relationship, then it is fairly simple to resolve.

Fred

Fred found himself gradually feeling more repulsed by his wife. She had a facial freckle that grew gradually over time into a raised mole. The change was so gradual that neither of them was very aware of the change. Fred loved his wife very much but his repulsion grew over time and his mixed feelings confused him, so he sought counseling. The counselor was able to help Fred discover that the mole reminded Fred of a similar mole on his stepmother whom he had despised. The counselor helped Fred resolve his feelings towards the stepmother and the repulsion he felt toward his wife disappeared.



Chapter 10: You Attract the Kind of People You Don't Want to Attract

Everyone has the experience of sometimes attracting people they don't want to attract. If it seems to be happening to you too often, or too consistently, then it may require a change in strategy or persona.

Cindy

Cindy attracted too many men who were only interested in her for recreational sex. Cindy understood why, when she learned about personae and strategies. Cindy had been using her “sexy” persona, with revealing clothes and a flirtatious manner. Cindy held the belief that men would be attracted if she were sexy and flirting (many are), but those messages are aimed at their Me-parts not their Us-parts.

Alex

Alex attracted too many women who seemed to mostly interested in him for his money, which he didn't have. Alex liked to appear successful. He drove an expensive car, dressed well, and liked to go to expensive places. When he changed his strategy and his persona, he began attracting women who were attracted to him for himself, not for his extravagance.

Rene'

Rene' attracted women who were dependent and submissive. He wanted to attract women who were autonomous and strong-minded. Rene' cultivated a persona that was heavily macho. He held the belief that a strong, macho image would be appealing to women who were also strong-minded. Rene' changed his beliefs, adopted a more comfortable, less macho persona and found that he became more attractive to the kind of women that he felt attracted to.

Strategy

If you find yourself attracting the kind of people that you don't want to attract — and it happens consistently — then use this strategy:

1. Examine your beliefs about what attracts the kind of people you want to attract. Odds are good it's an invalid belief or assumption.
2. Examine the persona you adopt in situations where you are meeting prospective partners. You'll probably find the persona you're using is not very natural to you, but one you put on because you believe or assume it's the most attractive persona for you.
3. Select your most appealing and “real” persona and adopt a high probability strategy for meeting potential partners. (Read the next chapter also.)



Chapter 11: Attracting a New Partner

Let's assume that you don't have a partner, and you want to attract one. We'll start with some new things to learn and then we'll list some of the strategies that are most successful.

Getting Past “Stuck”

Anytime you're stuck in a single phase of pairing, one way to get past the stuck point is to advance somewhere further into the process. This means that if you have a possible partner who isn't attracted to you, you can advance to courting directly, or even to infatuation. You can also go right to bonding, and even to coping.

Another thing to note is that the strategies are different for a person whose “window” is open, than for a person whose “window” is closed.

Mary

Mary was only 18, but she had finished her education, had a job, was considering getting her own apartment, but still lived at home. There was no doubt in Mary's mind that she was ready to find a partner, marry, and settle down.

Astrid

Astrid was 26, finished with law school, and had worked with her law firm for two years. She had a good job, and her own apartment. Her window was closed, however, because she planned to save her money for two more years, and then take a trip backpacking around the world. Her plan was to open her own law practice when she finished her backpacking trip, get married, and settle down. For Astrid, her window won't be open until she returns from her trip.

Phil

Phil was in medical school. He faced two more years of school, two more years of advanced specialist training, and two years of residency. After all that, and only then, will his window be open.

Windows

Now, here is something you need to know about these windows. People whose windows are closed sometimes can have their minds changed by events. Astrid, for example, may become infatuated with someone, fall in love, and then be willing to change her mind. Phil could do the same. What you need to know is, *usually that doesn't happen*.

To avoid heartbreak and disappointment, the best strategy is this. If your window is closed, limit your relationships to people whose windows are also closed. If your window is open, limit your relationships to people whose windows are open. When your window is *closed*, it's unfair and hurtful to involve yourself with someone whose window is open. When *your* window is open, you risk hurt

and disappointment and frustration if you focus your attentions on someone whose window is closed.

When a person's window is closed, it means that the person's parts are not willing to let the Us-part take charge. That means that you'll be dealing with that person's other parts. Sometimes you can work at building a relationship with a person whose window is closed, on the chance that you will build bonds so strong that you will be well positioned when the window opens. The study of many relationships shows that there are risks with this strategy. If your relationship goes all the way through infatuation, there is a strong risk that the person with a closed window will terminate the relationship before any significant bonding takes place.

It seems that the main place that the window counts is in bonding. A person with a closed window can be attracted, court, and become infatuated. The problem comes in bonding. Unless the window is open, the bonding may be superficial or even resisted. As infatuation wanes, and it's time for bonding to become important, a person with a closed window may well find the other parts resisting bonding. The excitement is over, and quite often the relationship is over. There are always a few exceptions, and the exceptions give hope. The reality, however, is more frequently one of disappointment and heartbreak.

Some Strategies for People With Open Windows

First, select a possible partner with an open window. Second, find someone that your Us-part is attracted to. (Give less attention to factors like money, and status than you do to factors like attraction, and whether you genuinely like the person, feel comfortable with the person, and can see yourself living with that person even if there were little money and status or anything else that might seem appealing.)

Next, find ways to demonstrate your attraction. Whether you are male or female, there are ways to initiate courting. Most people respond well to displays of attraction. When you ask people how they first became attracted to their partner, the most common answer is that the partner was attracted to them first, and their attraction came in response to the attentions paid by their partner. If you are met with little response then you must move on to another strategy.

The following strategies fit a range of situations and to be able to do all of them would require a person with a wide range of persona. Most people find one or two that best suit his or her personality and self-image. If your self-image keeps you from doing any of them, you may have too narrow a range of strategies available. In examining a number of cases of people who were unable to attract a partner, the most common problem was that they had too few strategies that they felt free to use. If that turns out to be the case with you, and you want to change, then the chapter on strategies and persona in Book Two will help.

1. The “Go for Broke” Strategy

The go for broke strategy results in a quick conclusion to the issue.

A Chicago man, frustrated by a reluctant possible partner took out a billboard advertisement on a billboard across from her office, asking the lady of his dreams to meet him for dinner. She went on the date. When asked about it, she said, “who could refuse that?”

To qualify as “Go for Broke,” the initiative must be somewhat outrageous, and dramatic.

Sally McD

Sally McD wrote a short book entitled, “To the Man That’ll Marry Sally McD.” The book was all about the wonderful life that would come to the man who would marry Sally McD. She had it printed and bound. On the dedication page she put “Dedicated to Charles L.” Actually, she had three books printed, each with a different dedication page for the possible partners. She also had ninety-seven more copies printed, with blank dedication pages (just in case). She then sent the three copies out to the men to whom they were dedicated. Thus began three whirlwind courtships. Before it was over, all three men had proposed, and Charles L. won her hand. She told her story to four other women, each of whom created her own book, and each succeeded in using the book to attract the possible partner of their choice. Outrageous! And Successful!

Sally McD’s story is reminiscent of the story of the man who gained widespread fame in the 1970’s by advertising “Drop me in any city in the country, take away all but \$100 for meals and cab fare, and in forty-eight hours I’ll buy a piece of real estate with no money down.” It’s possible that Sally McD could take her ninety-seven leftover books and find ninety-seven live partners of her choice, in any city of the country, within forty-eight hours.

If all goes well, you only need one.

2. The “Creep Up On ‘em” Approach

The “Creep Up On ‘em” approach is based on the idea that you can form bonds with any one of the parts of your possible partners. Once a bond is formed with one part, it becomes easy for the bonding to spread to other parts. Evidence of this comes from the zillions of relationships that are formed with co-workers. One wag said, “Working together must be the greatest aphrodisiac known to man.” Two people working together, especially in intense situations such as meeting deadlines, finishing a difficult project, or putting together a proposal, form bonds that are strengthened by the intensity of the situation. A bond between the work- parts, can lead to attraction, as can a bond between the Me-parts, the Children-parts, the Family-parts, etc.

Martha

Martha offered to help with widower John's baby anytime the sitter couldn't make it. Several times John called on Martha to help out. Each time the sitter couldn't make it, John was on the spot. So there was a certain intensity to the need for help. Martha was wonderful. Martha grew quite fond of the baby. "She loved the baby like a natural mother," said John later. You can guess the rest of the story.

Harry

Harry got nowhere with neighbor Alice, until her car wouldn't start one day. Harry jumped in and solved the problem. Harry offered to teach Alice about her car, and over the next few weeks gave her a complete course in maintaining and troubleshooting. The bond formed by working together on the car led to a date and that led to a relationship.

Francis

Francis couldn't attract the interest of a young lawyer, who, it turned out was interested in politics and had political ambitions. Francis decided to get interested in politics and volunteered to help out on the campaign of a local politician. Each time she met the lawyer she was attracted to, she told him that he ought to run for office, and offered to help on his campaign. The bond formed by their mutual interest in politics spread. Recently, she was his campaign manager, and also his wife.

You get the idea. You can bond with someone through any part. If you have a reluctant partner, seek to discover what you can of his or her work, hobbies, interests and the person. The more you know, the easier it becomes.

3. The "Up Front" Strategy

The "Up Front" strategy is one of awesome directness. The idea here is to pierce through all of the rituals and "dancing" that goes on during the attraction phase, and get right to the point. The strategy either works or doesn't work. It saves a great deal of time and energy. It can be used by a man or woman. The important thing is the persona. It works best if you put on the persona that is calm, direct, relaxed, and confident.

An example "I find I am very attracted to you. I want to get to know you. Tell me a comfortable way for you that would let us get better acquainted."

Or "I find I'm very attracted to you. I want you to tell me the best way for me to sweep you off your feet so that you'll feel about me the way I feel about you."

Or "I've been struggling with a way to get you interested in me and I've decided to be direct and ask you. What would you have to discover in me in order to find yourself attracted?"

Or “I want you to have the books in the “Metamating” series. As I was reading, I kept thinking about you. Read it, and then I want to talk to you about it.”

There are a zillion different tactics that you can use. Each of them fit into one of these basic strategies. Be direct, be outrageous or “Creep Up On ‘em.” If the strategies you’ve been using haven’t worked, expand your range.



Chapter 12: How to Improve Your Chances of Attracting a Partner

Understanding the pairing process can help you improve your chances of attracting a partner. Most people go about the process loaded down with old wives' tales, wrong strategies, and mistaken assumptions.

Do Something

First of all, decide that you'll take responsibility for finding yourself a partner. It's all very nice when your partner finds you, and perhaps that will happen. But, while you are waiting, decide to do something yourself. No one is as interested in getting your pairing needs met as you are. No one else is going to care as much as you do. It's your job. Do it.

When you're hungry, whom do you rely on to solve the problem? *You* take care of it. When you're sleepy, whom do you rely on to handle it? *You* get yourself to bed. When your Us-part is needy, whom do you rely on to take care of it? *You!*

In the Victorian days, our culture was such that many young people waited until others took responsibility for finding a partner. Those days are gone forever. In these days, it's up to you. If you feel hesitant, fearful, or embarrassed when you take an active step toward finding a partner, then take comfort. You are not alone.

Becky

Becky used to feel embarrassed about taking any initiatives with men. Then she noticed that other women sometimes took initiatives and were successful. So, she gathered up her courage and found herself a wonderful partner. When she was reading this book before it was published she asked that her thoughts be passed on to others. Becky was able to take initiatives when she concentrated on this thought; "It's less embarrassing to risk taking initiatives than it is to stand around waiting for someone to find me." She also wanted to pass on the thought: "Better to risk a little embarrassment than to be lonely."

Here are some thoughts that will help you be successful in the initiatives that you take.

Be Attractive, Be Yourself

You're already attractive to a number of people. Those people were imprinted at an early age to be attracted to those characteristics that *you have — right now!* Many people destroy this natural attractiveness by attempting to be different than they are.

Sara

Sara was naturally bubbly and high-spirited. When she decided that it was more attractive to be calm and detached, she attempted to put on a persona that wasn't

natural to her. This confused men who met her. Those who were imprinted to be attracted to someone bubbly and highly energized couldn't find Sara under her mask of calm detachment. Those men attracted to calm detachment would be attracted to Sara and then turn away as her real personality showed through. Sara was reducing her attractiveness by attempting to hide her natural self, and be something she wasn't.



Angie

Angie was naturally plain of feature and had a pale complexion. Many men are attracted to just this combination in a woman. Angie felt she had been cheated by nature and attempted to make herself to look like other girls she thought were more attractive. Angie went to work with cosmetics. When she went out into the world, she had extraordinary color and dramatic cosmetic effects. As a result, those men who would have been naturally attracted to her the way she naturally was, couldn't find her. Those who were imprinted to be attracted to women with high color and dramatic features found Angie to be a poor imitation.

Both Angie and Sara started with the assumption that they were not attractive and attempted to make themselves over into what they thought would be more attractive. Both used bad strategies and had bad results. They both ended up "right" however. Both thought they were unattractive, and their results proved them to be correct. It was not easy convincing Angie and Sara that the problem was not that they were not attractive. The problem was that they *thought* they were not attractive. They then compounded the problem by creating a worse one, attempting to be someone they were not.

Harry

Harry was a rather mild young man. He was sensitive and thoughtful. He felt intimidated by the more macho fellows in his school. He decided that he was not attractive and needed to become more macho before he could be attractive. Harry joined a weight lifting gym and built up his body. He took up swearing, spitting, and driving fast. His strategy was a failure. The women who were attracted by macho characteristics quickly saw through Harry's charade, and the women who were attracted to gentle men had no interest in the person Harry appeared to be.

The first and most important step to becoming attractive is to *be yourself*. The second most important step is to *feel okay about being yourself*.

Easy to say, hard to do? Perhaps. Feeling okay about yourself must be one of the most difficult things in the world to do. If you don't know how to do it, there are many books you can find that aim to help in this important problem.

What is true is that one of the most attractive characteristics that *anyone* can have is an inner sense of self-acceptance. It isn't beauty or handsomeness. It isn't height or weight. It isn't body shape or features. There are beautiful women who don't like themselves. Somehow, they are only beautiful on the outside. There are handsome men who don't like themselves. They are only handsome on the outside.

There are women who would never be considered beautiful who are beautiful on the inside because they are at peace with themselves. They value themselves as they are. As soon as you get to know someone like this, they become beautiful in all ways.

So, there are two important keys to attracting someone to be your partner. First, be yourself, be natural, be the natural and real *you*. Second, do what you need to do to accept yourself the way you are.

Finding the Real You

Here are some ways to get in touch with the real and natural you.

Step One: discover where the problem is.

- Make a list of those things about you that are attractive. Make a list of those things about which you *don't* feel attractive. This will give you an idea whether the problem is in your TWIPI (your view of how it is with you), or whether the problem is in your TWISB (your view of how it should be with you).
- Identify the feeling you get when you are feeling unattractive. Identify the feeling you get when you are feeling attractive.
- Identify the strategy you use to deal with the things about you that you don't feel are attractive.

- Identify any persona that you use when you are attempting to be attractive. Compare that to the persona that you use when you are being natural and just being yourself.

Learn to recognize any errors in your TWIPI or TWISB that are giving you bad feelings about yourself. That will help you spot what you do when you get a bad feeling, and any persona you adopt that may mask the real you.

Step Two: get more in touch with the real you.

Fantasy work helps here. Imagine yourself being natural and at ease with yourself. Watch yourself as you are with your best friends. Then imagine yourself being the same way around possible partners. Visualize yourself being relaxed, natural, and fully at ease with yourself. Then step right into what you visualize. Be yourself, be natural, be at ease with yourself. As you do this, you will be as attractive as it is possible for you to be.

Exercise: Get Outside of Yourself

One way to remain natural and at ease with yourself is to get outside of yourself and concentrate on someone else. Be curious about the other person. Set out to discover as much about that person as you can. Here is an exercise that is wonderfully useful.

Select a person whom you like and want know better. The first few times you do it, you might want to tell the person that you are doing an exercise in getting to know people, and you want his or her cooperation. After you do it a few times, you'll find that you can do it naturally and easily and you won't need to explain what you're doing.

- Imagine a room with nine chairs, one for each of this person's parts.
- Get the person talking about likes, wants, and wishes.
- As the person talks about a like, want or wish, imagine what part that is, and imagine that part with that want or wish.

As you do this exercise, you'll discover that you can learn a great deal about a person, and you can remember it. In a short space of time, you'll know this person so well that it will amaze you — and the other person.

George and Millie

George meets Millie, and wants to get to know her better. He can start on any topic, and ask her what she wants, likes, or wishes. Perhaps Millie says she would like to have her own Italian restaurant some day. George fills the Work-part chair with an image of Millie in a chef's hat and dishes of spaghetti on her lap.

He discovers that Millie is active in her church and likes to sing in the choir. He fills her belief-part chair with Millie in a choir robe. George then discovers that Millie likes banana splits, getting a manicure, and hot baths. He sees her Me-part

chair submerged in a hot bath, while she eats a banana split with one hand, while the other gets manicured.

George learns that she likes to read biographies (she enjoyed a book about Lincoln), and she also likes horseback riding. He sees her on her interests-part chair upon a horse, reading a book with a Lincoln portrait on it. Millie confides that her ideal man is her fiancé and she hopes to have three children. George fills her Family-part chair with her fiancé and Millie on his lap. George fills her Children-part chair with an image of Millie with three kids on her lap.

Okay, you get the idea. The image of the room, and the chairs gives George a logical place to put everything he discovers about Millie. The imagined image gives him a helpful technique for remembering what he learns, and it helps him recall any single part of Millie.

What's really important about this exercise is that it keeps you outside of yourself, and focused on the other person. As you do that, you'll find it very easy to avoid being self conscious or self-critical. You will discover that you have a natural curiosity about people and enjoy satisfying that curiosity.

You'll discover that any person you do this with, will feel attracted to you either as a friend or as a possible partner.

One more thing you can add, if you like, is to share with the person each time they have a similar want or wish that you also have. You will find that this extra step of marking matches will give you a number of common bonds. Common bonds have a way of stimulating attraction.

Intensity

You read earlier that you can generate attraction by bonding. Every bond that you share is the basis for developing attraction. There is one more element to that: the more *intensity* involved in the bond that you share, the greater its power to create attraction. So, if you want to create powerful attraction in a possible partner, then create a common bond that has a high level of intensity.

It is not easy to create intensity. It is however, easy to find situations where the intensity is already there. For example, here are a number of situations where there is a high level of intensity already in the situation:

- An election
- A fire
- An exciting parlor game
- An accident
- A prom
- New Year's eve
- A horror movie
- A suspense movie

The horse races
A religious service
A final exam
A roller coaster ride
A spring week in Fort Lauderdale
A school board meeting to discuss busing
A death in the family
Someone else's wedding
The Super Bowl, World Series, etc.
Election eve

Enough examples, you get the idea. There are a number of everyday events that have in them a high level of intensity. Sharing any of these events with another person creates a bond. The greater the intensity, the greater the strength of the bond. Strong bonds build strong friendships between friends, and strong bonds create potential for attraction between possible partners.

Summary

If you have identified a possible partner, and want to increase the odds that the person would be attracted to you here is a good formula.

1. Decide to do something — take an initiative
2. Be yourself — be as natural as you can be.
3. Know that you have many natural attractive characteristics, and be at ease with yourself, secure that you are the best *you* that you can be.
4. Get outside of yourself, and discover as much as you can about your possible partner. Mark any matches that you have in common: likes, wants, or wishes.
5. Share an experience that has a high level of intensity.



Book Four

Troubleshooting Courting



Introduction to Courting

Courting is an engaging and charming activity. To see it in its purest form, watch twelve to fourteen-year-olds. After that age the same activities are there, but they become subtler and more polished. Long after you have found a partner and are out of the courting arena, you'll find a certain delight and charm in watching young people go about it.

Courting

Here are some of the activities to look for:

Flirting: sending signals of attraction.

Ignoring: seems to follow flirting — it's as though now that you've sent the signal, you want to deny having sent it.

Focusing: paying a lot of attention to the person you're attracted to; watching him or her, looking for signs from that person; paying less attention to others.

Primping: paying inordinate attention to your own looks, hair, facial blemishes, cosmetics etc. (primping is a signal of its own).

Posturing: being aware of how you present yourself; acting taller, older, more vigorous, thinner, heavier; being more aware of how you walk, talk, act.

Initiating: taking the lead sometimes in interactions with the one you are attracted to; calling, inviting, inquiring, pushing, shoving, touching as if by accident; arranging to be in the way of the potential partner.

Withdrawing: being hard to reach; acting as though you're not interested; acting occupied; pretending an interest in others that you may not feel.

Matching: agreeing with, liking the same things; discovering an interest in anything that interests the object of your attraction.

Teasing: attacking, accusing, acting as though you are upset or hurt or annoyed; tickling, hitting, bumping into.

This list should give you an idea of some of the activities that are bound up in the courting process. By the way, these identical items are found in virtually every culture. They have different appearances, depending upon the culture, but they seem to be innately human activities.

Chapter 1: You're Ready for Exclusivity; Your Partner Isn't

There are a number of plateaus in the courting process. The courting process moves at different speeds for each party. Therefore, it's common for one person to reach a plateau before the other. That may be the case for you.



You're ready for exclusivity and your partner isn't.

Windows

Another possibility is that you or your partner — or both — have closed windows. When your window is closed, it's wise (but not easy), to avoid exclusivity. Becoming exclusive gives a big boost toward infatuation. Infatuation — while your window is closed — puts heavy pressure on you. So, another possible reason for your partner resisting exclusivity is that your partner's window is closed and your partner is resisting becoming exclusive as a way of avoiding pressure and possible hurt.

If you know that both of your windows are open, then it's best to be patient and wait for your partner to be ready. Pushing, or forcing a step your partner isn't ready for, may give your partner the impression that you are only interested in your own needs and not willing to consider your partner's needs.

Strategies

The most considerate and caring strategy is to deliver two equally important messages to your partner. The first is your willingness or eagerness to become an

exclusive couple. The second is your willingness to be patient until your partner is ready.

Once delivered, it's best to avoid pushing or manipulating your partner. You may periodically reaffirm the two messages. This has the effect of demonstrating that you are still very interested, and that you respect your partner's wishes.

There are several strategies that are best avoided. They almost always have poor outcomes:

1. Avoid displaying jealousy toward others that your partner may be involved with.
2. Do not attempt to make your partner jealous of you by inventing a supposed interest in someone else. If you have a genuine interest in another, go with it. Avoid games or pretenses; they are certain to have poor results.
3. Avoid displays of bad humor (sulking, pouting, withdrawing), as attempts to manipulate your partner into becoming exclusive.

The single most important capacity you can display in this situation is patience. Patience on your part keeps the pressure off of your partner. Your partner will not necessarily appreciate your patience, but it is quite probable that he or she may resent it if you apply pressure.

When you display patience, you demonstrate a respect for your partner and a willingness to accept your partner the way your partner is, without forcing your needs onto your partner. Patience is a mark of maturity, and a demonstration that you are indeed a candidate for a mature relationship.

Patience is difficult. You're ahead of your partner and you want your partner to catch up. The one ahead is always eager for movement on the part of the other. However, pushing or game playing will probably not have the outcome you intend. It seems as if they should work, yet quite often they have the opposite effect.

If you are feeling terribly pressured by time, and you want to force your partner to either go with you or go away, then pushing and forcing a decision may get you an answer. On the other hand, it might not hurt to be patient, *and* to keep an open eye for other, possibly more rapidly developing relationships. This is not a suggestion for you to start up another relationship to force the first one. However, if you are in a hurry and your partner is moving too slowly for you, then it might be prudent to have more than one non-exclusive relationship.



Chapter 2: You Want Intimate Communications; Your Partner is Closed

Intimacy in communications means being open and straight about your feelings and thoughts. Being closed means either not communicating your honest feelings and thoughts, or communicating feelings and thoughts that are designed to manipulate the other person.

Discovery

The courting phase is the time to discover important things about you and your partner and how you communicate. Wide differences on important issues like intimacy are indications that the relationship may be on shaky grounds for the long term.

If you are both rather closed and avoid honest and open intimate communications, then coping will be difficult, but possible. If you are both open and honest and seek intimacy in your communications, then coping will be easier and you will have the key tools for it. The worst difficulty is when one is open and seeks intimacy, and the other is closed and avoids intimacy.

People can and do change as they grow and mature. It is also true that they most often do not change. Many a person has married with the secret hope of changing his or her partner. Most have been severely disappointed.

If you seek openness and intimacy, and your partner shuns it and has little interest in developing it, then you have a decision to make. A long-term relationship can succeed in these circumstances, but the open person will often find himself or herself making all the concessions and accommodations. A one-sided relationship can be deeply frustrating and painful.

In Chapter 4 of this section, there's an exercise in open communications. This exercise may help you and your partner in understanding intimacy and openness. By working together on the intimacy exercise you can determine whether your partner is willing to work to become more open. If the answer is 'yes' then you have a rewarding joint project. If there is considerable resistance, then you have a decision to make.



Chapter 3: Your Partner Has Violated Your Trust

Trust is a very volatile issue for twosomes. A relationship without trust is a relationship filled with pain and torment. The following thoughts about trust are among the most important things you'll discover in this book, and the most important beliefs and strategies that you can learn about pairing.

Trust is a Gift

First, grasp the idea that trust is something very separate from the acts that violate trust. For example, Sally lies to Bill. Bill could stop trusting Sally. However, the lie is an *act* and it may or may not ever be repeated. Trust is trust; it can be given or withheld. Trust is a basic *belief* about someone else. Even though Sally has lied, Bill can choose to trust Sally in the future.

Trust is a gift. It is given to another. It does as much for the giver as it does for the recipient.

So, trust is a gift you give your partner. It is a gift of love. A gift is always best when it's given without strings. For example, Tom gives Mary a watch. If it's truly a gift, then Mary may do what she chooses with it. The watch is now Mary's and if it was truly a gift without strings, then it is hers to do with as she pleases. If Mary gives the watch to her friend Ann, then Mary has done with it as she chooses. If Tom chooses to feel bad about Mary's use of the gift, then Tom must have put strings on the gift.

So, here are several thoughts for you that all run counter to conventional wisdom.

- A gift is only a true gift if it is given without strings.
- Trust is a gift — a gift of love. Trust, when given without strings as a gift of love, does more to enrich the giver than the one it is given to.
- If you allow any act of the recipient to make you withdraw the gift, then it was given with strings, is not a true gift, and does not enrich the giver, but hurts the giver.

Example

Fred and Sara are a twosome. Sara trusts Fred. Fred spends an evening with another woman. Fred lies about it to Sara. Now, what is Sara to do?

Sara is wise to consider the actions or acts. Fred spent an evening with another woman. Fred lied to Sara about it. These are acts that need to be dealt with. They are best dealt with by talking openly about them. Fred and Sara need to have open discussions about the events and they need to come to some resolution about them.

Let's assume that Fred and Sara discuss the events and Fred takes responsibility for what he did and apologizes to Sara for violating his agreement and for lying about it. Fred affirms again his commitment to Sara and pledges to honor his

commitment in the future. Sara considers everything and decides to forgive and forget. Now, the acts are dealt with.

What about trust? If Sara withdraws her gift of trust in Fred, then what will happen? Sara will not trust Fred. Sara will find that she is miserable. Fred will feel the lack of trust and be miserable. The relationship will be uncomfortable for both Fred and Sara.

The best advice to Sara would be to continue her loving gift of trust to Fred. That trust may or may not be violated. That's up to Fred. Sara can only give her trust and be nourished by it, or withdraw her trust and feel pain.

If the acts that threaten the relationship continue, then Sara will have to make her own choices about continuing the relationship. The future of the relationship will depend on the acts that threaten it, not the trust or lack of it that Sara feels.

So, acts can threaten a relationship. Withdrawing trust can threaten a relationship. If one person acts in a way that threatens the relationship and the other withdraws trust, the question arises “Who is responsible for threatening the relationship?”

If Sara were to withdraw her trust, the relationship would be threatened. She would say that Fred was responsible. Fred would say that Sara's lack of trust was responsible. Both would be “right” from their point of view. But the relationship would be destroyed.

If the relationship is to be destroyed, let it not be the lack of trust that does it. Let it be destroyed by acts.

Notice that acts come and go. They are one-time things. Trust is ongoing. It must be there always — continuously — in order to nourish a relationship.



Chapter 4: You Say “No” and Your Partner Pushes

Ellen Goodman dealt with this issue in her column of April 18, 1984, headlined “Deciphering Language of Courtship.”

BOSTON Two weeks ago, in writing about three separate rape convictions, I noted that a new definition of rape was finally taking hold of the public consciousness. Juries in three separate cases had determined that, “If she says no, it’s rape.”

In that same column, I also asked whether that same change of mind was part of our daily lives. Rapists after all, came out of a culture in which men were supposed to persist and women were supposed to resist. Many men grew up believing that a woman could say one thing and mean another.

Since then, I have heard from any number of men, both in private conversations and in the mail, relating their own experiences with the yes-no-maybes of sexual relations. One lawyer told me about the time he took no for an answer, only to discover later that she wanted persuasion. Another friend was convinced that many of the negative messages he received were actually mixed.

Three of the letters I received were in some ways typical of the response from many men, angry or thoughtful. One came from a Virginia husband and father of two who wrote, “You are wrong when you assert that if she says no it’s rape. By your definition, I could have been guilty of rape a dozen or more times. But...all of those ‘victims’ went out with me again, and many remain warm friends. By fostering such a broad definition you water down the true meaning of the word. You are lumping ‘not tonight dear, I have a headache’ into the same category as the truly violent and brutal rapes that do occur.”

Another man in Miami tried to sort out the messages he had been dealing with since adolescence: “I, in no way, mean to excuse the all-too-often brutal response men have to the demurring female. But, honestly, young boys grow into men hearing of the sexual conquests of other males who ‘didn’t take no for an answer.’ Quite often the gentler male is left to suffer through the exploits of another who ‘scored’ where he didn’t That scenario of our male world is closer to everyday experience than most of us like to admit.

Finally, a retired 80 year old Floridian sent in a sexual riddle of his youth. “Question: What is the difference between a diplomat and a lady? Answer: When a diplomat says ‘yes’, he means ‘perhaps’. When he says ‘perhaps’, he means ‘no’, and when he says ‘no’, he’s no diplomat. When a lady says ‘no’, she means ‘perhaps’. when she says ‘perhaps’, she means yes, and when she says ‘yes’, she’s no lady.

These three messages are not isolated. They are messages along the continuum of ingrained beliefs and real-life experiences. They re-tell the cultural story of the ‘forceful man’ and the ‘reluctant lady’.

The Virginian is not the first man to believe he was rewarded for his aggressive pursuit of a demure dozen. The Miamian is not the first to wonder if his

gentleness was foolish, even unmanly. The riddle was not the first teaching tool for ladies who might be foolish enough to risk their reputations with an eager 'yes'

I believe that the actual number of double-messages are exaggerated in men's minds. Nevertheless, not every woman who says no means it. Not every woman who means yes, says it. The yes-no-maybes of our culture can produce an elaborate courtship dance to refrains of uncertainty, and frustration.

But that doesn't mean that an ambivalent or even coy woman is equally responsible for the atmosphere that ends in scenes of sexual pressure After all, if a man accepts her "no", what harm has been done? There are no destructive consequences, no violence, no cries of rape.

If "no" is ignored, though, a woman, even one who cares for the man, learns that what she says doesn't matter. That SHE doesn't matter. At least, not as much as the scoreboard. The consequences are enormously destructive.

We seek a great many things in the act that we call making love. Approval and affection as well as sex. Making love can edge easily into a power struggle. But denial and force are not equally weighted in this struggle. There is simply stated, much more harm in aggression. In the end, the man doesn't take no for an answer is only proving one thing that he can take.

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Ellen Goodman's column illustrates some of the ambivalence and frustration that is involved in the yes-no-maybes of sex in courtship. The issue is complex and difficult. The solution, however, can be rather simple, if both parties are willing to be open to discussion.

A man (in our culture) is caught between his desire to allow his lady to say 'when' and his fear that he isn't being 'manly' if he doesn't persist. He also has the fear that maybe he is missing the message; maybe her 'no' means 'maybe,' or even 'yes'. The woman is caught between her desire to please her partner and her fear that she will be 'just another score' or considered 'easy.'

The answer is possible, if both parties are able to discuss it. One answer may be to read this section together and discuss it.

Discussion Exercise — Part 1

Here are some questions that might get a good discussion going.

1. First of all, is there any chance that we might share each other sexually before marriage?
2. If yes, under what circumstances?
3. Will it depend on my pushing for it?
4. Will you say no when you mean maybe?
5. Will you say no when you mean yes?
6. If we wait for you to decide will it be never?

7. If I push and push will it happen sooner?
8. Do you expect a man to prove himself manly by persisting?
9. If I say yes, will it mean I am easy?
10. If I say yes, will you respect me in the morning?
11. Etc.

The first part of the exercise is to dialog about these questions. The second part of the exercise is to go inside and get a sense of what you're feeling. Do you feel any certainty? Are you ambivalent? Are you confused? Do you have a lot of mixed messages?

If you feel very certain, and very comfortable with the dialog, and you have a good sense that you both have reached an understanding on this issue, then you're finished.

If you feel uncertain, fearful, uncomfortable, then it's best to consider the matter unsettled. Either it will take another dialog in the future, or it is possible that the issue is so emotionally laden that it won't be settled at all through dialog.

Discussion Exercise — Part 2

If you decide to leave the issue unsettled, you can come to a sense of closure by choosing one of the following resolutions:

1. The issue is still unsettled, and that's okay. We'll deal with it again some time in the future. In the meantime, let's continue as we have been.
2. The issue is still unsettled, and that's okay. We'll deal with it again some time in the future. In the meantime, I want agree on one of these guidelines:
 - a. When I say no, I mean no. Please don't persist.
 - b. When I say no, I don't know what I mean. I really mean yes, but not now.
 - c. When I say no, it really means yes, but I am afraid of something. When I stop being afraid, I'll let you know.
3. When *you* push and I say no, here's how you react:
 - a. I'm glad that you react that way.
 - b. I'm not happy that you react that way.
 - c. I feel like you are trying to manipulate me, and don't really care about my needs wants and wishes.
4. When *I* push and you say no, here's how I react:
 - a. I like it that you handle it that way.
 - b. I don't like the way you handle it.
 - c. I feel I'm getting mixed messages, and I want to know exactly what you're communicating.

If these dialog starters don't work for you and your partner, make up your own. Be certain to cover these points:

1. Here is what I think and feel. Here is what I think I hear from you.
2. Tell me what you think and feel. Tell me what you hear from me.

One important point. If your relationship is to succeed in the long term, it must be built on a much broader base than sex. Long-term relationships are built on mutual respect and trust. They are also built on caring and concern for the feelings and choices made by each other.

Also, a solid relationship cannot depend on sex. A solid, long-term relationship must be big enough to allow for disagreement and differences in opinion on who decides what and when. If one party is willing to end the relationship if his or her sexual needs are not satisfied, then that is a good indication that the relationship is not yet broad enough to build on. (That person's Me-part is more deeply involved than that person's Us-part.)



Chapter 5: Sex is the Biggest Issue in the Relationship

It's normal to have sex be a very large issue during courting. If, however, sex becomes the dominant issue, then it isn't a relationship — it's an affair. If you both simply want an affair, then all's well. If you wanted a relationship, then you have to broaden the issues.

Intimacy

The other issues that are important are intimacy, exclusivity, and commitment, as well as resolving the internal dynamics such as domination and deference.

If you both have achieved a satisfactory level of *intimacy* (openness and trust), in your relationship, and you've become *exclusive* one to the other, and you each have made a determined *commitment* to each other, then it is appropriate that sex be the biggest issue.

The problem comes however, when one party chooses to make sex a major issue before there is a satisfactory commitment, or before you are both declared to be exclusive, or before you have achieved a satisfying level of intimacy. The difference between an affair and a relationship is that a relationship is expected to include such things as commitment and exclusivity and intimacy. An affair or dalliance is entered into by the Me-part and the goal is largely sexual and social. A relationship is entered into by the Us-part, and has broader goals.

A person expecting a relationship, and not willing to participate in an affair or dalliance has every right to expect that the relationship issues be resolved before making a complete sexual commitment. On the other hand, two people with closed windows, each unable to commit to a permanent, exclusive, intimate relationship, will often find that sex is the dominant issue.

Teenagers often find themselves blocked in. Their windows are closed. That is, they have decided to either continue their educations, or to wait until they have entered adulthood and have financial autonomy before being ready for marriage. Yet, they feel compelled to attract and be attracted to a partner.

If the teenage pair both have their windows closed, and they become an exclusive pair, and have begun to experiment with the openness and trust that builds intimacy, they run head on into the sexual issue. They are unable to make the commitment and open declaration that would allow for complete sexual commitment. So, the issue quickly becomes "Is it okay to have sex without commitment to a relationship?"

Each person must answer this question for himself or herself. Parents, ministers, teachers, and other authority figures can only advise. Each person is on his or her own.

Here's some advice on this issue in the form of a strategy for resolving the issue in your own mind.

A Strategy

The strategy is to call a meeting of your parts. You will find instructions on how to do this in Book Two, Chapter 5. After roll call, when all interested parts have agreed to participate, ask for input on these questions:

1. Am I fully confident in all parts that I have done the following:
 - a. made as much of a commitment to my partner as I am free to make?
 - b. determined to be exclusive with my partner until either the relationship ends, or is made permanent?
 - c. given my best to achieve openness in my communications with my partner so that we may have a high level of honesty and intimacy?
2. Am I fully ready for sexual experience?
 - a. Have I made strides toward maturity?
 - b. Am I really being dominated by my Me-part and its quest for sexual gratification, or is my Us-part ready for a sexual relationship with this person?
3. Am I fully confident that my partner:
 - a. has made as complete a commitment as my partner is free to make?
 - b. is determined to be exclusive with me until either the relationship ends, or is made permanent?
 - c. Has given best efforts to achieve openness in our communications so that we may have a high level of honesty and intimacy?

In a meeting of your parts, each part is obliged to respect the needs and concerns of each other part. To proceed, each part must be willing to support your decision without further protest or later attacks which produce guilt.

If the meeting produces a decision to proceed with full support, then you can feel free to enter into a sexual relationship without remorse or guilt. If, on the other hand, your parts will not fully support sexual involvement, then your Me-part can enter into the sexual relationship only at the risk of regret, remorse, guilt, and internal turmoil. Whichever decision your parts reach, you will be best advised to keep their counsel and abide by their decision.

Your decision need not be permanent. In either case, you can re-decide when and if the factors change. If your decision is no, and your partner will not honor your decision, then it seems evident that your partner does not respect you and your right to make free choices. The signs would indicate that you are dealing with your partner's Me-part, not Us-part.

The benefit in this strategy is that it makes you wholly responsible for your decision. Taking responsibility for your decisions is one of the basic components of maturity and good mental health.



Chapter 6: Your Partner Won't Make a Commitment

Commitment is the last great stumbling block to the full development of a relationship between two people with their windows open. There are many reasons for people to hold back on commitment. In this section, we'll examine some of the best reasons for holding back, and some of the worst.

Good Reasons to Hold Back, if your Window Isn't Open

Other parts of you have priority. It may be your Work-part and interest-part getting more education. It may be your interest-part and Sage-part seeking to travel and see the world before you settle down. It may be simply that you have beliefs and learnings that have convinced your parts to wait until you are older and more mature. There are many reasons for having your window closed, and if they are good enough for you that is all that counts.

To make a commitment while your window is closed is to attempt to move in two directions at the same time. It splits you into warring camps within your one mind. Wise people have discovered over time that it's better to convene a meeting of your parts and decide which direction to take. Then, once you are decided and all parts have agreed, you can follow the direction you have chosen with peace of mind and full commitment.



Chapter 7: You Have Several Possible Partners and Aren't Ready to Choose One

It's both frustrating and exciting to have more than one possible partner, and not be able to select one. Many discover that this situation produces a very high level of excitement as well as a high level of tension and strain. It seems the most successful strategy requires patience. Given time, you may discover that one of your possible partners becomes clearly favored by your Us-part. When that occurs, then your decision is easy. It also sometimes happens that none of your possible partners is a clear choice for your Us-part. That may be a sign that none of the existing possible partners is the right person for you. If you find yourself in this situation, you may also find you are getting pressure from one or more of your possible partners to make a decision. If one or more forces a decision before you are ready, consult with your parts, and especially your Us-part. If your parts have not reached consensus, then resist the pressure, even if it means losing one or more of your possible partners.

Different Parts with Different Views

It sometimes happens that you have several possible partners, each sponsored by a different part within you.

Alice

For example, Alice had two suitors. One had his own business and was very successful. The other had more modest prospects, but shared more interests with Alice. When she consulted with her parts they split this way. Her Me-part favored the successful one for the status and money that would be available. Joining in was her Family-part who saw benefits to her family, and increased status within the family if she committed to the successful suitor.

Her Us-part favored the second suitor. She felt more comfortable with the image of living with, and growing older with the second fellow. Joining in was her Interests-part who shared more interests with the second fellow. Her Work-part, and Beliefs-part had no particular preference, while her Children-part sensed that the second fellow would make a better father for the children she wanted to have.

Choosing between possible partners is difficult when your parts are split. Advice is difficult. Each person must make his or her own decision.

The Sage-part might go with the choice that the Us-part makes. The Sage-part generally keeps the parts working as a team by allowing the part with the greatest stake in the issue to have priority. Since each part knows that its needs will be considered and it will not be overwhelmed by any other part, then it will feel good about supporting choices made by other parts when their issues are at stake.



Chapter 8: You Want to Know More People and Get More Experience

Your Interests-part and your Sage-part often are curious to meet and know a wider selection of people before being ready to settle down with one. The Me-part and Us-part are frequently ready to decide much more quickly than the rest of the parts.

Parts Meeting

A meeting of your parts will allow all parts to have their say. You can find out what each part wants. If your parts are split, then it is best to wait until they can reach agreement.

Quite often the Me-part will be responding to the possibility of meeting immediate needs, without much regard to the longer term. Also, your Us-part may be infatuated with your partner and lose its ability to make reasoned and rational judgments. This combination often gets teenagers into marriages that they wouldn't make if they were listening to all of their parts.

If some of your parts want to know more people and get more experiences, and you're rather young or relatively inexperienced, then it might well be wise to listen to the parts that have reservations about commitment.

Another situation is the situation where you are no longer a teen, and have your window open, but you keep hearing the questions "Have I looked far enough?" or "Perhaps I could find a better partner if I took my time."

It's important to determine which part is voicing these questions. Here is what you want to distinguish between.

A. The Wise and Prudent Parts

The wise and prudent parts have real reservations about some aspect of your possible partner. Listen to these parts and check out the validity of the concerns.

Phillip

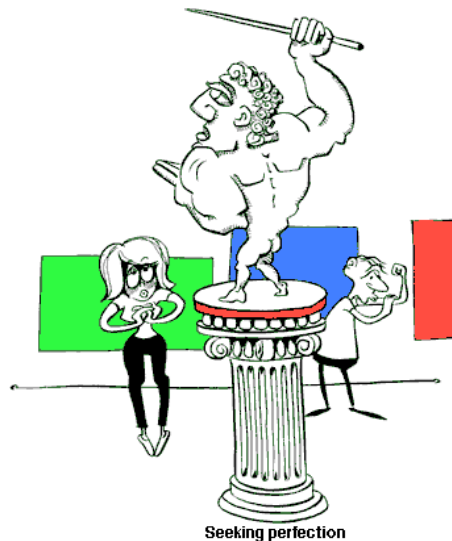
Phillip was through college, had a good job, and was ready for commitment and marriage. His Me-part and Us-part were all for commitment to his partner. His Family-part, Beliefs-part, and Interests-part all had reservations because his partner was of a different faith, and faith was important to both of them. His partner's family and his family were both opposed to marriage because of the different faiths, and in addition, his Interests-part was aware that they didn't share many common interests.

It is sometimes easy for teenagers to be more impulsive and take risks, but Phillip had reached a level of maturity where his other parts had blossomed more fully and he really had mixed feelings. Each person must make his or her own choices in this situation, however, Phillip kept having meetings with his parts until

they were in total agreement on the decision he made. Whatever you decide, if you reach agreement between all of your parts, you'll have no regrets or reservations about your decision.

B. The Parts That Are Seeking Perfection

Some people get stuck in this problem because they have a part of them that's looking for perfection in their choice of a mate, and they are unwilling to "settle" for less. Chip said, "I'm only going to marry once, and so this is the most important choice I am ever going to make. I'm not willing to commit until I find the perfect girl for me." Patricia said, "I'm in no hurry. I can afford to wait until 'Mr. Right' comes along."



The problem with seeking perfection is that perfection is impossible to find. Many people have lost their true loves forever because they held off waiting for someone even better, or someone even more perfect.

The challenge, then, is to determine whether you have sincere and valid reservations or whether you are hung up trying to find the ideal or perfect partner. The question can be phrased this way "Do I have real and valid reservations or am I simply being too picky?"

A Strategy for Answering the Question

First, get acquainted with your parts and hold a parts meeting. The goal is to find out where the reservations stem from.

1. Do they come from parts of you that find your partner unacceptable and are unwilling to go along with the rest of the parts?
2. Or, do the reservations come from your TWII or your TWISB?

In the first case, you'll be unable to reach a consensus of your parts. They will not all agree on going forward with commitment.

In the second case, your parts may all be willing go along with commitment, but you're hearing from your TWIPI or your TWISB about the imperfections in your partner.

Now, here's the important distinction.

If your parts are in disagreement, then it's prudent to do nothing until they reach full and harmonious agreement, one way or the other.

If your parts agree — that's really important — and the TWII and TWISB can be changed to bring you peace of mind about your partner.

Chip

Chip found that all of his parts were in agreement, but he discovered a rule in his TWISB that said "A man ought to have at least five deep relationships before he is ready for marriage." In his third significant relationship, Chip found a wonderful partner that all of his parts were in agreement about. Since the parts were in agreement, and the reservations were in the TWISB, it would be prudent to do what the parts agree to.

The TWISB rule can be replaced by a revised rule. For example, "A man ought to have at least five deep relationships before he is ready for marriage, unless he finds a wonderful partner earlier."

Sandra

Sandra found that her parts were not in agreement. Sandra had a good education and strong career ambitions. She was considering commitment to a fellow with less education and modest career goals. Most of her parts favored marriage to him, but her Work-part and Interests-part were opposed and were not willing to support the decision. They had strongly-felt reservations. Sandra decided to make no decision until she could reach consensus. Without commitment, her relationship soon faded away and she found another person she then married with no reservations.

If you are in this difficulty, the key to solving it is the parts meeting. A consensus will give you peace of mind and conviction to any decision you make to commit, or not to commit. If you have consensus the TWISB and TWIPI can be adjusted to rid you of the little niggling doubts.



Chapter 9: Commitment: You Aren't Sure Yet; You Need More Time

The issue here is that you're moving up the level of feelings more slowly than your possible partner. Your possible partner is ready to commit, and you aren't. You can't hurry yourself. If you need time to find out whether this relationship is going to develop fully, then you must take the time.

Carol

Carol was in this situation. She had a parts meeting, and they agreed that they weren't ready to make a commitment yet; they needed more time to allow the relationship to either blossom or fade away. She felt comfortable with the consensus and told her possible partner of her decision. In Carol's case her possible partner was understanding and respectful of her right to an un-pressured choice. She later said that the way her possible partner handled her resistance convinced her that he really loved her and respected her. Given the time to become ready to commit, Carol soon felt completely ready and made her commitment with confidence and sureness.



Chapter 10: Commitment Would Lead to Sex; You're Not Ready for That

In this situation, you're ready to commit, but you're holding off commitment because it would lead to sex and you aren't ready for that.

This strategy may work, in that it delays the sexual issue, but it has two built-in problems. The first is that you are not being honest with yourself, nor are you being honest with your possible partner. The second is that it discounts your ability to handle the sexual issue, and it discounts your possible partners' willingness to support your reticence.

If you are truly ready to commit, but are reticent to have the relationship become sexual, then that is the most honest and open communication that you can give your partner. Being open and honest in your communications with your partner is necessary if you are to develop mature intimacy. It confuses you and your partner if you pretend the issue is 'commitment,' when it really is 'sex.'



Chapter 11: Bad Reasons for Making a Commitment

Sometimes people make commitments but they don't really feel them. In these cases people are being dishonest with themselves and their partners. This kind of dishonesty stands as a very real barrier to achieving intimacy. So, the very act of making a commitment that's not truly felt is a very real barrier to ever achieving the feeling of being committed. Here are some of the reasons that people use in justifying an unfelt commitment.

Your Partner Has Made One and is Pressuring You for One

It seems a natural part of the pairing process that once one person has reached a certain level of intensity of feelings, that person wants the other person to be there with them. No one wants to be very far ahead of the other. Yet, the nature of human beings is that they follow these paths at different speeds. So, it is natural that one will reach a plateau or level before the other.

The unfortunate result of this situation is that sometimes a person makes a commitment that isn't really felt, because of pressure from the person who is somewhat ahead. When people do this, they may do this, thinking that they'll soon be ready anyway and what's the harm in pretending they're ready now.

The harm is the internal dissonance that is created by being dishonest in a relationship that only really works well when people are being honest. The harm is that the premature commitment actually acts as a barrier to really discovering and feeling the readiness to commit. The relationship becomes one of pretense and not of intimacy.

Your Partner Has Made One and You Want to Please Your Partner

Of course you want to please your partner. You discount your partner by thinking that a pretense will be the equal of a real commitment. You also do damage to your partner by putting up a barrier to giving the real commitment that you might eventually feel if you give yourself time.

Commitment is only one of the issues that need to be resolved during the courting phase. Intimacy is just as important. Intimacy is the ability to be straight and honest with your partner about what you feel and what's happening with you. A premature commitment often does two real damages to the relationship. First, it makes a real commitment improbable, and second, it violates the honesty that is so vital to achieving intimacy.

You'll please your partner more by waiting until you feel the full force of a real commitment. If you wait until you're really feeling commitment, then you will have a real gift to please your partner — and yourself. If you have not yet discovered the magic of feeling ready to commit yourself to another, then you have a wonderful

experience ahead of you. If you make the commitment before you're truly ready, you lose the magic of that experience.

You Won't Get Any Sex Until You Do

Ladies, please bypass this problem. The following is aimed straight to the men. (If you're a woman with a partner who is withholding his sexual favors until you make a commitment, then feel free to read this.)

For the Men

Sir, if this is the situation you face, please read this with great care. It may be the most critical issue you have to face if you are to achieve a truly satisfying long-term relationship.

Novels, poems, songs, and lawsuits are full of the results of men who've made a commitment they don't truly feel, in order to get the lady to surrender sexually. You are truly not the first. Indeed, you are the most recent in a long line of men reaching back into time eternal.

You're feeling the incredible seductive power of your raging hormones inviting you to "do anything" necessary to have your way with her. It may be tempting. Indeed, it may be the greatest temptation you ever have to deal with. It may be a "rotten" or awful thing to do to someone; however, raging hormones care not for niceties.



Novels, songs, movies, and poems eloquently catalog the tragedies that have occurred, and the lives damaged or ruined. However, very little has been written about the damage that it will do to you if you succumb to the temptation.

If you are a typical male, you want sex. You need sex. You feel compelled and driven to have sex. That's understandable since sex is truly marvelous. Beyond the physical release, there is the affirmation of you as a person, the recognition that you are desired and desirable. You may have grown up in a culture that applauds those

who are successful sexually. You have seen films, read books, listened to songs all supporting your need and desire for sex.

Now, here is something new. You have two different parts of you that want and need sex. You have a Me-part part that wants and needs sexual release and especially likes variety. Your Me-part may fantasize about group sex, about orgies about every kind of sex possible.

You also have an Us-part, a separate and distinct part of you that wants and needs a pair bond, a part that wants and needs a mate, a partner to share your life with.

It's vital that you understand that each part is different, and each has different needs. Both like sex. The Me-part isn't very particular. It can enjoy sex with almost anyone. Your Me-part can enjoy sex with prostitutes. Your Me-part can enjoy masturbation. Your Me-part can enjoy one-night stands or recreational sex with people you scarcely know.

Your Us-part however is different. Your Us-part wants sex, but only wants it with your very special one-at-a-time partner. Your Us-part has sex very differently than your Me-part. Your Me-part wants sex when it wants it, and the way it wants it, and to heck with the needs of the other person. Your Us-part, however, wants more. Your Us-part wants to *share* sex. Sex becomes something between two people, something that is more than sexual release: sex that responds to the other person's needs as well as your own. Your Us-part wants more than sex; your Us-part wants to "make love." Your Us-part wants sex that forms strong bonds with another person.

It's difficult to find words to describe the difference. You have to feel it to understand it. If you haven't truly felt the difference between sex with "just someone," and sex with *someone you love*, then perhaps you can't get a sense of this concept.

Here is one way to tell the difference. Sex with 'just anyone' starts out exciting and good, and then tends to become ordinary and go downhill. Sex with someone you truly love gets better over time. It gets richer, and means more. It may have its ordinary moments, and isn't always socko, but it always means something.

Okay, you have two parts that want and need sex. The issue here is the temptation to make a commitment to a possible partner, before you really fully feel that commitment, in order to have sexual access to her.

What if you do? What if you don't?

If you fall victim to the temptation, then you stand to lose the whole game. First, you make a commitment you don't really feel. What you lose there is the opportunity to feel what it's like to experience that full sense of commitment. You may think you can "fake it till you make it." You may think that you can fake it

until you really feel it. That's the trap. If you make the commitment before you really feel it, then *you won't feel it*.

You have been seduced by your raging hormones to be dishonest with yourself and with your partner. That dishonesty will stand between you both as you strive for an honest, open communication that achieves intimacy. So, you give up intimacy. At that point what you have is a relationship without intimacy (or pretend intimacy), and a relationship without commitment (or pretend commitment). What you have is sex from your Me-part.

The three key things that make up a loving relationship are intimacy, commitment and loving sex. You have none of them.

Maybe you think that they will come. Well, maybe they will, but you are bucking strong odds. It just doesn't seem to work that way. Maybe it will be different for you. Maybe you can pull off the miracle. Zillions of men before you have hoped they might be exceptions. They were wrong. Maybe you'll be right.

You have something now that they didn't have. You have a complete awareness of the situation. You've learned that you have two parts that want and need sex. You've learned that they each have different needs.

You're in a position to do it differently. All it takes is enough will power to resist the temptation to make a commitment you don't really feel.

Give your Me-part the sex it needs. Masturbate. Find ladies who are willing to have safe recreational sex. Whatever you choose to do, though, follow your values.

Then, allow your Us-part to have what it needs. Allow your relationship with your partner to progress at a rate that allows you to have it all. Be open and honest with your partner. Work at developing an intimate relationship with her. Work through the courting ups and downs that it takes to resolve the domination deference issues that seem to be required. Wait until you feel the full force of wanting (even needing), to make a commitment, then wait until your partner is willing and eager to make a commitment too. Then slowly, with love and patience, explore your partner sexually. Share yourself with her. Open yourself up to her. Discover what 'making love' is and how it differs from 'having sex.'



Chapter 12: All Your Friends are Making Commitments

It's frightening to be without a partner. You think, "Maybe I'll never find one that is right for me." The pressure gets worse when your friends are pairing up and you fear you'll be left behind.

When you want something so important as a partner, and you see all your friends getting what you don't have, it creates tremendous pressure to "hurry" the process along.

A key question to ask yourself is this: "Am I responding to the desire for commitment, or am I responding to the desire to commit to my partner"?

If you make a commitment before really feeling wholly ready for it (all parts concurring), then you chance losing the opportunity for commitment to develop fully, on its own, *and* you reduce the chances of achieving intimacy in your open and honest communications with your partner. Both losses impair the ultimate relationship.

Just remember this: imagine any happily married couple that you know. The day before they first found each other attractive, they both worried about never finding the "right" partner.

You may be only a day away from either finding the "right" partner or feeling like fully committing to your present partner — and if not tomorrow, then another day. The ultimate success will make the waiting worthwhile.



Chapter 13: You May Lose Your Partner Unless You Do

Many people find themselves in this box: “Either commit now, or I go.” Think for a moment about two things.

First, you’re not under the gun; your partner is. The situation isn’t that you must make a decision; your partner evidently feels required to make one. So, the best strategy is to leave the responsibility with your partner. A response like this will keep the situation straight: “I’m not ready to make a commitment right now. I don’t know when I will be, or if I will be. If you decide you must make a decision before I am ready to make mine, I will miss you terribly, but I will understand.”

Second, give your partner a copy of this book and point out this section. Any partner who would force you into a decision, knowing the risks and dangers might not be the kind of person who will work with you to build the kind of relationship you want. Use this section of the book as the basis for a discussion about what you both want from a relationship. Sometimes the process of working together through a relationship crisis like this will be the key to bringing you both closer together.



Chapter 14: You're Getting Older; It's Now or Never

People who remind you that you're getting older — and that it's now or never — really mean to help. Even the part in you that says that to you has good intentions. If you're not ready, then wait until you are. It might only take until tomorrow.

Ethyl

Ethyl, an 83 year old lady in a boarding home in Florida tells this story. “I was 22 when I committed to marry a man I didn't love. I told myself ‘You're getting older; it's now or never.’ When I was 39 he died, and I wasn't too sorry to see him go. I never loved him like I wanted, or he wanted. Then I met another man when I was 40. He gave me a whirlwind romance, and pressed me to make a decision before I was ready. I told myself ‘You're getting older; it's now or never.’ I married him, and quickly found myself in the same situation. He died two years ago, and I realized after he died that I never loved him the way I wanted to love a man. Now, I am seeing several of the men who live in this home. One has asked me to marry him. I heard the voice in my head sayings ‘You're getting older; it's now or never.’ I know that voice means to help me, but this time I am going to wait until I'm sure.”



Chapter 15: It's a Secret; You Don't Want to Declare

The completion in courting is the public declaration. After commitment, it somehow is important to make a declaration. Somebody on the outside has to know.

In this situation, one or another of you is unwilling to go public with your partnership and your commitment. There is a huge range of reasons. Here's a sampling:

It's too soon after the divorce — people will talk.
He just broke up with my best friend — she would be hurt.
My folks would be crushed — they think I'm too young.
We both work at the same company. If they find out, one must leave.
My partner is separated, but still married. If his 'ex found out, she would take him for everything in the divorce.
He still lives with his mother, and wants to tell her first. He's waiting for "the right time."

In each of these examples, the commitment of the Us-part is overshadowed by a stronger need from another part. It might be the Work-part threatened at work, or the Family-part fearful of upsetting family, or the Affiliation-part concerned about the neighbors. One or another of the parts is unwilling to have the commitment made public.

This situation frequently causes frustration and a sense that something isn't the way it should be. In the ideal situation the time of commitment is the time of the full blossoming of the Us-part. This is a time when the Us-part takes its place as a full partner in the team of parts. If all is going well the Us-part has a brief period where it dominates all of the other parts (infatuation), and readiness for full commitment is a sign that infatuation is well under way.

Yet, when the commitment must be kept secret, the full development of the Us-part and its brief period of dominance must be suppressed. That is what gives rise to the feelings of frustration and the sense that something isn't the way it should be.

What's occurring is a conflict between the Us-part and the other parts that are agreeing to keep the commitment a secret.

The risk to the relationship is that the full blossoming of infatuation will be inhibited, and the dominance of the Us-part may not occur. This is a problem that can be overcome in the long run, but it will take extra capability in coping to do it.

In the ideal situation, the Us-part becomes dominant over all the other parts during the period of infatuation. When that subsides, the Us-part takes its place as a full partner on the team. If that period is suppressed and other parts are dominant over the Us-part, then later on when the Us-part is to be a full member of the team,

there's a risk that it will still be dominated by the part or parts that are now suppressing it.

You and your partner will be protected against these risks by knowing and understanding the parts and the way they work together to bring harmony and peace of mind to each of you, and to your relationship. Knowing the risks and the potential problem, you can take steps to assure that the Us-part in each of you is given a full and equal role with the other parts later on in the relationship.

Knowing about these risks in advance may also make it possible for you and your partner to delay your mutual commitment until the way has been cleared of obstacles. In some cases it will be possible to hold back on reaching the point of commitment until the path is clear for a full and open declaration.



Chapter 16: Your Partner Courts You, But It's All Wrong

There are styles of courting, and often each partner has a different idea of what's "right" and what's not.

A Variety of Opinions

Paul: "She's always touching me, and wants to hold hands in public. That's not comfortable for me and I don't like it.

Rita: "He never brings me flowers, or gifts, or anything. If he cared to please me, he would bring me some little thing every once in a while. Just so I would know he was thinking about me."

Carole: "He smothers me with sloppy kisses. I feel suffocated. I wish he would kiss gently and with feeling."

Andy: "She knits me things. I have a drawer full of sweaters, socks and even a jacket that she knit for me. I don't wear them, and I feel like I should."

Willa: "He never calls me on nights we can't be together. I call him and he sounds irritated and can't wait to get off the phone. I need to hear from him when I can't see him."

If you have problems in this area, then the Sage model can help you sort them out and handle them effectively.

This is the kind of difficulty that any two people are going to have as they merge their different personalities and strategies. The process of coping is covered fully later in the book, and will be helpful to you in working through these kinds of difficulties.

Helpful Strategies

If you are NOT getting what you want, need or wish for then ask for it. This is basic to developing open, honest communications and a satisfying level of intimacy.

If you are getting things you *don't* want, and they seem important to your partner to give them, then learn to take them in good cheer as signs of caring and love from your partner.

If your TWISB is telling you that what your partner is doing is wrong, then check out your TWISB. Work toward shifting your perceptions of how your partner 'should' court you. If you can't make that shift, then work toward changing the strategy you use to respond to mismatches. You can learn to reframe a 'wrong' move on your partner's part from something that causes you upset to something which gives you good feelings.

An overactive TWISB can be a severe detriment to getting through the courting process. Courting is a time for joyful giving and joyful taking. It is a time for learning new ways of expressing feelings from your partner. It's not a good time for correcting or shaping your partner into your image of what "should be."



Chapter 17: You Think Courting Seems Silly at Your Age

This problem is common with people who have been married once and divorced or widowed.

Sam: “She wants flowers and dancing and all that stuff. That all seems silly at our age. I’d rather just watch TV together or read a book quietly. I’ve been through that kid stuff once already, and that’s enough.”

Angela: “He writes me love notes. He nibbles at my ear. He calls me silly names. I get embarrassed. We’re grown adults; we should act like it.”

If you have this problem, there is new information for you. It seems that the Us-part doesn’t age very much. People can be romantic and get infatuated and go through all the courting steps at virtually any age.



It’s an ageless process.

Often this problem stems from some old learnings or beliefs about how people *should* act (in other words, an overactive TWISB). If you wish, read the previous chapter about the problem of courting wrong.

Some recommendations for you would be to work hard to lighten up and let it happen. Just let go a little. Allow your Us-part to come out and do some kid stuff. If you’re seeking a good relationship, and care for your partner, then just allow your partner to do what comes naturally. It probably won’t last too long, and then you’ll be through the courting phase and into coping.

You can use your embarrassment as something with which to practice coping.



Book Five

Troubleshooting Infatuation



Introduction to Infatuation

Infatuation is a special time in your life. It is marked by intense attending to your partner, and an exclusive focus on your partner. People often experience hormonal rushes that make it possible to dance all night, work all day, and be ready to dance all night again. It is marked by a change in time perception, where time races when you are with your partner and slows to a halt when you are apart.

Bonds

Infatuation is marked by matching of common bonds between you and your partner. Everything your partner does, says, feels, or thinks is accepted positively during this period, and vice versa.

Little, ordinary things become marked as special because they are shared between you and your partner. It is a time of bonding and the bonds formed during infatuation have a special high level of intensity to them.

Love, Love, Love. You feel that you're in love. You love your partner, you love "your song" you love "your restaurant." You love anything and everything you share with your partner.

Also during infatuation there may be incredibly strong reactions of jealousy, attachment to certain spaces or places, and rejection of any and every form of external authority.

It is a time of incredible intensity and risk taking.

What a wonderful time. What possibly could go wrong with infatuation?



Chapter 1: You Get Infatuated Too Early

Ah, yes. In the early stages of puberty — perhaps the first few years — the hormones sometimes rage out of control and trigger infatuation, even without a partner.

When this happens you can experience all the sensations of infatuation and have no one to share them with. Usually what happens is you find someone to focus them on. When that happens, we call it “puppy love” or a “crush.”

Didi

Didi was 12 when she became infatuated with her math teacher. As she described it, “I couldn’t sleep, I couldn’t think of anything but him, I would stare at him and listen to every word he said. When he called on me, I was the happiest person alive. When he didn’t, I was crushed.”

We grownups sometimes laugh at “puppy love,” and we tend to discount it. It is, however, as powerful a set of feelings as you can experience later in life, in real life courting situations. Not only are the feelings and sensations as powerful but they also come at time of life when it is difficult to understand the feelings and to handle them well.

In some people, infatuation is triggered too early in the cycle, even years after puberty.

Sheila

“I finally realized I wasn’t like everyone else. I would get attracted to someone, and if they gave me any signs at all of being attracted in return, I would leap right into infatuation. It wasn’t until I was 20 that I finally had what you call a ‘normal’ experience with infatuation. When I was 20, I dated Todd for six months before I found myself infatuated.”

Everyone has different levels of hormones. If you find yourself becoming infatuated too early in the cycle, then you are simply a little out of phase. It’s no real problem, as long as you understand what’s happening. There are people who never feel this thing called “infatuation,” and some of them would gladly trade places with you.

There is little you can do to change the process. You have little or no control over becoming infatuated, or not becoming infatuated.

What you can do is allow your Sage-part to monitor your decisions and actions during the periods of infatuation. These times can be difficult if you find yourself taking excessive risks, rebelling against external authority, and feeling strong feelings of jealousy. Your Sage-part can counsel you and help keep you safe. Your Sage-part can also alert you when you risk alienating authority figures or hurting yourself or others with jealousy.

Normally, people who experience this difficulty also find that the problem moderates with age. It may be wise for you to protect yourself against too early commitment to the people with whom you become infatuated.

If you are older and have this difficulty, and your window is open, don't worry. Early infatuation will not stop you from achieving completely satisfying and loving relationship. You need to be aware that you may be into infatuation and out of it before your partner is into it. All this means is that you and your partner will be out of sync and you will lose a little of the intense bonding that's shared by couples infatuated at the same time.



Chapter 2: You Get Infatuated Too Easily and Too Often

This difficulty is similar to the person who gets infatuated too early in the pairing process. The difference is that infatuation comes later in each relationship, but it comes with every relationship, and sometimes two at the same time.

Good and Bad Parts

This difficulty has its good and bad parts. The good part is that you get to feel the incredible, wonderful, experience of infatuation many times in your life. The bad part is that it loses the specialness that is nice to have when you finally settle down with your permanent partner.

Another not-so-great part of getting infatuated too easily and too often is that your dating years become heartbreak time. It frequently happens that our early pairing experiences don't end up in permanent relationships. If you find yourself getting fully infatuated with almost every person you date for a while, you can be in for rough time emotionally.

For the person who understands the process and knows what's happening, this is painful but nothing more than that. Some people have had this experience and not known what was happening and as a consequence have drawn some wrong conclusions about themselves and their ability to have lasting relationships.

By understanding the situation and recognizing what's happening, it becomes possible to moderate somewhat the risks, the pain and the behaviors.

Betty

Betty experienced this difficulty with getting infatuated too easily and too often. Between ages 14 and 19 Betty was “totally” in love with eleven different young men. In each case she experienced the full effects of infatuation. In nine out of these eleven cases she made a full and complete commitment to her partner and in each case felt it would end in marriage. Betty gave herself fully to each partner in turn.

By the age of 20, Betty had drawn three wrong conclusions about herself. She concluded that she somehow could not have “permanent” relationships. She concluded that she was sexually promiscuous, and finally, she concluded that she was a bad risk for marriage. Having made these wrong conclusions, Betty became suicidal and sought counseling. After understanding that her difficulty was simply a tendency to become infatuated too easily and too often, she was able to monitor her pairing process more wisely. With awareness and self-understanding, Betty was able to form a very satisfying and loving permanent relationship.



Chapter 3: You're Worried Because Infatuation Doesn't Last

The movies, the songs, and the poems that celebrate “love” (infatuation), all make it seem that it goes on forever. The love stories frequently end with “and they lived happily ever after.” This phenomenon can leave people with the notion that infatuation is supposed to last. It isn't supposed to.

Remember, during infatuation the Us-part is in charge. The Us-part dominates all the other parts. That means that the relationship has priority over yourself, your family, your work, your beliefs, your interests, your patriotism and even your wisest self.

That simply isn't the way it works in life. During infatuation, we lose our ability to do reality testing, and we end up with distorted notions about how it will be in the future.

Infatuation isn't supposed to last. The other parts have to get back into balance and your life has to become a balance of all of your parts. You still have a family and obligations duties and responsibilities. You may have work, a job and obligations. You have beliefs that must be honored, you have interests that must be pursued, and you have wisdom to develop.

Infatuation is there to give great intensity to the shared experiences that bond you to your partner. Those positive bonds are the basis of real love, the kind of love that can last a lifetime.



Chapter 4: You Confuse Infatuation with Love

It's a common misperception to confuse infatuation with love. During infatuation, you *feel* love. So, they get interconnected in your mind.

Infatuation is a period of life marked by hormonal rushes. Somehow, these hormones affect people in such a way that they “feel” love more easily and more deeply. So, it's easy to get confused about the two different experiences.

During infatuation you get connected to your feeling of love very easily. Some people, when infatuated, feel love towards almost anything and everything.

But, infatuation is infatuation. Love is love. That's really a good thing too, because infatuation fades away. Love stays on. Love can grow and grow over time. If you are fortunate and handle coping well, you can make it possible for love to grow and grow throughout a long relationship. Eventually, it can reach the same level of intensity and vigor that most people only achieve during infatuation.



Chapter 5: You're Not Infatuated with Your Partner

It is easy to be disappointed if you have the experience of not being infatuated with your partner. Maybe you had it, and it faded away. Maybe you will have it sometime in the future, or maybe you simply won't have it at all.

Some people experience infatuation so mildly that they scarcely notice it. Certainly, it is vastly different from this WOW! experience that some people have.

If you've found your partner, built your relationship with exclusivity, intimacy, and commitment, you've done all you can do. If you don't get infatuation, that's the luck of the draw.

Barbara

"I was attracted to him and still am. We have a lot in common, and things went very well for us in our relationship. He asked me to marry him and I said 'yes' without a doubt. We have been engaged now for four months, and I keep waiting for the big Wow! I Just don't have it for him. I have experienced it with others, but not with him. I love him. At least I think I do, but I don't feel that "special feeling" with him. Am I wrong to worry? Should I marry him?"

What brought Barbara to counseling was her concern that maybe the WOW! was love, and she really didn't love him. After learning about the pairing process and understanding how infatuation is different from love, she was very relieved. Her parting words were, "I'm sad because I didn't experience infatuation with Roger (yet), but, I'm relieved to know that I can go forward with our marriage. I really love him very much, and want to spend the rest of my life with him."

Infatuation is a mystery. Sometimes it comes and sometimes it doesn't. No one can yet explain how to bring it on when it doesn't come or how to turn it off when it comes when you don't want it.



Chapter 6: You're Infatuated with Someone Other than Your Partner

Are you sure it's infatuation? You need to be clear whether it is infatuation (which is experienced by the Us-part), or sexual attraction, which is felt by the Me-part. The way to tell is to examine the fantasies you have about the new person. If they are sexual, or relate to such things as money, status, control or power, then they come from the Me-part. If you have fantasies of settling down with this person to a long life together, and you find yourself thinking about home and hearth, then it is from the Us-part.

If what you feel for the new person comes from the Me-part, then you have a different problem than this section deals with. This section is for people who have a partner and now find they are infatuated with a new person — and their Us-part is thinking of home and hearth — not a fling or affair.

A Common Trauma

Welcome to the club. Infatuation, while bound to another, is humankind's most common trauma. It has been described as "the most exquisite torture." So many lives have been tossed and torn by this situation. And now, you. If you're like the millions of millions who have gone before you, you can expect to feel a pain and agony unlike any other you will ever face.

The excitement, the soaring passions, the fantasies of infatuations, the torture, and the agony and pain of being bound to another. These ingredients have sourced endless streams of novels, poems paintings and song.

I suspect it won't help much to know that you are but another of those who have — before you — faced and resolved this daunting dilemma. You have a unique situation, and a unique experience of feeling the rending feelings you feel. You must face the situation, deal with it, resolve it, and get on with your life, just like all those who have gone before you. Yet, you may not have a path to follow, or a strategy that will enable you to handle this in the best way possible for you. If you are searching for a way to deal with it, then this section is for you.

Some Things to Know

Some things you ought to know before you decide anything. First, the experience of infatuation renders you less able to apply reason and wisdom in resolving a problem. Infatuation is an incredibly powerful emotional experience and it temporarily disables your ability to make rational, reasoned choices.

Second, infatuation elevates your Us-part to a dominant position within your multiple parts, and gives it a priority that it won't have when the infatuation fades.

Third, infatuation gives you a sense of willingness to take risks. You may well find yourself exposing yourself to risks that you wouldn't even think of taking if you weren't under the influence of infatuation.

As a consequence of these effects, people often find that they make decisions that make no sense to them later. They often discover that they take risks that later seem to have been foolhardy. They often find that they make choices, under the influence of infatuation, that give exaggerated priority to one domain of their lives, at the expense of other domains that are later seen to be more highly valued.

There is one more thing that is important here. The Me-part can have two, three, or four affairs going at the same time. The Us-part is only able to have one relationship going at a time. It is very common for a person to have one person for the Us-part, and one (or more) for the Me-part. This situation is common the world over, and it can be quite satisfactory if it is clear that the Me-part relationship doesn't threaten the Us-part relationship.

Because the Us-part can only really handle one relationship at a time, the solution to this situation is to handle each relationship in turn.

This means that the Us-part can't be ready to get into a relationship with a new person until the present relationship is resolved. Even though the Us-part may feel infatuation, the bonding and coping that must follow in order to have a satisfying and loving pairing relationship can't and won't occur until the first relationship is resolved.

So, if you discover that you are firmly bonded with your present partner, and you find parts of you that tell you to proceed with an affair with a new person, and that part tells you that you can proceed with both at the same time then, you are not hearing from your Us-part. It is likely that your Me-part is really the one most interested in the new person.

A Strategy

This is a book on pairing. The goal is for you to learn to build a loving and satisfying long term relationship. With that in mind, here is a strategy that will give you the best results for your Us-part.

- a. If you have a loving and satisfying long term relationship, then you have achieved what this book is all about. It's unwise to give up a loving and satisfying long-term relationship in hopes of finding another one that may or may not be.
- b. If you have a long-term relationship that is not loving or satisfying, then take the steps necessary to change yourself and the relationship until it becomes loving and satisfying. Those steps are clearly pointed out in this book.

- c. If you have done everything in your power to make yourself a good partner and have worked with your partner toward building a loving and satisfying relationship — and it is still not loving and satisfying — then choose whether to terminate the relationship or stay with it.
- d. If you choose to terminate the primary relationship with your partner, then do so and get it all cleaned up before beginning your search for a new pairing relationship.
- e. If you choose to maintain your existing relationship, then take whatever actions you need to terminate any other outside relationships, or refrain from opening yourself up to any other possible partner for an intimate relationship.

Since your reasoning powers are somewhat incapacitated when you're infatuated, it's important to get input on the key questions from all of your parts. A good way to do this is to hold a parts conference, (Book One, Chapter 6). Bring all your parts together and ask for their input on these questions:

- 1. Is my relationship with my partner a warm and loving relationship? (Take care that it is not compared with the excitement of infatuation. Infatuation is always more exciting and stimulating and appealing than the less intense warmth and loving that marks bonding and coping.)
- 2. Have I done my best to become a good partner to my partner?
- 3. Knowing what I know about my partner and myself, is it possible (if we both worked at it), that we could become good partners for each other, and build a loving and satisfying relationship?
- 4. Have I done my best to invite my partner to participate in developing our relationship fully, to be as good as it can be?

Your Parts

Your parts will have something to say on each issue. You can expect lively debate, and even some rather heated exchange, but if you wait and are patient, they will be honest and open in answering each question. If there is harmony among them, and they can reach agreement on keeping the existing relationship, then decide to keep it and re-commit to making it as good as you are willing to have it be.

If there is harmony among them, and they reach agreement on terminating the existing relationship, then decide to do that and take whatever steps are needed to do it.

If there is disagreement between them, and they will not resolve it and agree to fully support one position or the other, then you are in an internal state of dissonance, and the best action is to make no decision while in that state. By default then, if your parts will not agree to support terminating the existing relationship,

then you will end up re-committing to your present partner and working further to make the present relationship warm and loving.

The outcome of the situation will stay unresolved until the parts come into harmony on one side or another of the issue. Because the state of internal dissonance is so uncomfortable, your parts will continue to work on the issue until some resolution occurs.

Eventually, something will change, and the issue will resolve. In time the infatuation will dissipate. That may resolve the issue. In time, your added efforts to make the present relationship work may come to fruition. You may find that the existing relationship becomes more loving and satisfying because you are giving it your attention. You may find that even with your full attention the existing relationship continues to be unsatisfying. If you have done your best, and the results are unsatisfying, that in itself may be the thing that allows the dissonance to be resolved.

While your parts are in disagreement on a decision, you may find that your efforts to improve your present relationship are being sabotaged by one or more of your parts that are seeking termination. If that occurs, then hold another parts conference and ask the parts to stop their sabotage and do their best to come back into harmony again. If you have developed your Sage-part, then the Sage-part can find areas of agreement between the opposing parts, and ask each part to work towards the best long-term solution.



Chapter 7: You're Infatuated with Two People at the Same Time

How lucky can you get? Some people never achieve even one satisfying infatuation, and here you have two.

If you are fairly young (within three years of having reached puberty), then you are possibly under the influence of raging hormones. It is not unusual for people to experience all the feelings and sensations of full infatuation, even without a partner. What usually happens is that the person finds someone to direct the feelings toward, sometimes even two people (occasionally even more). That may be what's happening to you.

Another situation that sometimes occurs is that a person is attracted to a possible partner, the attraction is mutual, and courting takes place. The courting then leads to infatuation as it is supposed to do. Then the person — in the full bloom of infatuation — discovers another possible partner and “bingo,” virtually overnight there are two infatuations going on at the same time.

What seems to happen in those cases is almost similar to the case of the young person. The hormones stimulated by the first infatuation are spilling over and make the person susceptible to infatuation with yet another person. If that's happening to you, then it might be wise to continue to focus on the first person and allow the feelings for the latecomer to fade away. The reason is, that people who leave the first for the second frequently find that the second infatuation dissipates, they have little or nothing bonding them together with the second person, and everybody loses.

Yet a third case is somewhat similar. This happens when X is attracted to A and B and courts with both. Things go along smoothly until X becomes infatuated with A. It sometimes happens that the infatuation spreads to cover both A and B. This all can happen so quickly that it can be difficult to distinguish which person really triggered the infatuation. This can be quite a difficult situation. Fortunately it usually happens to people who are still quite young and still have their windows shut.

The way to handle the third case is to make no decisions until the situation clears itself up. It won't be long before the Us-part makes it very clear who really is the important partner. If you want to speed the process up, you can hold a parts conference and see which the Me-part prefers and which the Us-part prefers. That will usually help to clear up the situation. If not, then simply wait.



Chapter 8: You are Infatuated, but Your Partner Isn't

This situation can be very frustrating. It's normal to want all of your feelings with your partner to be mutual. Matching is one of the important parts of infatuation. If your partner isn't there yet, or if your partner is already past infatuation, or if your partner just doesn't experience it, you can feel frustrated because you are "out of sync."

Some people allow this lack of synchronization to defeat the pairing process. One might think, "My partner doesn't love me." Another might conclude that the partner is just playing "hard to get." People do all sorts of distortions with their TWIPs when they are infatuated. If you're serious about your partner and both your windows are open, don't let this timing difficulty bother you. Remember, you're playing for the long haul. You're in the game for keeps and you don't need mutual infatuation in order to get there. The fact that you have it means that you will benefit by the intense bonds that infatuation creates. You can help to share your infatuation with your partner by "marking" your positive bonds when they occur. (See Book One, Chapter 9)

It sometimes happens that a partner feels overwhelmed by the infatuation of the other. If that seems to be happening with you and your partner, then lighten up a bit. Understand that you are feeling incredibly strong emotional responses and your partner isn't. There is nothing inherently wrong with that, and it will all work out if you each don't get uptight about the differences. It may happen that your partner will experience the feelings of infatuation after you are all finished. If so, remember what it felt like, and support those feelings in your partner.



Chapter 9: You Both Were Infatuated, But One of you Stopped Early

You both have to stop eventually. It is normal that one discovers infatuation fading away before the other. If you don't understand the process, that can be very frightening. "My partner doesn't love me any more," you might think. Or, worse yet, "I don't love my partner any more."

More good relationships are ruined because people don't know that infatuation must fade away, and they confuse infatuation with love.

If it stops early for you, simply share your awareness with your partner and assure partner that the bonds developed during infatuation are with you strongly and you now feel a powerful feeling of love for partner. After all, that's what every partner needs to hear. Almost everyone gets to be infatuated, some many times over, but real love is rare and should be much more highly valued.



Chapter 10: You're Infatuated with Someone and You Don't Want to be

Sometimes it happens that you find yourself infatuated with someone with whom you don't want to be infatuated. Your parts are in conflict and your better judgment tells you that it's wrong, or it won't work, or something like that.

The part that feels infatuated, and the parts that support it are telling you to express the infatuation and share it with the person. The rest of you says, "don't." This situation is one where it isn't wise or productive to express your feelings, however, it doesn't work to try to shut them out, or repress them.

One good solution to this is to allow your feelings and keep that person as a "secret love." A secret love is one with whom you don't share your feelings. Sometimes you make a person a secret love because they are unreachable, such as a movie star or a rock singer.

Sometimes you make a person a secret love because they are already attached and unavailable, or too old for you, or too young for you, or they are the kind of person that you wouldn't consider being with.

Kathy

"He had already been married and divorced three times, he used drugs, and he had been in jail once for robbing a gas station. Every time I saw him I melted inside. I hardly ever spoke to him, even though he was always trying to get me to go out with him. I knew that if I went out with him, even once, I wouldn't be able to say 'no' to him. I went crazy for a while. I didn't know what to do. It got so I couldn't think about anyone else. Every time I wasn't busy, he would come into my mind, and my fantasies made me blush. Part of me wanted to tell him how I felt. Yet I somehow knew that I couldn't, or he would use me and I would be hurt. So, I finally decided to make him my 'secret love.' I treated him the same way in my mind that I had thought of Tom Selleck when I had a crush on him. In my mind I could do anything with him, and yet by keeping him only in my mind, I was safe."

Ted

"She worked for me. I had to meet her every day in the office. She was married, had a baby, and I knew it would be crazy to tell her about my feelings. Yet, I couldn't talk straight when I was around her. I couldn't think of anything but sweeping her away from her job, her husband and everything and living the rest of my life with her in a little ivy-covered cottage by a lake. I asked a friend what to do, and he suggested that I make her my 'secret love.' When I began to think of her that way I found that I no longer worried about giving my feelings away. I could keep her in my mind, and didn't have to do anything about it in the outside world."

As you experience an infatuation about someone that you can't or won't have, you may discover that the feelings spill over and make it easy for you to be attracted to someone who is available and that you want to be attracted to.



Chapter 11: Your Partner is Infatuated with Someone Else

This can be absolutely devastating, if you and your partner don't understand what's happening. You might first discover this situation when your partner announces, "I've fallen in love with someone else."

Your partner's first reaction might be that the feelings of infatuation must be honored, and partner must leave you for the new person. The important things to communicate to your partner are these:

- a. Becoming infatuated is natural and normal. It happens to many people.
- b. You understand perfectly how it can happen, and you understand that it doesn't reflect on your partner's feelings for you, or on the quality of your relationship. (If your partner denigrates the quality of your relationship, he or she may be comparing your comfortable, loving relationship to the excitement of the temporary infatuation.)
- c. Your relationship with your partner is large enough to encompass events like this, where one of you or the other finds him or herself infatuated.
- d. Luckily, infatuation does not require action. A person already in a good relationship, and already committed to another, is best advised to keep focused on the primary relationship, rather than start up a new one under the influence of infatuation.
- e. You will work with your partner on coping with this, and you're willing to work together to help your partner get through the strong emotions that infatuation generates.
- f. You understand the strong impulse to action, and you further are aware that hasty decisions made while under the influence of infatuation can be hurtful to all parties.
- g. You will stand by and support your partner as he or she struggles with the urge to respond to the emotions of infatuation, until the infatuation dissipates and your partner is once more able to make reasoned choices. At that time, you will support whatever choice your partner makes.

If your partner has not read this book, then share it. If you both have read it, then suggest that your partner read through the section on infatuation again. Be understanding that infatuation reduces your partner's ability to make prudent choices and be rational and reasonable.



Chapter 12: Your Partner is Jealous or Possessive

Jealousy is sometimes one of the unfortunate byproducts of infatuation. Infatuation triggers a release of hormones. That is one of the sources of the intensity and extraordinary feelings that infatuation brings. Another effect of those same hormones (sometimes) is to trigger feelings of extreme jealousy or possessiveness. Some people are flattered by possessiveness and jealousy. Others are put off by it. It helps to have a joint and mutual understanding of this effect.

If your partner is jealous or possessive, read through this section together and talk it over. Tell your partner how it feels to you. Tell your partner that you understand the feelings that your partner is experiencing. Share with your partner that you will be supportive as he or she struggles with the feelings. Even though your partner learns that the feelings are stimulated as a side effect of infatuation, he or she may still struggle with the feelings. When your feelings tell you to be jealous, and your rational mind tell you that the feelings aren't real (but only chemically stimulated), you may understand, but you still have to deal with the feelings.

Once infatuation has diminished, the feelings of jealousy and possessiveness will probably diminish as well. If they do not, then your partner will have a problem to work through and you will have some coping to do. Jealousy and possessiveness are destructive on a long term. Jealousy reduces trust, which is necessary for intimacy. Possessiveness is a feeling that comes from the Me-part, and one person's Me-part doesn't form bonds with another's Us-part. Possessiveness is also a way of perceiving and a way of being that converts the other person from a full-fledged partner to a thing, a possession.



Chapter 13: Your Partner is Taking Too Many Risks

Infatuation has many wonderful effects, and some troublesome side effects. One of the more troublesome side effects is the increased willingness to take risks. This has the greatest effect on men, but is also a factor for women as well. If a man becomes infatuated while still young (under 21), then the effects can be compounded by the effects of adolescence, which also make risk taking seem desirable, or at least acceptable.

If your partner is caught up in infatuation and seems willing to take more risks than you feel are appropriate, then you can help by sharing this information with your partner. Share how you feel about the risk-taking behaviors, and pledge your support to help partner through this sometimes dangerous period.

If your partner had too much to drink, you would demonstrate a concern for your partner's safety by arranging for him or her not to drive. That's being a good partner and demonstrates caring.

In the same way, if your partner is taking too many risks, you can be a good partner by supporting your partner in moderating the risks your partner takes.

As you talk through this issue, discuss the kinds of risks that you see, and get agreement on appropriate steps that you can take to help him or her through this unfortunate side effect of infatuation.

Some examples of excessive risk taking are:

- a. Driving too aggressively and too fast. Racing with others and responding to other aggressive drivers.
- b. Missing school or missing work. Risking your partner's commitments to other important facets of life.
- c. Breaking family agreements unnecessarily. Being late, not coming at all, etc.
- d. Flouting authority. Disregarding the needs and desires of authority figures such as parents, teachers, bosses, policemen, etc.



Chapter 14: You've Lost Your Mind and Can't Think; Nothing Makes Sense

Congratulations. You've achieved full-blown infatuation. It's both joyous and miserable at the same time. This phase of it — if felt at all — only has a short duration. So, it will be over very soon, and you will be able to think, concentrate, and focus once again on something other than partner.

During this brief but colorful phase, protect yourself from hazard by avoiding any serious decisions. You probably have reduced capacity for making reasoned and sound decisions.

Do your best to maintain your outside agreements and commitments during this phase. It sometimes happens that people make huge changes in their life during this period, and then they quickly regret them. It is not uncommon for people to leave home, or quit their jobs, or drop out of school, or break relations with their parents or drop friends, and do many other things that they deeply regret a few weeks later.

Also, be aware that a lot of people don't know what you're learning here, and they may not be so understanding of your wild swings. So, it's best to do as much as you can to protect existing relationships and commitments during this period. If you truly intend to quit your job, or leave home, or any of these things, you can wait a few weeks more until your senses return and you can be certain that the decision is one that all your parts support.

If you have already done some of these things and now regret it, it might help to share this section with those involved. Perhaps when they understand what was happening to you when you made a hasty decision, they will understand enough to allow you to reverse it.



Book Six

Troubleshooting Bonding



Introduction to Bonding

Bonding is the name for the connection you make in your mind between the satisfaction you get from satisfying a need, and the object that provides the satisfaction.

Needs

You have a strong need to pair up with a partner. When you find a partner who is willing to pair with you, you feel a feeling (love) as the need is satisfied. Your partner is what made that feeling possible for you and you attach (bond) the feeling to your partner.

Let's get more general for a moment. You have many needs. One is for comfort. Any object that provides you comfort becomes attached to the satisfaction you feel as the need for comfort is satisfied.

You have a need for friends. When someone satisfies that need, you feel a feeling (friendship, or love). You associate your feeling with your friend, thus you are bonded to that person by friendship.

You have a need to have a child or children. When you have a baby, you satisfy that need. The baby is the object that gives you the feeling you get when the need is satisfied (love for a child). You're bonded to the child by the feeling you get as your need is satisfied.

You have a need for work, or some expression of yourself that provides satisfaction for your need to accomplish, achieve, create, etc. You feel a feeling (love of your work) that bonds you to your work (if it satisfies your work needs).

You have other needs, as any human being does. Anything that provides you with the satisfaction of your need is *bonded* to you by the feeling you get from satisfying the need.

Love

Now, back to love, as we know it. The need for a pair bond may be the most intense of all the needs we humans have (this is especially true before midlife). You have a need for a pair bond. The intensity of that need is variable from one person to another, but you have a need for a pair bond. When you meet your partner, you feel the intense satisfaction that comes from satisfying that intense need. That feeling you get when you satisfy it is the feeling we call love. That kind of love differs from other loves that you have. You can love your job, your boat, your car, and the love you feel is different from the love you feel for your partner. You can love a friend or many friends, and the feeling you get is different from the love you feel for your partner. You need friends, and you need a partner. Each need is different, and the feeling you get when you satisfy that need is different. So, love is the feeling you get when you satisfy your need for a pair bond with your partner.

Now, suppose you are attracted to your partner, you court, become infatuated, and fall in love. Every time you feel that feeling of satisfaction (love), you're creating another shared positive experience (a positive bond) with your partner. Love grows as you create more positive bonds. If you have one, it's love. If you have ten, your love grows. As you have 100, your love grows more still. Every time you see your partner, and use your Us-part to process, your partner puts you in touch with that growing pool of positive bonds.

The more intense the feeling of satisfaction, the stronger the positive bond that's formed. So, the value of infatuation is that it creates very intense positive bonds out of situations that might otherwise be very ordinary.

One more thing. Sometimes you might have a negative experience with your partner. For example, you and your partner have a fight, and your partner withdraws from you. Your satisfaction of your need is momentarily threatened. You feel an intense feeling of dissatisfaction (you may feel it as fear, anger, loneliness, grief, etc.), as your satisfaction is threatened. This also causes a bond, a negative bond. In this case, your partner is bonded to you by a very intense negative feeling. So, with time, and more disagreements, you accumulate a larger and larger reservoir of bad feelings that bond you to your partner, also.

So, bonding is the result of shared experiences that put you in touch with feelings. Those feelings form a bond between you and your partner.

You can bond with your partner on other feelings as well as love. For example, when you have a child, you each bond to the child and feel love for a child. At the same time, you're sharing a mutual experience of loving a child, and that shared experience forms another bond between you.

Suppose your partner suffers a death in the family. Your partner feels intense loss and the feeling of grief. You feel grief also. You share your feelings of grief together. This is an example of a bad experience that forms the source of another bond of love between you.

To Summarize and Simplify

Bonding is the part of the pairing process that builds bonds of love between you and your partner. You may also bond on other feelings, some negative, like fear or anger, and some painful like grief.

The more intense the feelings of love that are shared, the stronger the bond that results. The more often that feelings of love are shared, the stronger the bond. So, you can build a strong bond out of a few very intense shared experiences, or a large number of low intensity shared experiences (or any combination).



Chapter 1: Your Only Bonds are Sexual

During infatuation, the feeling of love is very intense. You want to shout it out, to paint it on the wall, to quickly share it with your partner. After infatuation, the feeling is subtler. It can pass without notice if you let it. You can learn to recognize it each time you feel it and can learn to mark it by sharing it with your partner. You can do it with a touch, a look, a sound, or any sign that your partner will recognize. Your long-term relationship will benefit by building as large a reservoir of shared positive bonds as you can.

Valerie

Valerie said, “Soon after we met we had sex. It was the most incredible experience of my life. We were terrific together sexually. I just couldn’t get enough sex with him, and he felt the same way. After four months, we decided to get married, and we did. Gradually the sexual excitement faded, and we had to find other ways to communicate and other things to do. I began to realize that the only thing holding us together was the memory of the wonderful sex, and yet that was over, and we couldn’t seem to get it back again. I became very depressed and we began to fight over everything.”

It wasn’t that Valerie and her partner had too much of a good thing. The problem was that they didn’t have enough of other things. Sex is the basis for good solid bonds if the feeling that is satisfied is love, and not simply the need for sexual gratification (felt by the Me-part). Sex does not hurt bonding; it just isn’t enough by itself.

Valerie and her partner were taught to mark positive bonds and they were able to gradually build a large reservoir of positive bonds from their daily experiences of living together and caring for each other. They will, with work, be able to accumulate the bonds they need to sustain and support a loving and satisfying relationship. But, as Valerie said later “I wish I had known how to tell the difference between my feeling of love, and my feeling of sexual gratification. I also wish we had learned to mark positive bonds when we were so excited about each other. If we had, we wouldn’t have felt so empty when the hot sex was over.”

For your information, sex with your partner creates two different kinds of satisfaction of a need, two different feelings. Orgasm creates a powerful feeling of sexual satisfaction. That’s one feeling. Sharing something that feels good with your partner puts you in touch with another feeling. That feeling is love. In the excitement of sexual relations, it is easy to feel one and let the other slide by unnoticed.

Valerie was taught to feel both feelings; first, the sexual gratification, then afterwards, the warm glow of love that she discovered she felt towards her partner. She now concentrates on the feeling of love, focuses on it, feels it to its fullest, and then marks it by communicating that feeling to her partner.

If you learn to mark your positive bonds by becoming aware of the feeling of love every time it comes to you, and mark it by communicating it, then you will build a large reservoir of shared positive experiences of the feeling of love.



Chapter 2: You Have Many Positive Bonds, but Many Negative Bonds Also

Matt's story: "We had a very stormy romance. We were both getting over other relationships, and our lives were in turmoil. One day we would be madly in love and joyful, the next we were fighting like cats and dogs. After it all settled down and we were living together, I couldn't make up my mind about marriage. I didn't know whether I loved her or not. Sometimes I would get in touch with all the wonderful things I felt about her, and knew that she felt about me. Then, quick as a flash, I would find myself thinking about all the bad times I had gone through and all the fights we had."

Matt and his partner were bonded with very powerful positive bonds, as well as some very painful negative bonds. In addition, Matt had attached the feelings of turmoil that he was going through to his memories of his first months with his partner.

So, thinking about his partner could put Matt in touch with the good and joyful feelings, as well as the painful feelings, as well as the feelings of turmoil connected with his relationship.

Matt resolved his doubts after he understood the Sage model and learned the coping strategy covered in Book Two. He discovered that he was bonded to his partner with at least three feelings. He learned that he could separate those feelings and could deal with each of them differently. He learned to mark his positive bonds, and to handle his negative feelings in such a way that they wouldn't cast any doubts upon his feelings of love for his partner.

Matt and his partner each learned the coping strategy, and each undertook to learn how to be great partners. They are now equipped to build a solid, loving and satisfying relationship day by day. As time goes by, they will build more powerful positive bonds, and the force of the negative bonds will dissipate as they are no longer being reinforced.

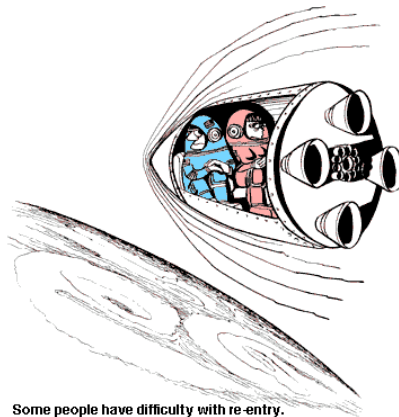


Chapter 3: You Were Bonded with Exciting Romantic Events; Now Nothing

Phil's story: "We met on a three-week tour of Europe. By the second week we were lovers, and we toured the magical city of Paris together. The trip and Doris were the highlights of my life. We both loved touring so much, when we got back to New York we spent most of our weekends touring other famous attractions. We spent a romantic weekend in Maine. We saw the cherry blossoms in D.C. and were enchanted by the Niagara Falls. I used up half my savings taking her to fabulous romantic nightclubs, and everything we did seemed magical. Then we married, and settled down to ordinary living, and all the magic and excitement are gone."

Phil's problem was that the magic of Doris, the nightclubs and touring were mixed up together. When infatuation wore off, he began to assume that the magic of Doris was really not Doris, but the places and sights they had seen together.

Phil gave credit for his positive bonds to the places there were, and the things that they did. He concluded that because now that they weren't going many places the excitement was gone.



The answer to Phil's problem came from understanding the pairing process and understanding that the magic really came from his feelings for Doris. The places were incidental. Phil did an exercise that brought it home to him. He was asked to spend an hour by himself, getting in touch with his feelings of love for Doris. He was instructed to write down each time he could remember that he felt that special feeling for her. On a separate list, he was to record each time he felt the excitement and curiosity of touring a new place. When he did the exercise, he found the two lists were quite separate. He had many occasions when his feelings came from a touch, or a word, or a glance from Doris. None of them were attached to the touring excitement. Phil gave up his concern about his relationship, and began to be aware of every time he felt that special feeling and then he would mark it by sharing his feeling with Doris.

Until we understand the process and the way our minds work, it is easy to be confused about what happens. Phil now knows the difference between powerful feelings of love, and the exciting feelings of exploring and seeing new things.



Chapter 4: Bonding on Ordinary Events Seems Boring or Unexciting

Harry and Betty were an example of a couple where one is infatuated, and the other is not. Harry had to learn the pairing process to discover that infatuation isn't love, and isn't required in order to bond and develop a loving and satisfying relationship.

Harry and Betty

Harry: “When I was dating Betty, she was really in love with me. I didn't feel that much, but I liked her a lot. Everything we did together was exciting to Betty. She would get this glow on her face, touch me and tell me she loved me. I felt really good about those moments, but I knew down deep that I wasn't feeling as strongly as she was. She made a big deal about “our song.” I gave her a flower, and she pressed it and promised to keep it forever. I began to think there was something wrong with me. I thought, maybe I can't feel things like other people. Or, sometimes I thought, I must not love Betty. I Just couldn't get that excited about things the way that she did. Now, she wants to get married, and I want to marry her, but I'm worried that I don't love her as much as I should.”

In some ways Harry is fortunate not to have gone through infatuation. He formed many loving bonds with Betty (which he discovered when he learned to recognize his feelings of love), and he did it without the massive excitement and turmoil that infatuation can cause. Harry quickly developed the practice of marking his positive bonds, and was then able to share Betty's markings of hers. Just knowing that what they were doing was the best way to build a loving relationship took all the pressure off of Harry. He no longer had the distortions in his TWISB that were causing him doubts.

