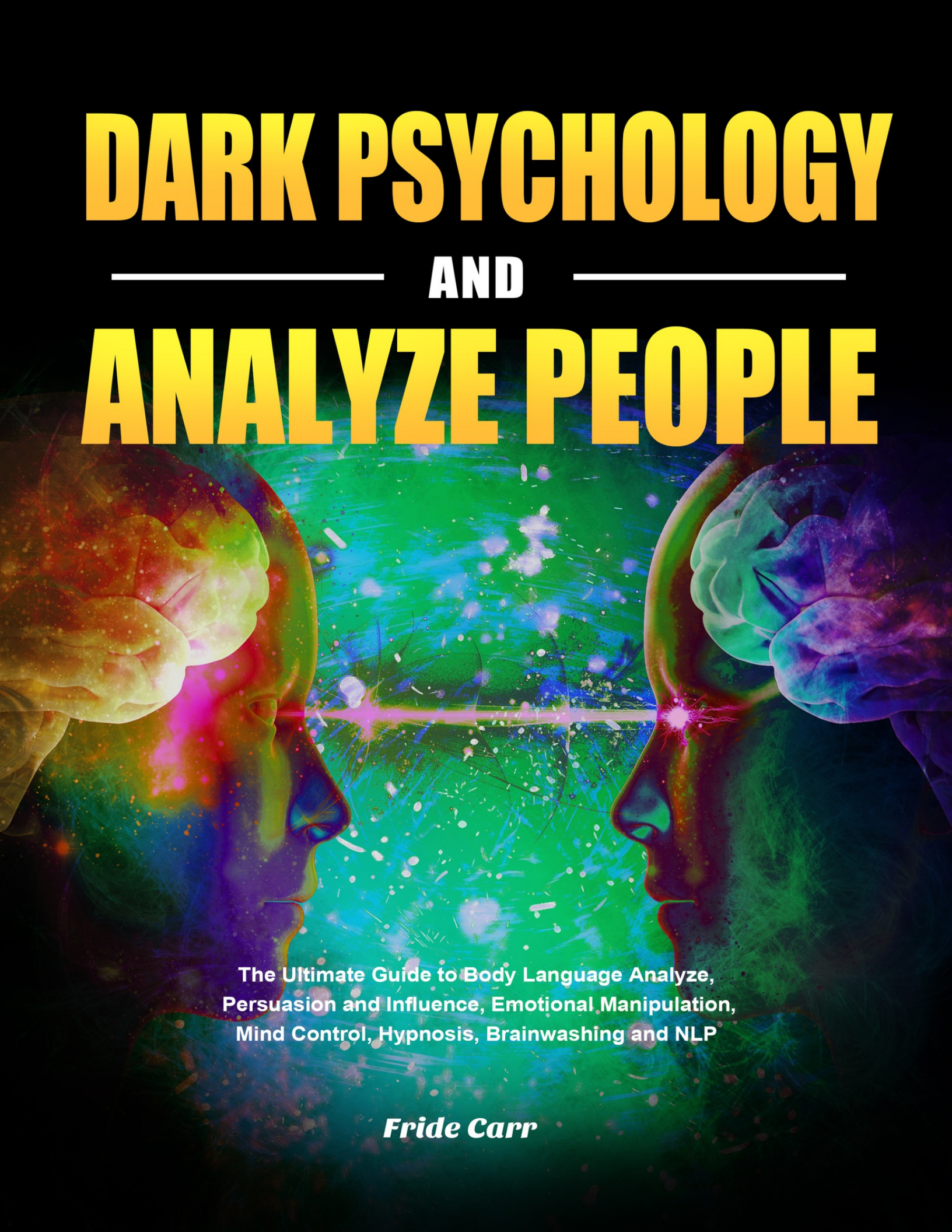# DARK PSYCHOLOGY

AND

ANALYZE PEOPLE

The Ultimate Guide to Body Language Analyze, Persuasion and Influence, Emotional Manipulation, Mind Control, Hypnosis, Brainwashing and NLP

Fride Carr

Book Description

Dark psychology isn't an area of psychology that is regularly discussed or even studied. The problem here is that many areas of dark psychology are pertinent in most psychological fields, and the effects can't be ignored. Understanding the effects of dark psychology will help you discover a much deeper and darker part of psychology, and one that's used by many people in the world today.

This book is written in such a way to help you understand how dark psychology will affect people when used correctly and incorrectly. Unfortunately, many people that are intrigued by this type of psychology will try to use the principles that they have learned to do harm instead of instill positivity into the lives of others.

There are several principles that can be seen as positive and can be remarkably effective in changing a person's thought patterns. This can allow for personal healing and development. But there are several aspects of dark psychology that are used to harm others. Knowing how to identify the patterns that are employed by many "dark psychologists" will help you counteract those effects if you're ever exposed to them.

You will learn the basics of hypnotism, brainwashing, persuasion, and the reading of body language.

Dark Psychology and Analyze People

The Ultimate Guide to Body Language Analyze, Persuasion and Influence, Emotional Manipulation, Mind Control, Hypnosis, Brainwashing and NLP

Fride Carr

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Introduction

bro, C. O. T. T. O. N. (n.d.). *Person in black pants and black shoes*

sitting [Photograph]. https://www.pexels.com/photo/person-in-

black-pants-and-black-shoes-sitting-on-brown-wooden-chair-

4101143/

Psychology studies the conscious, unconscious, and subconscious phenomena that occur in one's mind. There's been much debate revolving around the question of whether or not psychology can be classified as a scientific field because many of the aspects and conclusions that are based in psychology aren't as openly quantifiable as other scientific explorations. That said, the mind is a remarkably complex part of a person's being, and although there may be some similarities between people's minds, they are inherently unique. This means that psychology will primarily be based in theory to analyze the

similarities in the characteristics of people's minds. For this reason, psychology is considered a social science.

Psychologists study and explore mental and emotional processes in people and use empirical methods to understand the different types of relationships that exist between psychosocial variables in people's minds. For psychologists to successfully diagnose and treat patients with mental and emotional disorders, they need to rely on aspects from many medical fields, including neurology and psychiatry. Psychologists rely on their abilities to read people and correctly diagnose any problems of the mind to help their patients work proactively to deal with these mental problems.

Psychology can be used to help people because it allows others to accurately read and even alter certain behaviors in the mind. However, these capabilities can be used dangerously by others, and this is where the birth of dark psychology occurred.

Mind control and altering the mental perceptions of other human beings have become fascinating topics to people over the last few decades, and although many of the hypotheses and actions may dwell within the realms of science fiction, there's a lot more truth behind these manipulative factors than most people originally thought possible.

Hollywood and the media have released countless stories about people being hypnotized and brainwashed into committing acts that they would not normally do. Many people believed that there was no such thing as this type of mental manipulation until more and more cases of these forms of dark psychology started taking root in modern culture. Once psychologists realized that this was certainly a possibility of the mind being subtly manipulated and eventually rewired, dark psychology became an unrecognized subdivision of psychology itself.

This book is going to dive into the different parts of dark psychology, how it operates, and how you can understand the techniques used by those who have personality disorders in the Dark Triad. You will learn many of the techniques involved with dark psychology, and for that reason, you'll need to practice caution when going forward. If you're a psychologist yourself, then you'll understand how dangerously detrimental mental manipulation can be. If you're a layman and only reading this book for the sake of knowledgeable curiosity, then do be careful if you consider using any of these techniques on

others.

Chapter 1: Dark Psychology's Secrets and Principles

Krima, E. (n.d.). *Woman's face* [Photograph].

https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-s-face-3319333/
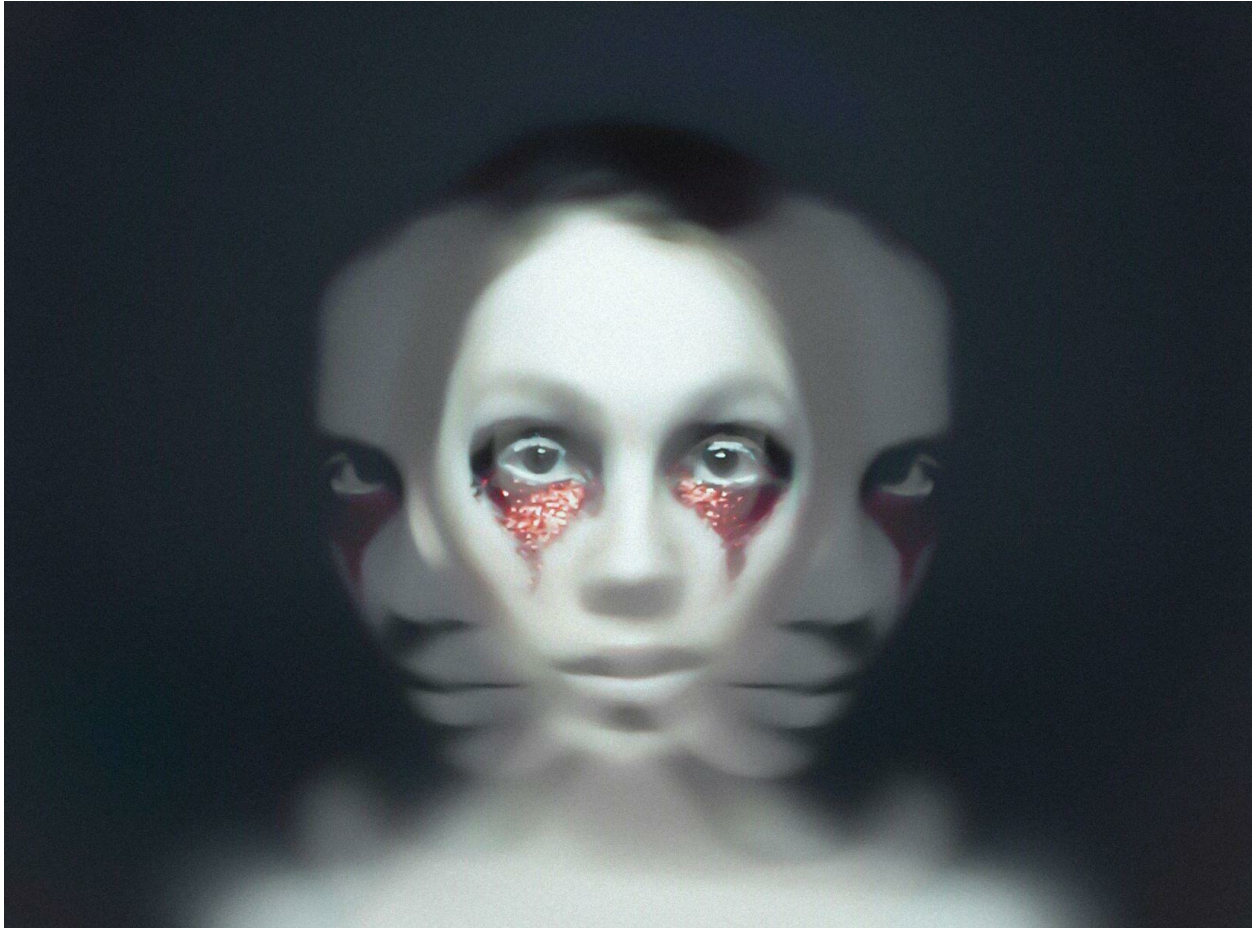
There are many reasons why people would consider using principles and tactics associated with dark psychology, but there are two main reasons that would interest someone enough to employ these tactics. Either a person would like to convince someone to do what they want, and manipulating them would be the most successful way to accomplish this, or they want to break another person down to benefit from that person being mentally or emotionally damaged.

There may be many myths and allusions associated with dark psychology, but there are several defining factors of what dark psychology isn't and what it is. Since dark psychology is such an interesting subject, it's assumed that it would be thoroughly researched with multiple areas that are studied, but this isn't the case. Dark psychology remains a rather taboo subject in several circles of psychological studies, and although many books have been written on the subject, there's a definite lack of peer-reviewed research. This has resulted in several different theories of what dark psychology actually is.

Simply defined, dark psychology is a psychological tool of manipulation or persuasion. A person that uses techniques in dark psychology for their own personal gain will harm their targets. This harming process is inevitable, and the damage can become irreversible. The key here is to understand the difference between a person that uses dark psychology to gain what they want compared to someone that merely manipulates others. The key difference here is that those that rely upon dark psychology to get what they want are inherently darker than those that merely manipulate others.

What Dark Psychology Isn't

MacQuarie, M. (n.d.). *White and black skull figurine on black surface*

[Photograph]. https://unsplash.com/photos/u6OnpbMuZAs

There may be many misconceptions regarding hypnosis and mind control because of the media, but it's important to understand that dark psychology doesn't allow people to gain control of anyone's minds on a whim and against their will. Dark psychology does have certain techniques that are able to manipulate, persuade, and convince the minds and thought patterns of others, but they won't work on everyone. Dark psychology isn't a form of sorcery and does remain within the realms of logical reasoning.

Dark Psychology Isn't Merely a Form of Hypnosis That Can Give You Control Over Just Anyone

Hypnosis is a powerful tool that can confuse a person's mind enough to gain some control over a person for a certain period of time. Using a series of well-timed command phrases placed in nonsensical word salad can confuse someone's mind enough to gain some control over them. Once they're confused, their critical thinking skills become diminished, which allows a hypnotist to escalate and accelerate their compliance to obeying certain commands.

Derren Brown, a trained hypnotist, decided to put his hypnotism skills to the test. He was pulled over by a number of police officers because he would regularly speed while driving his vehicle, and he tried to hypnotize certain officers to get out of his tickets (The Power Moves, n.d.). Most of the time, the techniques didn't work and he still received the tickets. That was until the right police officer with the right type of mental condition pulled him over.

There are many factors that could have caused the police officer to become susceptible to hypnotic tactics, like being overly tired or even being too polite. The police officer in the video was friendly enough for Brown to find a way to start manipulating him. The fact that it worked surprised even Brown himself, but he used enough words and catchphrases when speaking to the police officer that he managed to confuse his critical thinking skills enough to drive away without receiving the ticket. There are several videos

on YouTube revolving around Derren Brown and potential subjects that would be susceptible to hypnotic influences.

Hypnotic techniques will be discussed in detail later on, but the most important factor that allows for hypnosis to work is that it needs to be performed on a susceptible subject. People that are defensive of their personal and mental boundaries won't be hypnotized very easily.

Dark Psychology Isn't Merely Neuro-Linguistic Programming

Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) may seem similar to hypnosis, but it does have some key differences. Hypnosis relies heavily on verbal suggestions to alter thought patterns and interfere with critical thinking, while neuro-linguistic programming builds on the thoughts, behaviors, and language patterns of people to either enhance certain behaviors or change them to believe something else. These behaviors can be used positively in areas like therapy, but they can also be used dangerously by more manipulative people (GoodTherapy, n.d.).

Dark psychology and NLP do rely on some auditory patterns and well-designed stimuli that can affect a person's mood. NLP, on the other hand, is much like hypnosis and will only work on specific individuals. Practicers of NLP use certain combinations of secret words and phrases that are verbalized in a specific order to influence the mind of another person.

Hypnotism wants to gain some control, where NLP wants to allow for the change in some belief systems or thought patterns. There is much debate about how effective this is, and even though there are people that are susceptible to this type of programming, there's a lot more to dark psychology than just this.

Dark Psychology Isn't Merely a Tool Used by Manipulators

Wanting to Brainwash Their Victims

Because of the distinct lack of peer-reviewed research on dark psychology, it's been difficult for people to hear the term "dark psychology" without automatically associating dark connotations with it. There are, of course,

areas of dark psychology that are used by manipulators, persuaders, psychopaths, hypnotists, and even car salesmen, but that doesn't mean that all of it is negative.

Remember that dark psychology isn't a magical form of psychology that can allow anyone to access or control anyone else's mind. There's no magic involved here, and that will change the way that people will start to view dark psychology and all of its branches. There are people that believe that the use of dark psychology is safe, and although there are many 'safe' aspects in its theory, there are still areas that need to be addressed.

Dark psychology isn't going to brainwash anyone and make them mindless robots that follow cult leaders. This does beg the question of why some cult leaders are so successful, but like many other people, they have found ways to use dark psychological techniques to their advantage and persuade the thought patterns of susceptible people.

To fully understand how dark psychology works, it's important to understand its fundamental structure.

What Dark Psychology Is

One of the main objectives of dark psychology is to employ social manipulation in social settings. The ultimate purpose is to benefit the "dark psychologist," regardless of how detrimental it is to that person's victims. Dark psychology is a combination of attributes that are used to influence a person's thoughts without using traditional coercion or other forms of natural persuasion.

Dark psychology uses operant conditioning to "hack one's psyche," which makes them interested in the information that has been presented to them. This means that external causes and reasons will have led to the change in the behavior of certain subjects. Exposing a susceptible person to repetition and thought conditioning will affect the way that they process information. This means that they will be more easily manipulated later on by the same "dark psychologist."

Dark Psychology Is Used for Social Persuasion and

Manipulation

There are many psychologists that believe that manipulation and persuasion can be used synonymously, but this isn't the case. They need to be separated for the sake of accurate interpretation. The reason why they need to be separated is that there is a remarkable difference in the moral and ethical framework of the fundamentals of manipulation and persuasion. One of these psychological techniques is used to inherently harm others, while the other can be used to help others.

People that use persuasion to change the thought patterns of particular individuals aren't doing so to intentionally harm them, while those that use manipulation aren't concerned about the well-being of the people that they manipulate. Manipulators will use any method to manipulate their subjects, regardless of how detrimental the whole process may be to the subject.

Understanding the difference here is vital to understanding how dark psychology works. Dark psychology can be used by anyone. It can be overt, or it can be subtle when it needs to be. This can range from different aspects like thought persuasion to social manipulation. Dark psychology can be relatively harmless to the subject or exceptionally detrimental, with lasting effects if used incorrectly. That said, because dark psychology is on the darker spectrum of psychology, it will rely more on manipulation instead of persuasion, because many techniques in persuasion can be based in normal branches of psychology and not necessarily in dark psychology.

The 5 Steps to Manipulation in Dark Psychology

It's readily believed that mankind has free will based on the decisions that all of us make on a daily basis. Having control over one's mind to make your own personal decisions according to your own moral compass is one of the aspects that sets human beings apart from other sorts of animals.

Other animals tend to have a limited form of free will because they tend to make decisions based on their ultimate survival at that very moment, like how to stay warm or where their next meals will come from. Human beings, on the other hand, are more capable of making deeper decisions based on the

repercussions of those decisions and how those decisions will affect future events (Pictotherapy, 2019). This is because people have free will… or do we?

If everyone is capable of making their own decisions, then any forms of persuasion and manipulation won't work. That said, the mind is a complicated place, and even though people will be able to make decisions for themselves, it doesn't mean that they won't ever be unexpectedly influenced by those practicing dark psychology.

Even though people do have free will (or degrees of it), there are still five distinctive ways that one's mind can be manipulated by another person's commands.

The first way that a person can make someone more susceptible to their manipulative techniques is by **building trust with one's subject**. Manipulation can occur without trust, but gaining the trust of another person first makes any type of manipulation much easier later on. If one trusts another person, then they are much more likely to consider the ideas that are being presented to them. This type of trust can be built through friendships, intimate relationships, and even brief encounters between people. If someone seems trustworthy enough to another person, then that person will be more inclined to listen to what that person has to say.

Manipulation will always take trust. This is why people that are more trusting than others will be more susceptible to being manipulated later on. This includes other areas of dark psychology, like hypnosis and NLP. A person that doesn't trust easily won't be susceptible to these types of techniques because their distrust allows their minds to be more protective over themselves, which makes them less likely to be influenced by external factors.

The second way that people are manipulated occurs when their **old ideas are questioned**. People, in general, rely on the ideas that they have built up over several years, and these ideas become concreted in their minds. These ideas will become part of their psyches and their identities over the course of their lives. When a person repeats a certain behavior for a certain amount of time, this behavior will become a habit.

Research has found that it takes 21 days until a repeated behavior becomes

habitual. This repeated behavior allows for the mind to concrete it in one's psyche and can eventually be performed with ease and with little thought over the process (Clear, n.d.). Driving a car, for example, is a rather stressful activity while one is still learning how to drive, but with practice and repetition, it can be performed remarkably easily. Habits take time to form, but once they've formed they're not easily broken.

Manipulators know that changing the way that one thinks can't be overtly performed. If one's mind starts to realize that its old way of thinking is being attacked. then the mind will protect itself and stop the manipulative techniques that are being performed on it. For a manipulator to successfully change the way that someone thinks, they will need to subtly question the old ideas of a person by implanting other ones into their mind. It may take 21 days to form a new habit, but it only takes an hour for a new idea to take root in one's mind. Once the idea is implanted and starts to grow, then future manipulations will be much easier.

The third way that manipulators start to change the way that others think is by **consistently and subtly injecting new ideas** into their thought processes. This may seem difficult but once trust is formed then it's very easy to inject ideas that would otherwise just be disregarded or ignored. Portraying the masked vigilante in *V for Vendetta,* Hugo Weaving coined the phrase, "Beneath this mask is more than just flesh and blood, beneath this mask lies an idea, and ideas are bulletproof" (Rotten Tomatoes, n.d).

Manipulators will implant new ideas into others. It's one of the key ways that they're able to change the thought processes of their subjects. Those that manipulate others need others to think more as they do, and the only way that they can accomplish that is to implant specific ideas in the beginning. This is one of the reasons why NLP is employed regularly by manipulators on trusting subjects.

The fourth way that people will manipulate trusting subjects is by **using subtle persuasion**. Even though manipulation and persuasion are separate techniques, manipulators will use persuasive techniques while building trust with their subjects. If a person notices that they are being manipulated and will get hurt in the process, they will prevent the manipulation from going any further. If, however, a manipulator starts using persuasive techniques rather than manipulative techniques, then the subject may not realize what the

ultimate goal of the manipulator is. Many manipulators understand that patience is necessary while using these techniques, and they will take their time building trust and implanting new ideas into their subjects.

Finally, manipulators will **reinforce their ideas and build on the set frameworks** that they have been setting in place. Manipulators that successfully change the thought processes of their subjects will understand that manipulation takes time. Since people are creatures of habit, it's easy to understand why the mind will fight change to certain degrees. If a person is trying to implement a new exercise program into their daily routines, they will normally succeed if they spend enough time every day slowly building themselves up. People that try to run 10 miles on their first day when they have never exercised before will almost always fail. The reason for this is partly physical, but more mental. The mind doesn't normally like to accept huge changes right away.

The same principle is used by manipulators. If a person notices that someone is trying to manipulate their way of thinking, their minds will fight the process. If the manipulator employs patience and subtle thought injections, they will eventually change the way that their subjects think. Once the subtle changes are accepted by the mind, then the manipulator can reinforce those ideas that have already been implanted and build on the frameworks that they have set in place.

These five steps won't work on everyone and will only work on people when a certain amount of trust is involved. They will work on susceptible people. Understanding how manipulators will use these five steps will help you identify manipulators and their subjects.

Chapter 2: The Dark Triad

Ehlers, M. (n.d.). *Red triangle* [Photograph].

https://www.pexels.com/photo/red-triangle-1340397/
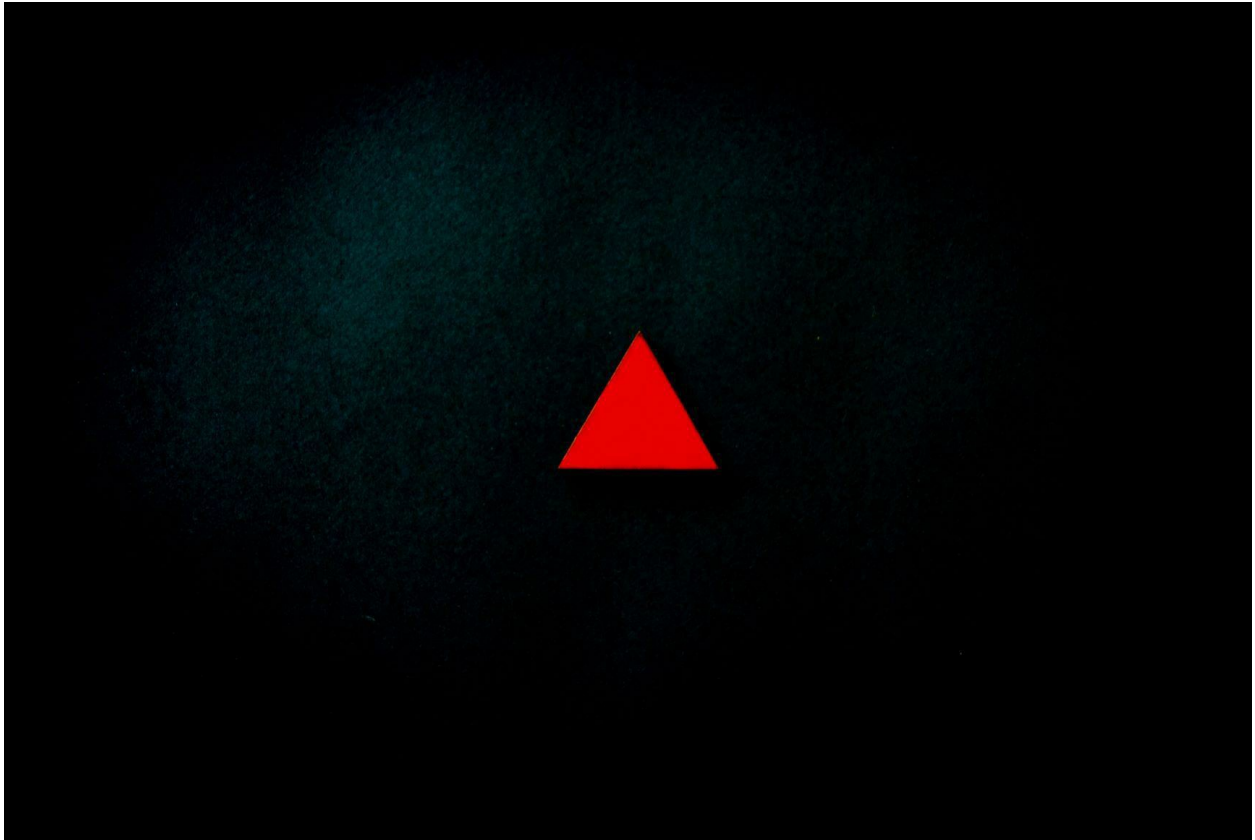
Since many aspects associated with dark psychology can be detrimental, most people tend to avoid these types of destructive behaviors. Therefore, specific individuals are attracted to these types of techniques, and those are generally people with personality disorders. The Dark Triad personalities include three of the main personality disorders that not only are attracted to techniques in dark psychology, but also employ them on a regular basis.

The Dark Triad includes psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism. This is considered the Bermuda Triangle in dark psychology. The reason is because it's dangerous for anyone to get too close to someone with one of these personality disorders. Even with people that exhibit one of the Dark Triad personalities, there can be an overlap of these personality disorders,

which can create a unique personality profile.

All three of these disorders create a manipulative and toxic environment for others. These problems are normally escalated in instances of intimate relationships, but any person can be manipulated by a Dark Triad personality when trust has been developed.

Defining the Dark Triad

Zasiadko, R. (n.d.). *Trees covered with thick smoke* [Photograph].

https://unsplash.com/photos/cf-ZRVtH6kE

The Dark Triad may sound like a new term, but it has been around for several years. The term "Dark Triad personalities" was first coined in 2002 by Kevin Williams and Delroy Paulhus. They created this term because of the three unusually toxic and negative personality disorders (Lancer, 2018). There are several similarities between the disorders, but psychopathy and

Machiavellianism share more similarities with each other than they do with narcissists.

Narcissism is distinguished by a person's constant pursuit for self-gratification and the gratification from others. This constant need for "ego development" is what causes their overinflated sense of self-worth. It's important to note, however, that although narcissists do tend to seek ego gratification, they are inherently self-destructive and will physically or emotionally harm themselves. Narcissists overcompensate for this self-harm by overinflating their self-worth to others and will use grandiosity, vanity, entitlement, and dominance in order to build their self-worth. Although narcissists aren't generally physically abusive, they will resort to verbal abuse, emotional blackmail, and manipulative techniques in order to obtain what they desire.

Machiavellianism is a personality disorder that revolves around manipulation. The other personality disorders also include manipulation to a lesser or greater degree, but not as severely as Machiavellianism. This personality disorder is particularly calculating, scheming, and amoral. All of the manipulative tactics used in Machiavellianism are used to demean others while building themselves up or benefitting from other forms of personal gain.

Psychopathy is divided into subcategories, namely the psychopathic and sociopathic divisions. Both of these personality disorders are considered antisocial personality disorders, but this must not be confused for not thriving in social situations. In fact, both psychopaths and sociopaths thrive in social interactions and are often considered very charming.

An example of this is Ted Bundy, who was one of the most prolific serial killers of the 20th century. Even though he was an extremely dangerous and violent psychopath, many of the people that met him in passing stated that he wasn't merely good-looking, he was also very charming and seemed like a complete gentleman. It was this charm and seemingly gentle nature that would ultimately lure so many women to their untimely deaths. Ted Bundy suffered from a severe psychopathic personality disorder and killed over 30 women before he was apprehended by the police (Becker, 2018).

Ted Bundy would not only torture and kill his victims, but would also perform grotesque sexual acts on them before, during, and even after their

deaths. His violent psychopathy completely removed any form of empathy and remorse that he could have had for his killings. However, he was charming, seemingly innocent, and very persuasive when he met his victims, and people tended to fall into the trap of trusting him. Ted Bundy was a very dangerous psychopath and was seemingly incapable of feeling remorse for the crimes that he committed. He was an expert manipulator.

Although psychopathy and sociopathy are both antisocial personality disorders, and both have a distinct lack of empathy, the primary difference between the two disorders is psychopathy is driven by a need to use physical manipulation, pain, and violence to get what they desire, while sociopathy relies on more emotional manipulation to achieve their desired outcomes. People that have these disorders are known to be callous, abusive, impulsive, bold, and non-empathetic.

Common Traits in the Dark Triad

Psychologists have attempted different forms of research in an attempt to understand the three 'malevolent' personalities that make up the Dark Triad. They all have some differences, but all of them act more aggressively than most people would consider being socially acceptable. They will make all of their decisions based on their own self-interest, and they lack empathy and remorse when they make these selfish decisions that are destructive to others.

All three personalities in the Dark Triad are focused on manipulation to deceive and exploit other people, but their motivations and actions will vary according to what personality group they fall into (Lancer, 2018). Those that have a malevolent personality from the Dark Triad will violate normal social values and norms and have little to no feeling for the consequences that their actions will produce. A person with one of these personalities will be deceitful, lie, steal, cheat, and even resort to violence to get their way.

Some researchers have believed that they act in this way because of certain genetic factors, but studies have shown that there's much more to the Dark Triad than merely genetic factors (Craparo, 2013). Even though it was once believed that psychopaths will breed psychopaths and the genetic factor between these types of personality disorders is a fair assumption—but

research has found that there is much more at work in the Dark Triad than merely genetic factors.

Malevolent personalities are difficult to predict and even understand (Craparo, 2013). This is because people, including those with malevolent personality disorders, will experience unique adaptations of their own psyches. This means that malevolent personalities can't be ruled out by singular events. It's easy to assume and predict that people with these types of personalities will develop in the same way, but there is something much greater at work in the development of these personality disorders.

These types of disorders can't begin to develop without a traumatic event that has rooted in the person's mind. This means that while some people may be predisposed to developing malevolent personality disorders, they won't fully become activated until they've experienced a traumatic event, which causes the malevolent personality to take root and start to develop.

Research has found that people with malevolent personality disorders will have experienced a traumatic event before the age of 12. This type of traumatic event at such an early age will result in a traumatic break in a young person's mind.

When the mind is exposed to something it can't understand or fully process, it will attempt to protect itself and prevent further damage from occurring later on (Craparo, 2013). Traumatic events leave a lasting impression on a person. If a person experiences a traumatic event at an early age, their minds will try to compensate and protect them from further damage along the way. This occurs because the human mind is susceptible to change and pain. The moment one of these two entities crawl into the mind's framework, the mind tries to protect itself by forming a new narrative.

As complicated as this may seem, the framework that the mind starts to develop is directly reliant on the experiences that occurred in the past. If a person experiences a traumatic event when their mind is still susceptible to dramatic change, then there's a risk of a malevolent personality taking root in that person's psyche. The mind tries to protect itself from those experiences, and it starts to build a new narrative for itself to compensate for those experiences.

Although there may be a genetic factor, there is more of a psychological

factor at play here. Machiavellianism and psychopathy are very closely related because of their openly malicious behaviors, while narcissists are seemingly more 'fragile' than others. That said, narcissists aren't overly emotional, but they will use their emotions to get a specific response out of other people. Narcissists just seem more fragile to manipulate the emotions of others.

The Deception

McLean, E. (n.d.). *Mystery conjurer showing trick in place for parking*

[Photograph]. https://www.pexels.com/photo/mystery-conjurer-

showing-trick-in-place-for-parking-4173858/

All three personalities within the Dark Triad include high levels of deception. They not only lack empathy but also honesty and a normal sense of

commitment. Since these personalities are so caught up in personal gain, they will use any tactic that they can think of to accomplish this. This means that they're generally greedier and less fair than others because they want to profit themselves.

A recent study has also shown that people with a Dark Triad personality are more likely to be unfaithful if they're involved in intimate relationships. The reasons can vary from the thrill of doing it to personally gaining something else from those other relationships (Lancer, 2018). These personalities will cheat on their partners even if the risk is high, but they will be deceptive to get out of any confrontations that can occur because of it. Machiavellians and psychopaths will be openly deceptive, whereas narcissists are known to be more subtly deceptive because they rely more on self-deception to help themselves also believe the lies that they are telling.

Unfortunately, these personalities will always be rooted in deception, and even though many people will try to defend people that they know and love with these types of personalities, the facts remain the same and they still have a dark personality. Once people with these types of personalities realize that people are defending their behavior, they will continue on with it because they know that they can manipulate those types of situations in the future.

Being intimately involved with someone that has a Dark Triad personality will inevitably end up in pain and severe heartbreak. Most people with these types of personalities will become abusive at some point during their intimate relationships. Narcissists tend to resort to verbal abuse, while the other two personalities are more prone to becoming physically violent. This is important to remember because these types of personalities will manipulate their victims into believing that the abuse was the victim's fault and could have been prevented if the victim had merely acted in a certain way.

It may seem like people wouldn't fall for these types of manipulations, and for those that haven't experienced them firsthand, it does seem rather unlikely that people would fall for these types of tactics. The problem is that there are countless victims that do fall for these manipulations because Dark Triad personalities build their manipulations over time. In the beginning stages of their intimate relationships, they will almost always be gentle and charming. Once they've formed their bonds of trust with their victims, they allow certain abusive techniques to come into the relationship to break their partners down.

This ultimately causes their victims to feel isolated from their friends and family, which makes them more reliant on the abuser.

The Psychosocial Repercussions

Gunawan, A. P. (n.d.). *Men sit on sofa* [Photograph].

https://www.pexels.com/photo/men-sits-of-sofa-1036804/

Personalities in the Dark Triad are more aggressive than other 'healthy' personalities, and this aggression results in behaviors that become dangerous with time. This includes bullying, violence, and sadism. These traits, however, are well-hidden when someone first meets a Dark Triad personality. They seem like they are the "life of the party" when people meet many of them. People are initially attracted to them because of their 'enjoyable' natures. But after some time, people that are aware of these types of personalities will realize that these 'enjoyable' natures are much more erratic

than seems safe or appropriate and can lead to dangerous developments.

This erratic behavior includes dangerous impulsivity, risky sexual behaviors with bizarre fetish developments, unnecessary risk-taking, and substance abuse. Dark Triad personalities are also known to sexually harass and even stalk people that aren't interested in them. Because of the egotistical nature of these personalities, they don't always take rejection well and this can lead to them negatively pursuing certain people. This pursuit has very little to do with the victims themselves and much more to do with the fact that the Dark Triad personality's ego wasn't built up in the way that they needed it to be.

These personalities are prone to having a much lower emotional quotient (EQ) than normal personalities. This means that although these three personalities are based on selfish gains, they are inherently prone to act in self-destructive ways. This means that the Dark Triad personalities will be prone to developing depression and always feeling a sense of loneliness. This further aggravates the problem by overcompensating on other, more aggressive emotions like being domineering, entitled, immoral, and grandiose.

When tested to see which of the three personalities were the most aggressive, the narcissists tested on the lower end of the spectrum, with Machiavellians coming second and psychopaths being the most aggressive. In many of the cases, psychopaths scored more than double on their 'aggression' tests compared to the narcissists. Machiavellians scored the highest in "psychosocial issues", where narcissists scored the highest in the "interpersonal issues" section of the Dark Triad personality test.

The true repercussions of these types of behaviors can be determined according to the personality of the person, but they still remain independently unique. Each personality in the Dark Triad is destructive, and they will cause several problems for anyone associated with them. As has been realized over the years, there really isn't a proven form of rehabilitation for these types of disorders. Psychologists and psychiatrists have tried for years to rehabilitate these types of personalities with little success. The primary reason for this is because the mind has already set those types of functions into place, and this won't be easily changed. It's important to keep in mind that Dark Triad personalities are selfish and will use any form of action for self-gain, especially at the expense of others.

The Callousness
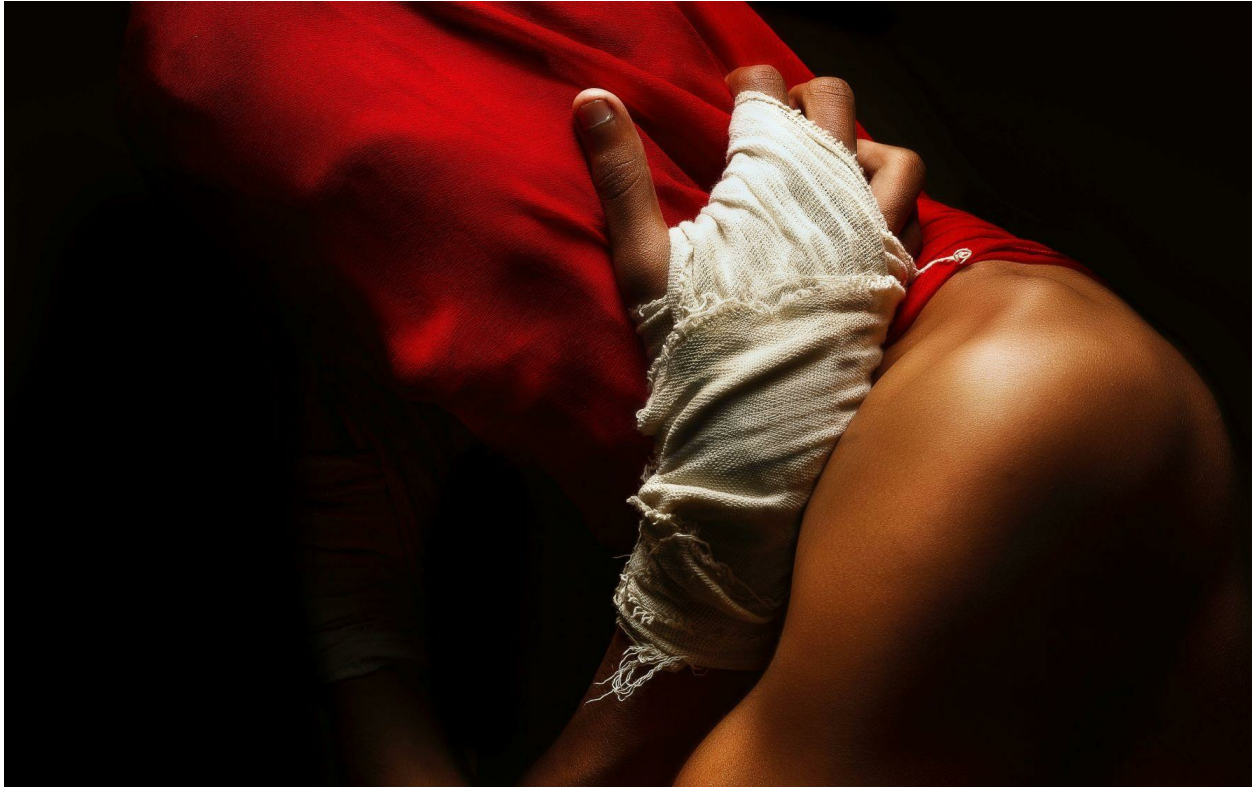
Hussain, C. (n.d.). *Person wearing bandages* [Photograph].

Most people have a certain degree of empathy. People were designed to be able to sympathize and empathize with their counterparts to help one another through difficult times. It's a normal human trait, and each person has a unique understanding of their own level of empathy. The Dark Triad personalities, on the other hand, don't have this type of empathetic drive and aren't able to understand it in other people.

Since the most likely cause of a Dark Triad personality disorder is experiencing a traumatic event at an early age, then it's easier to understand why these personalities don't empathize in the same ways that other people do. When the mind experienced the event, it had to try to protect itself, but in

doing so, normal empathetic development became hindered. The mind started a new callous way of thinking to protect itself from reliving the trauma. This is where the main problem lies.

Researchers found that all three personalities lacked empathy to a lesser or greater degree. The researchers in this trial decided to divide empathy into two categories, namely affective empathy and cognitive empathy, because they wanted to find out whether the Dark Triad personalities lacked both types of empathy (Lancer, 2018).

Affective Empathy is the type of empathy that allows a person to have an appropriate emotional response according to others' emotions. If someone is hurting and crying, for example, the normal response would be to comfort that person. The Dark Triad personalities all failed miserably with this type of empathy because either they exhibited the wrong emotions altogether or they didn't respond at all.

Cognitive empathy is the type of understanding that allows someone to discern what type of emotional state another person is in. The Dark Triad personalities are remarkably good at this, but it does little for the overall empathy of the person.

One of the most disturbing factors that the researchers found when assessing people with these types of personality disorders was that they all felt positive emotions when they were shown images of people being upset or hurt, while they felt negative emotions when they were shown positive pictures of joy and happiness. The psychopaths responded the most positively when they were shown images of people in a fearful state.

An example of a psychopath that truly thrived on the fear of his victims was Dennis Rader. After killing multiple people by binding them, torturing them, and ultimately strangling them, Dennis Rader was dubbed the BTK strangler. His primary motivation was to sexually assault his victims before torturing and killing them. He thrived on the fear of his victims, so he kept them alive for long periods of time before killing them (Ramsland, 2017).

The researchers knew that these types of personalities would lack much, if not all, empathy, but they were intrigued to find that all three personality disorders had unimpaired levels of cognitive empathy. They are able to notice and understand what emotions people are feeling, and that's what makes them

so successful at manipulating their victims. A manipulator will only effectively persuade their victims if they understand what emotions they're feeling and how they will be able to use those emotions to their advantage.

Being in an Intimate Relationship With a Dark Triad Personality

Meshau, E. (n.d.). *Silhouette of man standing against black and red background* [Photograph].

https://www.pexels.com/photo/silhouette-of-man-standing-against-black-and-red-background-333850/

There are several ways that one would be able to identify the traits of Dark Triad personalities, but one of the main ways is to look for any forms of manipulative behaviors. The Dark Triad personalities are master manipulators, and they will exhibit enormous amounts of patience if they have to. Being intimately involved with someone with one of these

personality disorders will get much worse over time. Far too many people have believed that the person would change, only to be hurt more detrimentally in the long run. Dark Triad personalities will attempt to isolate their victims from other loved ones. If they are isolated, then they won't receive the adequate support they'd need to understand how dangerous of a predicament they're in.

The only way that healing will be able to take place is if a clean break is made away from the manipulator. This will be difficult because they will see this as a betrayal. Dark Triad personalities will do anything to hang onto their victims because their victims directly fuel who they are. Without their victims, they would turn their destructive natures onto themselves.

Chapter 3: Persuasion and Influence

K.A.B.O.O.M.P.I.C.S.C.O.M. (n.d.-c). *Wooden model* [Photograph].

https://www.pexels.com/photo/wooden-model-6425/

"Social influence" is the psychological term for communication methods that are intended to influence the thoughts, feelings, or behaviors of another person. There are a number of different techniques and tactics that fall under this kind of communication, and not all of them are negative. For example, if you're trying to convince a friend or family member that smoking is bad for their health, this is hardly a negative communication. In this kind of situation, you are using a tactic called 'persuasion.'

On the surface, manipulation and persuasion look very similar. Hypnosis, NLP, seduction, and subliminal psychology are just a few disciplines that have been variously labeled as both 'persuasive' and 'manipulative' techniques. The key (and only) difference between these two kinds of

communication is intention. If you are employing these techniques for your own benefit, for the benefit of someone else, or for a neutral outcome (such as sales or business negotiations), then you are using the art of persuasion. In this case, you are not doing anything ethically wrong; you're simply using basic human psychology to get what you want out of your life and your relationships. If, however, you are using these techniques with the intent to harm someone else, put them in a dangerous situation, or convince them to do something that goes against their core values or beliefs, then you are engaging in manipulation.

Becoming a more persuasive person is hardly a 'dark' pursuit. Developing your persuasive skills will make you a better communicator, improving both your personal and professional relationships. Persuasive people are able to get what they want without resorting to bossiness, fighting, intimidation, or manipulation. They are also able to get what they want without inciting conflict, making these skills perfect for people who are less confident or aggressive by nature.

There are several easy persuasion techniques that, with practice, you can apply to your daily interactions to improve your productivity, success, and even enhance the quality of your relationships. Learning how to use these techniques yourself will also make you more aware when other people are using them against you, making you a more savvy negotiator, shopper, and consumer, especially in the age of social media.

Big After Small

This persuasion technique is most effective when you need someone to do a big favor for you. First, ask that person for a very small favor, something that you know won't inconvenience them in any major way. Once they agree to this, they will already be in an agreeable and helpful mindset. When you then follow up with the bigger favor, they will be more likely to agree to it.

Example:

You have been slacking in class all semester, and how you have no notes for the upcoming midterm. First, you ask a classmate for their notes from the last class. Once they agree, ask them if you could see the rest of their notes.

Small After Big

This technique works when you need a favor from a stranger, or from

someone that you don't know very well. You may need a very small favor from them, but if you aren't sure whether or not they'll agree, start by asking for something big (Anderson, 2019).

Example:

You need to borrow $25, but your friend has a reputation for never lending anyone money. So you ask them if you can borrow $100. They will, as you might expect, say no. When they refuse, follow up by asking them if you can 'just' borrow $25. At this point, they will be much more likely to say yes, as they believe that you're compromising with them rather than getting what you needed in the first place.

Anchoring

This technique has variations in NLP and hypnosis, but it initially began as a basic persuasion tactic employed by salespeople. When anchoring, you use one thing (the 'anchor') as a point of comparison for the thing you want the other person to buy or do, with the intention of making the other person think they are getting a deal or a bargain. This tactic is still an extremely popular one in sales, but it's also used in advertising, business negotiations, and other persuasive disciplines.

Example:

You are looking to buy a car, and you see one in the lot priced at $12,000. You talk the dealer down to $9,000, and come away thinking you got a great deal. But how would you feel if you learned later that the vehicle is only valued at $8,000? The initial price of $12,000 was the anchor that made you feel $9,000, by comparison, was a good price for the car. The anchor shifted the conversation, forcing you to begin the negotiation at $12,000 rather than $8,000.

Commitment and Consistency

Once people acquire certain beliefs or behaviors, it becomes very difficult to change them. For example, once a person registers with a certain political party, it will take a great deal of convincing to get them to change parties. Persuasive people understand this innate human quality and know how to use it to their advantage. To use this technique yourself, ask someone to make a very small commitment to you. Slowly but surely, build on that commitment, asking for marginally more or bigger things. The initial commitment creates a

certain dynamic in the relationship, one that puts you in a position of power. Once that dynamic has been established, it will be very difficult for the other person to change their behavior towards you (Anderson, 2019).

Example:

You need someone to pick up some groceries for you, but you know that they are unlikely to say yes if you ask them outright. So before you ask for those groceries, ask for something smaller or more convenient first. Alternatively, you can initially ask for something vague, like saying "Can you do me a favor?" The other person is more likely to agree to a request that is relatively small or vague. Once they've made the initial commitment, then ask them to pick up the groceries you need. They're much less likely to say no now that the expectation of them doing something for you has been established. From there, you can continue to build the dynamic by asking for incrementally bigger things.

Social Proof

If you have any kind of social media account, then you've seen this persuasion tactic being used every single day. Perhaps someone posts a meme that supports a certain political bias. Most people will believe it implicitly, without bothering to think critically about it or do any kind of additional research. This doesn't make them stupid or ignorant—human beings are naturally wired to want to be part of a group, making us more likely to believe things that other people seem to believe, too. On some level, we all feel the urge to go along with the group for fear of being ostracized. Persuasive people have always used this technique to great effect, and it's even easier in today's hyper-connected world.

Example:

You are a teenager, just about to graduate high school. One of the people in your friend group has recently started smoking cigarettes. You know that smoking cigarettes is bad for you, but every time you see your friend light up, you find yourself really wanting to smoke one, too. Simply be the first person in your social group to do something, and others are extremely likely to follow, simply because they watched you do it.

Authority

Authority is a powerful persuasive force. This is why people do all kinds of

unpleasant and difficult tasks for their bosses, parents, or teachers. Invoking whatever authority you have over another person can go a long way toward getting them to do what you want. This technique is especially powerful in marketing and advertising (Anderson, 2019).

Example:

You're in the supermarket shopping for toothpaste. One box claims that their toothpaste is approved of by the American Dental Association. No matter the price of the toothpaste, the idea that it's endorsed by an authoritative power will make you far more likely to buy it.

Scarcity

Humans are naturally wired to want what we can't have. If we perceive something to be rare, unique, or in short supply, we automatically want it more. This is why limited edition sales are so enticing and popular. Putting a "limited edition" label on just about anything will persuade people to buy it, even over something that they like more. Persuasive people employ this tactic to their advantage by making it seem like their time, money, or energy are in short supply and are resources that they can only spare rarely.

Example:

You want to spend more time with someone, but you feel like you're always the one reaching out. The next time they invite you out, act like your schedule is simply too full and you'd love to make it, but can't. The perception that your time is limited will make the other person try a bit harder to make time with you.

Persuasion vs. Manipulation
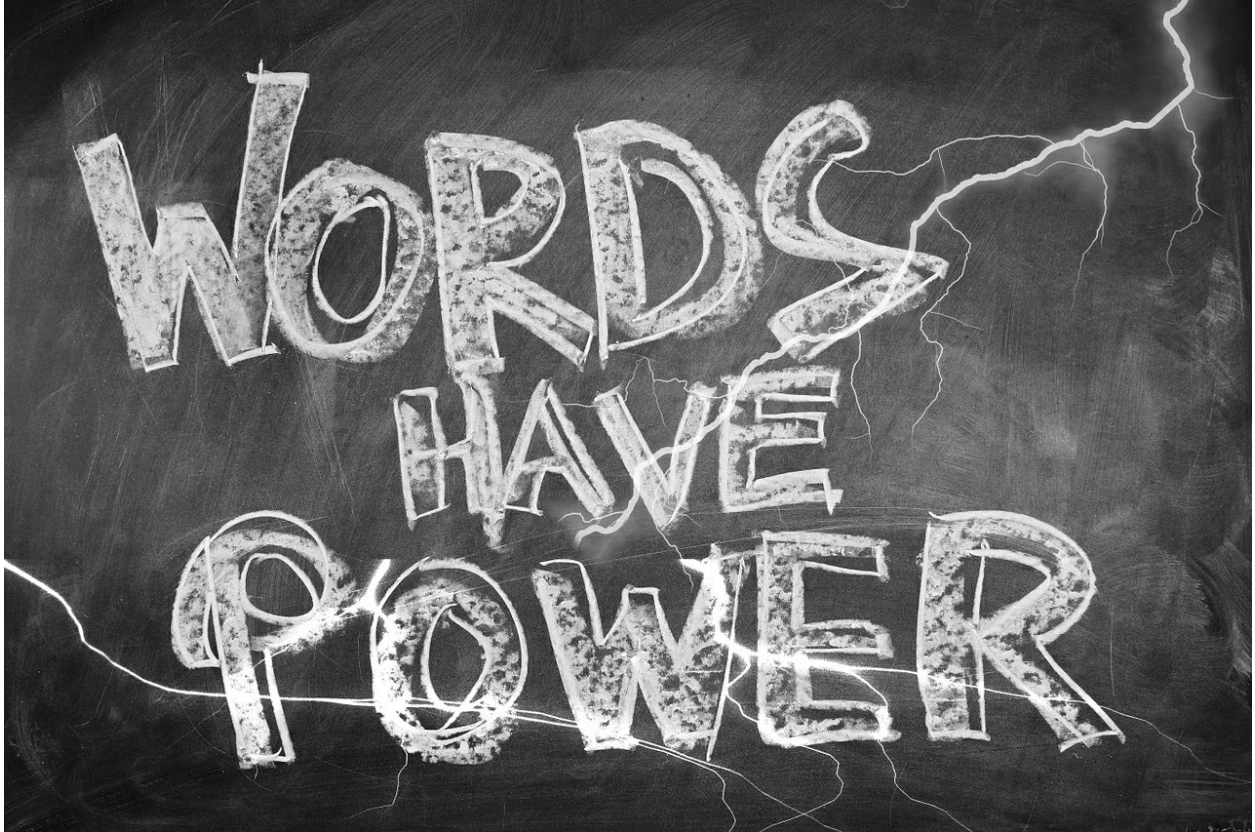
22172, G. (n.d.). *Board blackboard words* [Photograph].

When used for the purpose of actively harming someone else or convincing them to do something that you know is bad for them, any persuasive technique becomes manipulative. However, there are a few techniques that are only manipulative, because they cannot be used in an ethical or beneficial way. If you are with someone who tries to use any of these techniques against you, then you know you are in the presence of a manipulator.

Fear and Relief

Many people have used this manipulation technique at least once in their life without even realizing it. This technique involves using someone's fears to get them to do what you want. The manipulator will create or invoke some kind of fear and allow the situation to build until it's intolerable for the victim. When the victim's fear reaches a nearly unbearable peak, the

manipulator will then relieve their fear. In this state, the victim is likely to do anything the manipulator asks. This technique is very commonly used by employers. Making it seem like someone will lose their job is a fear tactic. With such a threat hanging over their head, an employee will likely do anything their boss asks to ensure their job security.

Reading Body Language

Though this could technically be considered a 'persuasion' tactic, people who learn to read body language are rarely doing so for the other person's benefit. When someone is trying to build a genuine relationship with someone else, they will often ask what the other person is thinking or feeling, and respect the fact that the other person may not wish to reveal the entire truth. But manipulators often learn to read body language because they aren't trying to build a genuine relationship—they are trying to gain complete, unadulterated access to their victim's thoughts and feelings. You can lie or conceal things with words, but you can't fake body language.

Example:

Someone is trying to persuade someone else to give them a large amount of money. The victim may make a show of defiance and resistance, but the manipulator can measure their progress by studying the victim's body language. This will show the manipulator whether their tactics are working or not. Body language includes studying the other person's posture, gestures, and eye movement to determine their true feelings. Since many of these behaviors are unconscious, they provide a clear picture to a manipulator of what your true thoughts or feelings are.

Guilt

Many of us have heard the phrase "guilt tripping" before. This is a very common, and very effective, manipulation technique. Making someone feel guilty makes them feel both vulnerable and ashamed, and therefore more likely to do what the manipulator asks in order to "make up" for their 'bad' behavior. This behavior is used most often in intimate or personal relationships, as the manipulator typically has more access to the types of things that another person might feel guilty about. And despite how it often appears to the victim, this is absolutely a calculated technique. Guilt tripping someone often starts slowly and subtly, building up to the request (or

requests) that are ultimately made by the manipulator.

Attraction

Many studies have shown that people with dark triad personality types are often perceived to be physically attractive by their victims. This isn't because having a dark triad personality actually makes you more attractive. Rather, it's because dark triad personalities tend to take much better care of their personal appearances than the average person. On some level, this is because dark triad personalities tend to have an inflated or grandiose self-image. On another level, this is because dark triad personalities are all extremely manipulative. Manipulative people understand one unfortunate truth about humanity—we are much kinder and more agreeable to people we find attractive than to people we don't. That also means that we are much more likely to do things for people who we find attractive than for people we don't. Manipulative people use this to their advantage by making sure they present themselves as attractively as possible to their potential victims. And this doesn't just include personal appearance. Manipulative people will pair their stunning physical appearance with a great deal of charisma and charm to bedazzle people into doing whatever they want (Anderson, 2019).

Playing the Victim

Many people who have survived some kind of abuse or trauma will develop what psychologists call a "victim mentality." But abusers and manipulators themselves will often make their victims feel guilty and sorry for them by convincing others that *they* are the victim. Playing the victim is advanced-level guilt-tripping. When other people perceive you to be abused or disenfranchised in some way, they're much more likely to do what you want in order to 'help' you. This is also an extremely effective control tactic for the abuser to use on an actual victim. Anytime the victim does something that the manipulator doesn't like, they act like the victim's behavior has somehow hurt or betrayed the manipulator. This makes the victim feel like their behavior is what's causing problems in the relationship, and ensures that they will do what the manipulator wants in the future.

Preying on Emotions

In one way or another, every manipulative technique preys on the victim's emotions. But when taken to an extreme level, the manipulator makes the

victim believe that the manipulator has romantic feelings for them. When a person has romantic feelings for someone else, they are more likely to do what that person says. They will want that person to like them back, and may do things they wouldn't normally do in order to impress that person. Worse, when someone has romantic feelings for someone else, they tend to ignore or excuse any potential flaws they may see in that person's character (Anderson, 2019).

Manipulative people use this to their advantage. Going through the trouble of creating an entirely false romantic relationship is an extremely advanced technique, however, and is more often used by people with dark triad personalities than by the average manipulator. This is because this technique is only successful if the manipulator is able to completely detach their own emotions from the situation. You can't be fully controlling of someone that you actually have feelings for. And if that person does decide to leave or find someone else, the manipulator is free to find another victim. Even if the other person suspected foul play, they'd never be able to prove it, as no real relationship was ever formed. The most successful manipulators are able to drag on the *possibility* of a romantic relationship for a long time, without ever actually making a commitment to the other person.

Bribery

This is a classic manipulation technique that has been used throughout history because it's extremely effective. This doesn't have to be an overt bribe— simply making someone feel rewarded for helping you is likely to motivate them to help you again.

Example:

You don't want to do the budget report for your project at work. You ask a co-worker if they'll do it for you, offering to compensate them by buying them lunch. When done in a friendly and confident way, the other person is unlikely to feel like they're being bribed. In fact, they may feel that the agreement is somehow fair to them. After an initial bribing, that person will be much easier to manipulate in the future without the need of a bribe.

More Advanced Techniques

There is a great deal of overlap between persuasion and manipulation. The

line is often drawn at intention, and in the case of most persuasion techniques, that's truly the only distinction. But there are some techniques of social influence that vary depending not just on intention, but on the situation. Persuasive techniques that are appropriate in a business negotiation, for example, are extremely unethical when used on a romantic partner. Depending on the technique, this could be because the techniques are too aggressive for appropriate use in an intimate relationship, or because a romantic partner does not have the skills to defend themselves against such techniques. In a business negotiation, it's expected that the person with the best communication skills will get what they want. But this is not the case where feelings are concerned, and so those skills become unfair and manipulative when used in a personal setting (Anderson, 2019).

Being Powerful vs. Demonstrating Authority

The exertion of power is not inherently good or bad, but it's extremely influential. People are more likely to follow and obey a powerful person, even if they ask for something unpleasant, difficult, or unethical. Simply exerting power can go a long way toward convincing other people to listen to you and do what you say.

When It's Persuasion—Demonstrating Authority

Invoking your authority is hardly an unethical thing to do, especially if you are a manager, parent, or other person whose authoritative presence provides a sense of order and security to other people. As long as you are not using your power to harm someone or put them in harm's way, there's nothing wrong with using your authority to change the behavior of those around you.

When It's Manipulation—Exerting Power

On the other hand, invoking authority over your friends, romantic partners, or even coworkers who are supposed to be your peers is manipulation. In this case, the 'authority' you're invoking is false, and is therefore being used to intimidate the other person into obeying you. However, even if you do have legitimate authority, it's still manipulative to use your power to harm someone else or force them to do something that you know is bad for them. Using your power to force someone to do something that compromises their core values or beliefs is also manipulative.

Mirroring vs. Building Rapport

Trying to put someone at ease is hardly a crime. In fact, this is an incredibly useful skill for people like therapists, police officers, and other people who work with those who may be emotionally volatile or distressed. Using persuasive techniques to put someone at ease is also a useful skill when meeting a stranger for the first time, or even going on a date with someone who is clearly very nervous. And this can be an invaluable skill in the face of conflict, whether it's with a stranger or someone you know.

When It's Persuasive—Building Rapport

Building rapport is the building blocks of professionalism. All professionals learn ways to make their clients, patients, customers, and employees feel at ease. One extremely powerful way to do this is to subtly mimic the other person's behaviors. When the other person subconsciously recognizes the similarities between your movements and theirs, they will automatically start to relax in your presence (Anderson, 2019).

When It's Manipulative—Mirroring

The only time this technique is manipulative is when you are trying to lull someone into a false sense of comfort. If that person has a good reason to feel angry, fearful, or agitated in your presence, using mirroring techniques to calm them down is manipulative.

Telling Stories vs. Creating Distractions

Metaphoric speech is an integral part of human communication. We often used stories, anecdotes, and metaphors to convey emotions, humor, and other nuances that we can't quite achieve with straightforward speech. Metaphoric language appeals to the brain's emotional center, making it much more influential than concrete language. This is why advertisements and sales pitches often include some kind of story—appealing to people on an emotional level is much more effective than simply listing the factual qualities of the product.

When It's Persuasion—Telling Stories

The world of marketing and advertisements uses the power of storytelling to its fullest persuasive effect. Think about it—a commercial that listed all the mechanical features of a washing machine wouldn't be nearly as interesting as a commercial involving a moving story about a family. Even if the story has little to do with the product or opinion being 'sold,' making your point

with a little anecdote or personal example will go a long way toward convincing people to agree with you.

When It's Manipulation—Creating Distractions

Politicians and lawyers are a few of the professional manipulators that have also mastered the art of the story. A politician may use one example of someone who was murdered by a black man to justify a racist policy. A lawyer may describe an altercation between a husband and wife to a courtroom with very little (or even no) evidence to back up the truth of those events. Even people who aren't racist will find themselves moved by the politician's story. Even if the judge throws out the lawyer's story as "circumstantial evidence," it was still heard by the jury, and therefore still has the power to influence their decision.

Lecturing vs. Fact-Burying

Contemporary speech advice is to keep things as short and concise as possible. But if you really want to persuade an audience, a long speech is actually the best way to go about it. The secret is to make your speech both long *and* interesting, something only a skilled public speaker can pull off successfully.

When It's Persuasive—Lecturing

Many of us have negative connotations with lectures. But a long, impassioned speech will almost always have much more of an emotional impact than a short, concise presentation. The long, compelling speech works better because it appeals to the audience's emotions. Even if they don't remember exactly what you said at the end of the speech, they'll remember feeling moved, and will therefore be more inclined to do what you want at the end of the presentation.

When It's Manipulative—Fact-Burying

Manipulators, however, can use the art of the impassioned speech to twist, distort, or outright omit factual information. The only reason to do this, of course, is if you know that the audience wouldn't agree with you if they knew the true story. Beware of presentations that are long and heart wrenching and contain no actual information about the product being pitched—there's probably something wrong with it. The same is true for political speeches that 'address' certain policies or current events without actually addressing any of

the facts, or even distorting the facts to fit that politician's political agenda.

This manipulation strategy is more common than you might think. In personal relationships, this often takes the form of sob stories that may or may not be true. Long-winded explanations that don't actually explain anything are another example of this technique at work. In both cases, the other person is almost always trying to lie, hide, or influence the other person to do something they wouldn't do if they knew the true story. In professional settings, this kind of technique most often finds its way into sales pitches and business presentations of faulty or unfinished products. Negotiators will use this technique to lure those across the table into a bad deal, and politicians use the power of impassioned speeches all the time to cover up the truth behind their more questionable policies or decisions.

Chapter 4: Emotional Manipulation

Serrano, J. P. (n.d.). *Greyscale photography of woman touching her eyes* [Photograph]. https://www.pexels.com/photo/adult-black-and-white-darkness-face-1161268/

All types of manipulation are detrimental, but there are certain manipulators that focus more on emotional than mental manipulation. Emotional manipulators focus their efforts on people that they are in close relationships with. This doesn't necessarily have to be an intimate or romantic relationship; it also includes relationships like close friendships and even familial ones. A manipulator will attempt to use emotional tactics to get what they want, no matter how catastrophic those manipulations can be.

Healthy relationships are built on understanding, trust, and mutual respect. The moment one of these areas is abused, the relationship starts to strain. If all of these areas are abused, the consequences prove that there was never a

relationship in the first place.

Emotional manipulators don't see a relationship with another person as a "give and take" part of life, but rather as a way to control another person and a way to gain what they desire. As with the Dark Triad personalities, there are people that would pursue these types of relationships in order to exploit the relationship or person in the relationship in order to gain what they wanted.

As with all sorts of manipulation, emotional manipulation will start subtly. Manipulators know that if they come on too strong with their ideals, they will chase their victims away. Successful manipulators start slowly and build their manipulative tactics as soon as their victims start to trust them. These subtle signs are difficult to identify, especially when they're happening to you. It's easy for you to read about these types of manipulations and exploits, but actually identifying them can take time, and once you do it's almost too late.

One of the greatest problems here is that people feel guilty after they realize that they've been manipulated or coerced to do something that they don't agree with, and it's normally this guilt that gives the manipulator a greater hold over you. Even though there is a sense of guilt involved with this type of manipulation, it's important to notice the signs and break away while there's still time to do so. That said, a manipulator is never going to give up one of their victims without a fight. The breakaway process will be a tremendously painful ordeal because they will use more manipulative techniques to keep you in their lives.

Even though their tactics may be subtle, there are 14 dominant signs that are indicative of an emotionally manipulative relationship. Throughout this chapter, I will refer to the people that are manipulated by a manipulator as 'subjects.' This doesn't imply that people that are manipulated are mindless robots and can't think for themselves, but they are more inclined to be manipulated by the manipulator's schemes because of previous interactions with the manipulator.

Emotional Manipulators Will Ensure That They Keep The Advantage

I. (n.d.). *A person drowns underwater* [Photograph].

https://unsplash.com/photos/rX12B5uX7QM
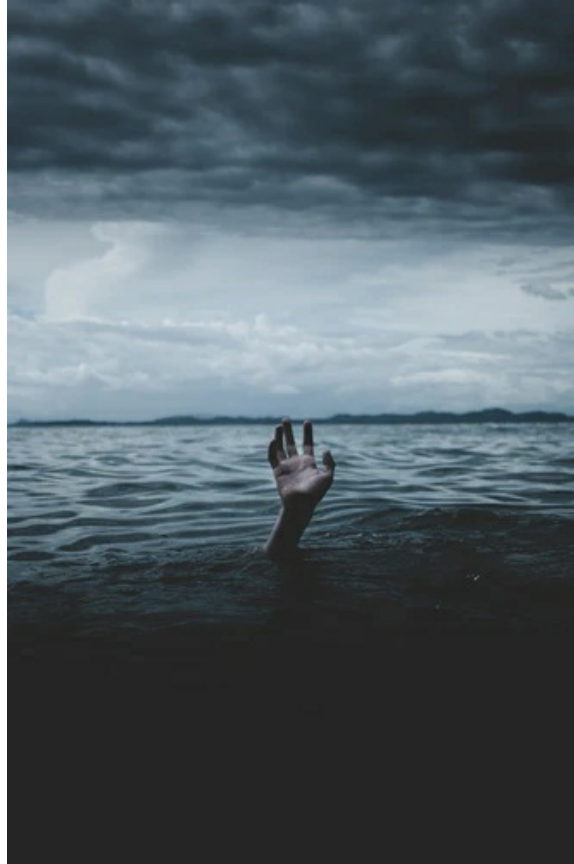
The moment a person is in an environment that they're familiar with, they will act more confidently than they would in an unfamiliar environment. Manipulators will use physical locations to their advantage. Known physical locations allow for a significant amount of confidence and clarity when deciding what to do next. This may seem like a foreign concept, but if a person drives the same route every day to their work, they will eventually become very comfortable with it. After a while, they won't really think about the trip itself because they are so familiar with the terrain. This level of comfort allows for an additional amount of confidence.

Any type of emotional manipulator will only work in locations that they're comfortable with because they have the opportunity to "own the space" that they're in, and this leaves everyone else at a disadvantage. This means that people would rather stay in their own home, office, or other familiar environments instead of them coming over to you. Staying in a familiar

environment will boost their confidence, and it will give them the advantage over others that they're trying to manipulate.

Emotional Manipulators Want to Get Too Close Too Fast

Emotional manipulators aren't always the most patient of beings. This means that once they focus on a specific target, they will want to develop a close relationship far too quickly. They tend to want to accelerate the "getting to know you" or "going out for coffee dates" stage because you appeal to the type of personality that they're pursuing.

This action may seem like it's easily identifiable, but there's a trick involved here. Emotional manipulators use this tactic to share vulnerabilities about themselves to make their victims trust them more and feel more special. Some people are wary of this type of behavior, but there are several others that do fall for this type of "vulnerable response." Emotional manipulators are experts at spotting people that are vulnerable themselves. Once the manipulator starts to share their own vulnerabilities with their subjects, then the trust starts to develop.

Once this trust starts to develop, the subject starts to share their own secrets and vulnerabilities with the manipulator. This is exactly what the manipulator wants because these pieces of sensitive information can be used later against their subjects.

Emotional Manipulators Will Let You Speak First

This may seem counterintuitive for manipulators to let their subjects speak first, but they allow for this to gain the necessary information. This can occur in business relationships and personal ones. When a person wants to establish control, then they'll spend enough asking probing questions and listening carefully to their subject's responses.

Manipulators want you to share your concerns and thoughts early on to know

exactly where they stand with you and how they can manipulate you with that information later on. Gaining information is invaluable for the manipulator because they'll be able to persuade your decisions when the trust starts to develop.

Emotional Manipulators Will Start to Twist the Facts

Once they've developed trust with their subjects, then emotional manipulators will start to twist the facts on the information that was provided to them. This can start as early as middle school, when children are trying to make friends and are bullied repeatedly by opening up to the wrong types of peers. Unfortunately, this doesn't end in adolescence. Since many of the traits that produce Dark Triad personalities will start to develop at a young age, they'll start to develop in early adolescence and even before.

Emotional manipulators will intentionally twist facts and conjure up lies about certain people at certain times. This tactic allows them to confuse their subjects and cover up the ever-forming doubt in their minds. Since the mind will naturally try to protect itself, it will start to pick up on problems associated with what the manipulator is saying to them. But the twisting of facts and telling of exaggerations are used to confuse their subjects.

They will use any misstatements and misguided information in order to keep their subjects loyal to them. The correctly placed piece of exaggeration is used to draw their subjects back to them, which helps them replace the growing doubt in their subjects' minds with the lies that they're weaving for them.

Emotional Manipulators Advance to Intellectual and Bureaucratic Bullying

Manipulators will make their subjects feel intellectually inferior to

themselves. There are times where they will publicly humiliate them in front of others and break their ideas down by asking enough questions to create enough doubt. Many manipulators will claim to be experts in many fields and will attempt to impose their 'knowledge' on their subjects.

Some manipulators will also attempt bureaucratic bullying, especially in business settings. They will go out of their way to make the lives of certain people very difficult in their work settings. This is an unfortunate problem that occurs when certain manipulators try sexual advances on certain people, and then the advances are refused, the manipulator can resort to bureaucratic bullying.

Both intellectual and bureaucratic bullying are common in business settings and can become problematic for anyone that doesn't fall into a manipulator's schemes. This can cause increased difficulty the longer the person resists the manipulator's advances.

Emotional Manipulators Will Make You Feel Sorry for Voicing Problems and Your Concerns

Being able to voice your concerns and bring up problems that you have noticed creates a healthy platform to solve problems in any type of relationship—business or personal. Healthily confident individuals are happy to accept constructive criticism because it can help them improve as a person or fix a problem. This isn't the case when it comes to emotional manipulators.

Emotional manipulators don't accept anyone voicing their concerns, especially not people that they're close to or involved with. If you bring up concerns or ask questions, emotional manipulators will disregard you and may even respond aggressively to make you doubt your concerns.

These types of manipulators are also prone to act in a completely vulnerable way to make you feel guilty about voicing certain things that you've noticed. There isn't a set way of how they may operate. Some manipulators will be combative, while others will rely on their overexaggerated vulnerability to make you feel that bringing up certain concerns was negative and hurtful. These types of scenarios normally only arise in more concrete relationships.

Some manipulators may try this tactic with people that they've just met, especially in a business setting, but those are seen as risky behaviors because they don't know how the other person may respond, and it may turn out very negatively for the manipulator.

Manipulators generally rely on the fact that they can use these types of manipulations on people that they know because they understand deep pieces of information about specific people. Once the manipulator knows how to make an individual person doubt themselves, then they will quickly rely on questioning them when they oppose the manipulator.

Emotional Manipulators Will Diminish Your Own Problems in Comparison with Their Own

One important factor about emotional manipulators is that they don't like to share the spotlight of their own glory. Even though manipulators are good listeners when they need to gain information about you, they hate sharing the attention that they feel should be reserved for themselves.

If you try to mention your problems to them, they will almost always "one up" you by invalidating your problems and mentioning that theirs are significantly worse. Once they've invalidated your problems, you would be forced to focus primarily on their problems.

This tactic is employed by the manipulator to break the confidence and self-worth of their subjects. It may start out as merely annoying, but it can develop into severe problems later on if one isn't able to ever voice their problems without them being invalidated or ignored.

Emotional Manipulators Will Act Like Martyrs

Emotional manipulators will regularly offer their assistance to people, but once they're busy helping out, they'll almost always start complaining about it right away. They will complain that you wouldn't have been able to do it without them, but they'll be more of a burden than anything else. The real

reason for this tactic is mainly just to instill a significant amount of guilt into their subjects. This may not work on everyone because many people will start disregarding the manipulator if they seem weak or like a burden, but there are other subjects that are heavily affected by the guilt that the manipulator causes them to feel. The manipulator will choose carefully who they can use this type of tactic with, and will normally reserve it for the gentler and more sensitive subjects.

Emotional Manipulators Are Never 'Serious' When They're Mean or Rude

One aspect of manipulators is that they're always overly critical of others. This can be performed in ways of gossip or direct conversation. Manipulators will say hurtful or rude things and disguise them as humor or sarcasm. The problem here is that the effects of these comments do break others down emotionally.

Unfortunately, manipulators plan for this to happen. They break their subjects down and add a meaningful compliment every so often to keep their subjects more reliant on them. The problem here is that research has found that more than 30% of all suicide attempts are directly attributed to verbal degradation and abuse (Suicide Prevention Resource Center, 2013).

This is why verbal abuse is such a dangerous form of abuse. Manipulators know that once they break their victims down, they will be much easier to manipulate. Carefully timed hurtful comments will break a person's spirit, and this allows the manipulator to build it in any way that they like.

Emotional Manipulators Never Take Accountability

Many, if not all, manipulators have an inflated sense of self-worth. Like with Dark Triad personalities, they need praise from others to keep their elevated sense of ego. The other problem here is that with this elevated sense of ego, they are unable to take accountability for their failures. They are experts at

passing the blame onto someone else.

They will always try to make others feel guilty for their failures. This means that they have extra opportunities to break others down regardless of what they've done. This is problematic in business settings, but is worsened in intimate relationships. If one person in a couple is always placing the blame onto their partner, the subject of this type of degradation will start to feel the effects very soon. It's a dangerous and slippery slope once manipulators start to use this type of manipulative method because it does cause severe strain on the person that's always taking the blame. Once they see how easy it is to use this tactic, they will continually do so until they change the person according to what they believe is the right type of subject for them.

Emotional Manipulators Are Always 'Better' Than You

No matter what anyone does, the manipulator will always believe that they are better than the people around them. This comes across when the manipulator will revert your emotional 'positivity' to negativity. Manipulators don't appreciate it when other people are happier than they are. This means that they will use any tactic necessary to bring their subjects down a few notches in their happiness. When the subject of a manipulator is happier than they ought to be, then the manipulator will bring up factors that will either upset their subject or reduce the level of their happiness.

Manipulators need to be better than their subjects. Unfortunately, this means that manipulators will find ways to belittle or upset their subjects. The manipulator will find ways to always be superior to their subjects. They can be sneaky with how they portray certain messages and may seem uplifting at first, but hide hurtful messages in what they're saying. The manipulator needs to be better than or struggling more than others. They will always need to be better than their subjects, regardless of the information given to them.

Emotional Manipulators Will Always Criticize You

Emotional manipulators will never be truly happy with what their subjects give them. No matter how hard people work to appease the manipulator, the manipulator will never be truly happy with the outcomes. The reason for this is because the manipulator needs to undermine the confidence of his/her subjects no matter what they do. They will criticize their subjects and make them doubt their confidence. This allows the correct amount of doubt to set in so that they can implant other ideas later on.

Manipulators will criticize their subjects in both positive and negative moments. When their subjects have experienced something positive in their lives, the manipulator will always congratulate them, but with a sort of 'half-sincerity.' This half-sincerity is then quickly followed up by something that they have done better.

On the other hand, manipulators are also prone to exploiting their subjects' heartache. When something negative happens to one of their subjects, the manipulator will bring up something that is much worse in their own lives. This doesn't allow the subject enough time to fully mourn their loss before the manipulator makes them feel guilty about it.

Emotional Manipulators Will Use Your Insecurities and Feelings Against You

Since one of the main factors that manipulators use against their subjects is trust, they will use all of the secrets and insecurities that have been shared with them at a later date. This means that they will gossip about their subjects to start rumors. These rumors will ultimately hurt their subjects and make them more reliant on their manipulators.

Once the rumors have been spread, the manipulator will start to use "guilt tripping" and "silent treatment" tactics to ensure that their subjects have to remain completely reliant on them. They may resort to passive-aggressive tactics and even ultimatums to keep their subjects in check. There are manipulators that have been known to coerce their subjects into staying close to them under the threat of self-harm and even suicide.

Emotional Manipulators Will Leave You Questioning Your Own Sanity

Emotional manipulation is also known as gaslighting and is a remarkably dangerous way of manipulating people. Gaslighting makes people question their sanity (Legg, 2018). Manipulators will use this tactic to intentionally confuse their subjects. They would relay certain information to them and then either deny it later or contradict their subjects later on.

This type of behavior is terribly dangerous because it not only makes the manipulator's subjects question their sanity, but it also increases their thoughts about suicide. The cases of suicide are on the rise because of this type of psychological torment (Suicide Prevention Resource Center, 2013).

Gaslighting normally occurs in intimate relationships, because of the toxically manipulative hold that some people have on their partners. In the last decade, the increase of suicides because of toxic relationships has been on the rise. Once the subjects start to question their own sanity because of gaslighting and severe emotional tormenting, then the risk of suicide increases drastically, no matter what type of person the subject was before (Suicide Prevention Resource Center, 2013). There have been several online forums reaching out and warning people of the risk of gaslighting and toxic relationships because many young people have resorted to ending their own lives because of the torment that they endured by the manipulator(s) in their lives.

Ways to Protect Yourself from Emotional Manipulators

Getting to the place to understand and know that someone is emotionally manipulating you may take time. Most people can quickly notice it when it isn't happening to them, but manipulators are very careful with their subjects in the beginning stages. Since they are trying to build trust and rapport, they will be wonderfully loving, empathetic, trustworthy, and patient in the beginning stages of the relationship. The signs of manipulation are subtle in the beginning but evolve over time.

There are many noticeable signs that occur as the manipulation starts to develop, but once the subject starts to fall for those manipulations, they will grow in severity and frequency. Most of the time, a person will realize that these types of behaviors are actually hurting them and will want to get out. The moment they start spending some time away from the manipulator and with other friends and family, they start to realize how detrimental the manipulations have been to their psyches.

Once a good break is made from the manipulator and reality starts to sink in again, it's important to find a way to start to heal from the manipulative effects. The first action that needs to be taken is **creating a safe distance from them**. Manipulators don't take it well when one of their subjects starts to distance themselves from them, and they will resort to many of the tactics mentioned in this chapter to try to draw their subjects back to them.

When this starts to happen, which it will, it's important to **apologize for your part in the relationship and move on.** This will, most likely, be one-sided and the apology won't be reciprocated by the manipulator. It's important not to dwell on what's happened in the relationship and try to avoid the manipulator as much as possible. This isn't going to be an easy task, but it's necessary.

Some people are tempted to reciprocate the harmful strategies that the manipulators performed on them, but this is a dangerous decision to make. It's best **not to beat them at their own game**. It's important to know the strategies and tactics that the manipulators use, but it's important not to get re-involved with the tactics that they're trying to use. It's simply not worth it.

Finally, it's important to **set boundaries.** Once the manipulator realizes that he/she is losing their control over someone, they will try to accelerate the types of tactics that they used in the past. This is difficult in both intimate and business relationships because the manipulator will use any of your personal details to get what they want. This becomes difficult, but boundaries will need to be set, even though it's going to be very difficult in the beginning stages while the manipulator is still fighting to keep hold of the subject.

Chapter 5: Simple Strategies to Successfully Read Body Language

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https://www.pexels.com/photo/selective-focus-photograph-of-man-wearing-gray-suit-jacket-1138903/

Not all communication happens with words. In fact, there's a great deal of research to suggest that *most* human communication happens not with language, but with our bodies (Bukowski, 2019).

The study of body language has roots that go all the way back to ancient Greece. The respected physician Hippocrates proposed that all human

behavior can be loosely categorized into four main personality types, or 'temperaments.' The four temperaments are sanguine, choleric, melancholy, and phlegmatic. According to Hippocrates, sanguine people are very extroverted and social; phlegmatic people are very thoughtful, relaxed, meticulous, and self-absorbed; choleric people are very ambitious, strong-willed, and motivated; and melancholy people are very creative, intelligent, considerate, and empathetic. In addition to carefully mapping personality types, Hippocrates also spent a great deal of time studying the behaviors of each temperament, determining how they interact with others on a nonverbal level.

We no longer divide people according to their temperaments, but the study of body language and nonverbal communication is very much alive today. Though your brain is constantly interpreting the nonverbal signals sent to you by other people on a subconscious level, learning how to read body language consciously will give you an edge when it comes to interpersonal relationships. Learning how to read body language gives you the ability to not only receive nonverbal signals, but to actively interpret them in the moment. It can also help you to analyze people that you're meeting for the first time in order to make the right first impression, analyze your own behaviors around others, and spot when someone else is lying, among other things. Perhaps most importantly, understanding how body language works gives you more control over the subconscious signals that you are sending out to other people.

Being able to read someone's body language gives you a peek into their subconscious. Our behavior and our emotions are deeply interconnected, and our true feelings can come out in even the slightest of movements or gestures. Normally, these gestures happen without us even realizing it—they are automatic manifestations of emotions that are happening on a subconscious level. By paying attention to the way someone moves their body, you can learn what their true feelings are, whether those are feelings of fear, lust, euphoria, etc. Though everyone's body language is slightly unique (just as everyone's speech patterns are slightly unique), there are certain universal expressions that all humans show in one form or another. These expressions are instinctual and are part of the way that we are wired as a species to communicate with one another.

If you truly want to understand another person, then learning the basics of

body language is essential. Verbal communication is incredibly limited. And, of course, verbal communication is very intentional. For example, someone can tell you that they're not attracted to you, but a slight curve of the lips or leaning toward you when they speak tells a different story. Our true thoughts and feelings can be found throughout our bodies, from our eye movements to the way we position our feet (Cooper, 2019).

The biggest mistake that many people make when they first begin learning body language is poring over lists of symbols and believing that all they have to do is memorize which gestures mean what. But reading body language is a holistic discipline. Depending on what else is going on in the body, a raised eyebrow or crossed legs can mean a number of different things. Every gesture should be studied in relation to every other gesture, and by looking at the whole picture, you'll begin to gain insight into the true nature of the other person's feelings.

The study of body language has become more popular in recent years, and can now be found in as many disciplines as law enforcement, parenting, and even couples therapy. But body language is an extremely old form of communication, much older than language. Before humans spoke, we communicated with each other exclusively with our bodies. Though our brains now have the capacity for language, our ability to communicate nonverbally has not disappeared. Verbal communication has added new depth and possibility to the conversations and connections we are capable of having with one another, but it's nearly impossible for humans to communicate through words alone. This is why conversations over the phone are never quite as emotionally satisfying as speaking with someone in person.

With our bodies, we are constantly negotiating unconscious power dynamics with the people around us. Body language conveys dominance or submission, confidence or insecurity, attraction or dismissiveness. As such, our body language deeply and subtly influences the ways in which other people interact with us. Regardless of what we're saying, our body language can signal to others that we find them sexually attractive, that we're open, friendly, dangerous, scared, timid, or powerful. The way that other people behave around us is just as much in response to these nonverbal cues as it is to the words we're saying. Becoming more aware of how your own body is positioned in certain conversations can give you insight into your own

subconscious thoughts and feelings. More importantly, it gives you the opportunity to change your circumstances by making subtle adjustments to your body language. If you want to appear powerful or confident, then body language can teach you how to send those signals to other people.

The study of body language begins with studying your own body. Once you've become familiar with the way that your body moves and behaves in certain situations, you can start to pick up those signals in other people. Once you've become comfortable both reading yourself and others, you can start to make intentional adjustments to your body language to convey what you want to convey to others, rather than allowing your subconscious to sabotage your communications (Cooper, 2019).

Learning to analyze other people's behavior will open up an entirely new world of interpersonal communication. Learning to read body language means understanding that no behavior is purposeless, but that every movement has some kind of conscious or subconscious message behind it. The ability to interpret these messages gives you a kind of social dominance over others, because you are able to actively process messages that the other person may not even realize they're sending. On the other hand, it can also give you a great deal more empathy for the people around you, as you'll be able to see the true feelings of insecurity behind shows of bravado or anxiety behind a mask of politeness. Depending on who you are as a person, learning to read body language can make you extremely dangerous or extremely compassionate. Either way, it gives you the ability to navigate communications with full awareness and intention. You will be able to communicate much more effectively with others and plan your responses strategically. You will also have more confidence in social situations, as being able to interpret body language eliminates uncertainty. You won't have to worry or wonder whether or not the other person likes you or is angry with you—you'll know based on the way they've positioned their body. You'll be able to sense much more quickly if someone is trustworthy, as you'll be able to tell when they are lying to you. Rather than responding to the words someone is saying, you'll be able to respond according to their true feelings. This will prove your ability to both resolve and avoid conflict. It will decrease the percentage of misunderstandings and miscommunications you have with important people in your life. Mastering the art of body language will have a positive effect on your reputation, your social success, and even

your productivity.

Body Language 101

The Face—Lips

The face is the most important part of the body in any communication. The mouth and lips, in particular, can give a great deal of insight into a person's thoughts and feelings. When the lips are drawn inward towards the mouth, that person is usually hiding something. They may be keeping a secret, or have something that they are apprehensive about sharing with you. The act of pulling the lips inward is a physical manifestation of the person's efforts to keep their thoughts to themselves.

Most of us understand that, when the corners of the lips turn down, the other person is feeling sad or down. But some people's lips come to rest in this position most of the time. If that's the case, this person is likely experiencing some inner turmoil or going through a period of grief. Those who are prone to depression or negativity sometimes seem to constantly wear a frown. If someone strikes you as particularly down or sad, study their lips the next time you talk with them. This can confirm for you if they're truly sad, or if there's another explanation for their low energy levels (Cooper, 2019).

Biting the lips is an indicator of anxiety or discomfort. When someone begins biting their lips, it's almost a sure sign of stress or nervousness. This kind of action is sometimes called 'stimming,' and provides the person with a minimal amount of pain to distract them from their anxiety.

The Face—Nose

The nose is a surprisingly expressive part of the face, often revealing signs of aggression, displeasure, or even deep thought. People who are lost in thought will often touch their noses. Slightly pinching the nose can sometimes indicate frustration or that the person is working through a particularly difficult problem.

The nose can also signal feelings of aggression. Understanding these signs can give you a much-needed heads-up before someone initiates conflict. Flaring of the nostrils often indicates anger. This is caused by a surge of

adrenaline as the other person starts to physically prepare for a fight, whether verbal or physical. If you notice this, that's a clear indicator that it's time to de-escalate the conversation, no matter what your own feelings may be in the moment. You can always revisit the point when the other person has had a chance to calm down.

The Face—Eyebrows

The eyebrows and forehead are another very expressive part of the face. Both eyebrows raised often signals surprise or astonishment. A wrinkled forehead often indicates that the other person doesn't believe what you're telling them. This, however, doesn't necessarily mean that they think you're lying. They may just be skeptical or surprised by the information that you're giving them, and need time to process it before they can fully accept it.

The eyebrows themselves are expressive, and doubly so when paired with the eyes. Our eyebrows are extremely flexible, which gives them the ability to convey many different emotional states. When the brows draw together, this can indicate shock or disbelief. One raised eyebrow is another way to signal that the other person doesn't fully believe what you're telling them. Two raised eyebrows indicates surprise or astonishment, especially if the mouth is open.

Lowered brows typically indicate confusion or irritation. They can also, however, indicate intense concentration. In some situations, lowered brows may even signal disrespect. This is especially true if the lowered brows are paired with an aggressive tilting back of the head (Cooper, 2019).

You've probably seen men raise and lower their eyebrows in cartoons when looking at a woman they're attracted to. This comic and effective way to signal attraction to an audience is something we associate more with cartoons than with real life. Believe it or not, we do something similar (though admittedly less exaggerated) when we see someone that we like. A rapid raising and lowering of the eyebrows can signal positive recognition. If you bump into an old friend at a coffee shop, for example, pay attention to the way your and their eyebrows move when you first recognize each other.

The eyes are extremely expressive in their own right, and so require their own section for interpretation. But around the eyes, there's a great deal happening in our faces to convey hidden meanings and express inner

emotions. However, below the face, there's also much to be read in the rest of the body.

The Body—Position and Posture

Leaning towards your partner when engaged in conversation is an indication of interest. This can also be a sign of attraction, especially when on a date. When all parts of the body are facing toward your partner, this is another sign that you are interested in and/or attracted to them. This includes the fingers, toes, knees, and nose. When the legs lean toward a love interest while sitting down, this can indicate the desire for a sexual encounter.

Hunched shoulders often indicate sadness or anxiety. In extreme cases, they can also indicate feelings of fear. This is an instinctive move that the body makes to protect itself against perceived danger. A drooping of the head and shoulders can indicate embarrassment. Since adults are often conditioned to hide feelings of embarrassment or anxiety, this drooping can sometimes be the only outward indicator of these kinds of feelings. Embarrassment, anxiety, and fear all typically present themselves through similar gestures and postures. Determining which emotion is really being conveyed requires a study of the person's facial expressions, as well as the context in which these gestures are being made. Curling the body inward makes you feel safe and protected. Whether we're embarrassed by a mistake or experiencing intense social anxiety, we reflexively begin to curl up in order to escape painful feelings of exposure or vulnerability. For those who aren't aggressive by nature, this is also a common response to conflict or unexpected confrontation. Unfortunately, this can also signal submission to the other person, inspiring them to become even more aggressive. If you feel yourself physically shrinking in the face of conflict, force yourself to stand tall and watch how quickly the other person backs off (Cooper, 2019).

The chest can be an expressive part of the body when it comes to flirtation and sexual communications. Men and masculine people will often throw out their chests to indicate strength and confidence. Women may do the same to make their breasts more visible. They may also turn their chests slightly to give their partner a better view of their figure.

As with the shoulders, curving the chest inward is a sign of fear or submission. This is a gesture that we see in many species of animals as a way of showing submission to a stronger animal. This is not a gesture of weakness

or insecurity—rather, it is a sign that they wish to avoid conflict. In humans, this gesture works in a similar way.

When you find yourself engaged in conflict with another person, pay attention to how your body reacts. If you feel your chest start to curve inward, try squaring your shoulders and force yourself to throw your chest out instead. This will be an extremely scary move, as it will make you feel exposed and vulnerable, but you may be surprised at how effective it is in making the other person leave you alone.

Reading the Eyes

The eyes are perhaps our most powerful tools of nonverbal communication, and learning to read the eyes can give you a great deal of insight into another person's mind. There's a reason that eyes are often called the "windows to the soul." Our eyes are directly connected to the brain, getting one of the brain's 12 major nerves all to themselves (this is the optic nerve). A simple glance or involuntary movement can tell you a great deal about how someone perceives themselves, or perceives you. Irritation, lust, doubt, attraction, and a long list of other emotions can be easily detected in the eyes if you know what to look for. Reading eye movements is a bit more advanced than more basic movements of the body, but with practice, you can learn much more from the eyes than from the rest of the body put together. Observing the eyes is how you determine whether or not someone is lying to you. It's also the primary way that we signal and determine sexual attraction.

Rapid blinking is often an indicator of stress or agitation. This is especially true when the blinking is accompanied by sweating or trembling. On the other hand, rapid blinking can also be a sign of arrogance. This is especially true of people in authority positions when speaking to someone they consider to be beneath them. For example, an arrogant manager may blink more rapidly when speaking to an employee than when speaking to a visiting corporate executive.

Sustained, direct eye contact can mean many things, but when it's paired with slightly lowered eyelids, this is often a sign of sexual attraction. Sometimes a person will even lower their head slightly while still gazing up at the other person through their lashes. When this kind of gesture is paired with dilated

pupils, you can almost guarantee that the other person finds you sexually attractive.

The nystagmus' is a measurement of how long it takes the eye to focus after a period of movement or disorientation. The average person's nystagmus is 14 seconds—anything longer than this may indicate trouble focusing or some kind of attention deficit disorder. One way to diagnose ADHD and other attention disorders in children is to ask them to spin around in a chair for a few seconds, then stop suddenly and look up at the ceiling. The eyes will move rapidly for several seconds, but the faster they stabilize, the better ability the child has to focus. If the eyes take longer than 14 seconds to stabilize, this is often seen as an indicator of an attention disorder. Some therapists take this activity to the next level, asking the child to perform this exercise on a weekly or monthly basis while gently encouraging them to see how fast they can focus on a certain spot on the ceiling. Overtime, the child's nystagmus will start to decrease. This, in turn, can improve the child's ability to focus and eliminate distractions when out in the real world. You, too, can determine if someone you're interacting with is easily distracted by noticing how long it takes their eyes to stabilize after moments of instability. Observe how long it takes the other person after spinning around suddenly or getting off of a roller coaster ride (Cooper, 2019).

Pairing the movements of the eye with movements in the rest of the body will help you to determine the trustworthiness of the person you're talking to. The face, in particular, often contains the signs of deception or truthfulness. One extremely subtle indicator to look for is the time it takes for the other person to shift expressions. Studies have found that the average person holds any given facial expression for between one and four seconds. When a person is lying or acting, however, they tend to hold their expressions slightly longer. Sometimes the symmetrical alignment of their expressions can also be skewed. When someone is expressing a genuine emotion or being honest, their feelings will be evenly distributed throughout the face, with all of the different parts expressing the same message. But there will be inconsistencies in the face of a liar. The eyebrows and lips may be saying one thing, but the eyes are saying another. Good liars often have excellent command over their facial expressions, but don't have as much control over their eye movements or posture (Cooper, 2019).

Rapid body and/or eye movements are often an indicator of nervousness.

However, sudden movements in the body or the eyes aren't always signs of anxiety. In fact, it's quite normal for one body part or another to be in constant motion. If someone is very, very still, on the other hand, this is an indicator of extreme fear or rage. When someone is preparing to fight or to flee a dangerous situation, their brain automatically quiets any excess movement in the body as a way to conserve energy. Their brain switches into high alert, ready to make any movements that are necessary for survival. This is why, when caught in a lie, people tend to freeze for a moment. Once their lie has been exposed, their body goes into fight or flight mode. This is one way to know that you've caught someone in a lie, even if they recover quickly.

When looking for deception, it's also important to pay attention to the hands. When confronted, a liar will often bring their hands to their mouths. Sometimes they will bring their hands to their throats. A hand to the chest can sometimes indicate righteous anger at being called a liar, but it can also be a gesture of guilt as well. These gestures are automatic gestures of protection when faced with exposure. Since they have no intention of telling the truth, they automatically reach to cover the major areas of communication. Verbal cues are also important indicators of deception. Excessive repeating or stuttering is often an indication of nervousness. Continuous clearing of the throat is also an indicator that the person is untrustworthy.

But the eyes show the clearest signs of trustworthiness. Generally speaking, the more dilated the pupils are, the more relaxed the other person is. When looking at something or someone we love, our pupils will dilate. During a conversation, a key indicator that the other person is losing interest is a restriction of the pupils. Pupils are also what tell you if someone is lying to you. Excessive darting of the eyes or avoidance of eye contact altogether are signs of deceit. A person may be giving off all the other signals of aggression or confidence, but if they refuse to make eye contact, then you know these are just postures. True aggression, confidence, and attraction almost always come with consistent eye contact.

The right side of the human brain controls auditory processing, big-picture ideas, decision making, and creative thinking. When a person's eyes suddenly move downward and to the right, this is an indicator that they are trying to create a mental picture of something, and potentially a sign that they are inventing a story. When the eyes are in this position, something is typically

being created, though whether that creation is an outright lie, an embellishment, or a recreation of a true story will depend on the context and other cues from the rest of the body. When someone is lying, however, their eyes will continually return to this position throughout the conversation. This is because they are likely in the process of envisioning something that didn't actually happen, rather than trying to recall a true memory (Cooper, 2019).

When it comes to spotting deception, the eyes are not the only cue to look for. A person's breathing tends to speed up when they are lying. Sometimes their breathing also becomes heavier or louder. The shoulders and elbows tend to remain very rigid and slightly raised. Think about the way that cartoon villains are often depicted when they are caught in the act. This posture of raised shoulders and stiff elbows is just a slightly exaggerated version of the truth. Raised shoulders of any kind are a defensive posture. The position of the hands is also an indicator of a person's trustworthiness. Open palms often signal feelings of relaxation, attraction, and honesty. When a person is lying, their palms tend to face downward. Some liars may cross their arms or fold their hands. These are all defensive postures taken when someone feels the possibility of exposure or vulnerability. Though just one of these gestures isn't enough to prove deceit, if you see many of these gestures happening together, it's best to be cautious around that person.

Chapter 6: Hypnosis

G.I.A.L.L.O. (n.d.-a). *Assorted silver-colored pocket watch lot selective focus* [Photograph]. https://www.pexels.com/photo/assorted-silver-colored-pocket-watch-lot-selective-focus-photo-859895/

Hypnosis is one of the most popular topics in dark psychology, and although many people don't fully understand the effects of it, most people have heard the term. It's important to understand that hypnosis isn't a form of magic, and even though it seems very impressive on television, it isn't something that can work on just anyone.

Hypnosis is a mental state that allows a person to move into a trance-like condition where they are more susceptible to suggestibility with increased concentration and attention. Hypnosis may seem slightly contradictory because it appears as a sleep-like state, but it enhances attention. This is because with this increased attention, a person's critical thinking skills will be

diminished and the mind's processes for making vivid fantasies will increase. Anyone within a hypnotic state may seem sleepy or even in a state of a deep sleep, but they're actually in a state of hyper-awareness. There may be many misconceptions and myths, but there are two theory groups regarding hypnosis that can show that it is a very real process.

The first theory regarding hypnosis is **the altered state theory.** Those who believe in this theory believe that hypnosis is a state of mind that is altered similarly to a trance. This type of state allows the participant to have their consciousness slightly altered in order to experience a somewhat different awareness.

The second theory regarding hypnosis is **the non-state theory**. Followers of this type of theory believe that people who are hypnotized don't enter another state of consciousness, and rather that the hypnotized participant is working with the hypnotist as they guide them along a path of enacting an imaginative role.

There isn't any conclusive evidence of which one is accurate because there are still many people that believe that hypnosis doesn't actually work. However, research has found that guiding someone into a hypnotic state can bring about deepened levels of concentration with remarkable amounts of suggestibility. This can allow hypnotized participants to find repressed memories, but it can also allow the hypnotist to work in the mind of the participant because they are so open to suggestibility (Smith, 2014).

Hypnosis is much more likely to work on participants that allow it. Hypnotizing someone that doesn't want to be hypnotized is very difficult and highly unlikely. When a participant is open to hypnotism, then they drop the mental barrier and allow the hypnotist to take them on a safe journey. This requires a sense of trust. In the cases of hypnotizing complete strangers without them being aware of it, it can be a remarkably difficult action to accomplish. When hypnotists are looking for susceptible people who might be hypnotized, they look for younger participants who are still highly impressionable, or they look for participants who are open to hypnotic suggestion through other means.

People aren't always mentally guarded and may be more open to hypnotic suggestibility. This drop in mental guarding can occur because of everyday distractions, deep thought, and even tiredness. Some hypnotists employ a

confusion tactic right before they introduce their underlying suggestion. The momentary confusion allows the participant's mind to confuse its critical thought patterns just enough for a suggestion to be implanted.

There are multiple ways that a hypnotist will be able to open this suggestibility in their subjects. It's much easier in willing participants to lead them into hypnotic suggestibility because they are openly understanding what is about to happen. In unwilling participants, the hypnotist needs to rely on confusion tactics for them to drop their mental guard and open their suggestibility. These confusion tactics include distractive gestures while implanting certain key phrases. These distractive gestures make the mind of the participant focus more on the gestures than the words that are being said, but their minds are still trying to process the words that are being said to them. This confuses the mind and allows the seeds of suggestibility to take root.

Regardless of whether the participants are willing or unwilling, the beginning process of hypnotism is known as hypnotic induction.

Hypnotic Induction

Korpa, J. R. (n.d.). *Free nature* [Photograph].

It was first believed that hypnotic induction was synonymous with putting someone into a trance. As the understanding of hypnosis has developed, there has been a change in opinion on the theory of hypnotic induction. Pure hypnotic induction is rather seen as a method to heighten the participant's expectations of the hypnosis journey in willing hypnotic inductions.

Induction normally occurs by gently informing the participant about what is going to happen and what sort of journey that they're going to take. This helps the participants focus on the right direction and move along the correct steps for a successful hypnotic journey.

This step is ignored when attempted on unwilling participants, and the hypnotist will attempt to use confusion or distractions as a form of hypnotic induction. The difference between hypnotizing willing and unwilling participants is that the former is based on focus, and although subjectivity comes into play, there is little confusion involved in this type of hypnotism.

Attempts to hypnotize unwilling participants will need to employ different tactics to confuse a person's critical thinking enough to implant certain suggestions. Willing participants are aware of that type of suggestive state and are more open to the positive effects surrounding the hypnotism itself.

For willing participants, there are several known hypnotic induction methods that can move someone into a hypnotic state but one of the most effective methods is Braid's eye-fixation induction method (Braid, 2013).

This method was developed by James Braid, a surgeon and natural philosopher that practiced in the mid-19th century. Braid became very interested in the theory of hypnotism and found that there were several ways that people could be induced into a hypnotic journey to help them focus on certain areas of their minds. Braid fully believed that therapeutic hypnosis could be used to treat functional disorders of the nervous system. That said, although he believed that it would be a valuable remedy, it wouldn't be able to replace other forms of treatment. He knew that hypnosis wouldn't be able to remove any value from medicine itself, nor did he wish for it to replace any branch of cognitive treatment. He merely understood that there was potentially great value in hypnosis and it could very well be used to aid in traditional medical practices.

To employ the technique that Braid invented, one will need to have a willing participant either seated or lying down in a comfortable position. Since hypnosis can be potentially unsettling to some people, it's important to make them feel as safe and secure as possible.

Once the participant is in a comfortable position, any brightly colored object that reflects light easily can be used to start the induction process. While holding the bright object (bright enough to irritate the eyes, but not bright enough to cause retinal damage or extreme discomfort), bring it up and hold it between eight and 15 inches away from the participant's forehead. Holding the object in line with the forehead or just above it will create the desired strain on the muscles of the eyes and the eyelids.

Even though there is a strain on the eyes at this point, it's important for the participant not to break their gaze away from the object and maintain it as best as they can. The importance of this needs to be explained to the participant because if their gaze is broken during the beginning stages of induction, all of the effects will be undone.

Once the participant has managed to hold their gaze without wavering, it needs to be explained to them that they need to focus all of their mental energy onto that bright object, and maintain that focus. All other thoughts need to be withdrawn during this process. Once they've focused their gaze and all of their mental energy onto the object, the effects of the induction will start to occur.

The main effect that the hypnotist is looking for is a slight dilation of the pupils. This would be a relatively strange occurrence because the pupils will always constrict when exposed to light in an eye that isn't compromised. Having pupil dilation while looking at a relatively bright object is indicative that the mental and hypnotic induction was successful.

If the participant continues to focus on the object, their body will most likely begin to sway in a wavelike motion. This is a normal response and is regularly seen in participants that are seated or even standing. If the hypnotist moves his free hand towards the eyes of the participant and then back to the object, they may involuntarily start to close their eyes. If this occurs, then the hypnotist has moved the participant into a trance-like state. If the eyelids of the participant don't close involuntarily, then the induction process wasn't successful and the process should be restarted.

Because this is a guided process, the hypnotist should advise the participant that they should allow their eyes to close if they feel led to and not to fight the process. The guidance in this process is needed because participants that feel unsafe or insecure during the process will inevitably fight the whole process. When the whole process has been explained to the participant and they know what to expect, they will be more willing to move comfortably into the journey. Once the participant is willing to accept the journey to come, they will be able to move into their hypnotic journey.

There are other methods that can be employed to bring someone into their hypnotic journey, but having them focus on a particular object while clearing their minds will bring about the best induction results. Using this type of induction technique is a successful way to open one's mind to the prospect of suggestibility. However, research has found that induction isn't necessarily needed to open the mind to hypnosis. The most important factor about the hypnotic journey is the effect of hypnotic suggestion.

Hypnotic Suggestion

Arguably, the most valuable part of hypnosis is hypnotic suggestion. Unlike other parts of hypnosis, this isn't one that was well understood in the beginning stages of developing the theory of hypnosis. When James Braid first started his attempts at hypnotic induction, he didn't initially use this term

Braid rather referred to this hypnotic stage as having the participant consciously focus their mind on one dominant or central idea. Braid accomplished this by either reducing or stimulating specific regions in the body of the participant. After years of research, Braid discovered that both nonverbal and verbal forms of suggestion were paramount to bring the participant to the place of hypnosis.

Hypnotism has evolved over the years, and modern hypnotism has put a lot of focus on different forms of suggestion. These different forms of suggestions are used by hypnotists to try to obtain the best results from a hypnotic journey. Some of the forms of suggestion that they take are used as indirect insinuations, metaphors, nonverbal suggestions, and direct verbal suggestions. The nonverbal suggestions that are generally used are differences in voice tonality, physical manipulation, and mental imagery.

These types of suggestions include both those that are delivered with permission and those are performed without permission, which makes the hypnotism more authoritarian. The main factor that needs to be considered with hypnotism is whether it's aimed at the conscious or unconscious sector of the mind. Many hypnotists believe that suggestion is a way of communicating that is primarily directed at the conscious aspect of a person's mind. That said, there are hypnotists that believe instead that suggestion is aimed primarily at the subconscious and unconscious sectors of a person's mind.

The main supporters of suggestion being aimed at the conscious mind wholly believed that the suggestive influence from the hypnotic journey would affect the conscious mind and not the unconscious one. James Braid was one of these believers, and this belief system suggests that no one will ever be able to be hypnotized against their will and made to do things that they would otherwise ever consider doing.

This created a rather significant debate between hypnotherapists and other hypnotists because those that believed in this process of hypnotism would never be able to understand how a person could be hypnotized against their will. These types of hypnotists believed that each person's mind will always be unique and uniquely independent of suggestive influences. However, people would still have to allow a hypnotic journey to take place, and it wouldn't happen without the participant's approval. This belief system makes sense to a certain degree because many people are very protective of what they allow to influence them and will remain mentally guarded.

That said, this belief system in the process of hypnosis does make sense, but there is a greatly lacking consideration in this argument—how is it possible for hypnotists to target certain individuals and hypnotize them against their will? The answer here lies in subliminal suggestion.

Affecting the unconscious mind doesn't rely on the same belief systems as before. Several hypnotists believe that using indirect suggestions to affect the unconscious mind is much more effective at hypnotizing a person, regardless of whether or not they were willing participants. These indirect suggestions can range from metaphors to stories, but will hide their intended meaning from the participant in the beginning stages of the hypnotic journey. Subliminal suggestion relies heavily upon the fact that the unconscious mind is affected by hypnotic influences. If the unconscious mind wasn't affected by the hypnotic influences during this process, then any type of suggestion would be highly improbable.

Since there are two vastly different thought processes when it comes to hypnotism, it's important to keep in mind that these two processes are very distinguishable from one another. There are those that believe that suggestive influences will work on the conscious mind while direct suggestions are given, while others believe that suggestive influences will only work if they have been used to target the unconscious mind. This will only occur through hidden metaphors, stories, and phrases with deeper meanings.

Even though these two theories are vastly different from one another, they still both require the participant to focus on a specific object or idea. Once they've focused on this object or idea, they will be able to be led in whatever direction the hypnotist desires. Once the whole phase of suggestibility has affected the participant, then it's time to move onto the third stage of

hypnosis: susceptibility.

Hypnotic Susceptibility

Induction and suggestion are two of the main factors associated with hypnosis, but these two factors are primarily associated with participants that want to be hypnotized. The third factor that is part of hypnosis is susceptibility. Some people are very susceptible to hypnosis and can fall into a trance relatively easily—unfortunately, these are also the people that can normally be hypnotized against their will. These are the types of people that hypnotists look for when trying to test out their abilities to hypnotize unwilling participants.

The other set of people find it very difficult to fall into a hypnotic trance, even when they're trying to do so. There are many factors that can affect a person's susceptibility to hypnosis, and all of them need to be carefully understood before attempting a hypnotic journey. People that can easily move into a hypnotic trance will most likely always be able to do so, whereas people that struggle to do so most likely always will. There are several factors that need to be remembered in times like this, and some people will struggle more than others. There are those that are more guarded than others and may feel insecure or unsafe if they drop their guard enough to go on a hypnotic journey. It's important to remember that some things cannot be forced and may take time to develop the needed comfort to continue on with successfully.

Hypnotic Applications

The theory of hypnosis has been around for a very long time, and because the world has developed and evolved, so has the theory of hypnosis. There are several applications that can show that hypnosis can be used for the benefit of the participants that go on hypnotic journeys. These applications include self-hypnosis for self-improvement, entertainment purposes, military applications, and even medical treatments.

Hypnosis has started to branch into areas like physical therapy, rehabilitation,

sports, education, and forensics. There is no limit to the potential effects that hypnosis can have on multiple aspects of life. Some artists are known to go on hypnotic journeys in order to increase their overall creativity.

There are several real-world applications for hypnosis, and all of them can be used for beneficial factors. There are, of course, people that will try to use hypnosis in order to harm others, but this is much more difficult than people realize, and it's certainly not as impressive as Hollywood has made it out to be. There are certain people that are open to hypnotic suggestions, but being able to hypnotize them according to something that they don't believe in is highly improbable.

Chapter 7: Brainwashing

M.E.O. (n.d.-c). *Photo of head bust print artwork* [Photograph].

https://www.pexels.com/photo/photo-of-head-bust-print-

artwork-724994/

Hypnosis can be used both positively and negatively. The effects of hypnosis are normally positive, but brainwashing, on the other hand, is always negative and dangerous. The reason for this is because brainwashing completely contradicts and undermines the values of the subject.

During the Korean War, American prisoners of war (POWs) who were captured in Korea or China were tortured both mentally and physically and eventually brainwashed. Several of the American POWs started to believe aspects about the war that were completely inaccurate and untruthful. Some

of the prisoners went so far to pledge their allegiance to communism and betray their country. This sounds rather far-fetched because there are still many skeptics about whether or not brainwashing is an actual process (Stein, 2016).

According to psychology, brainwashing is known as the reformation in thought patterns in particular subjects and falls into the section of "social influence." People are influenced by multiple different sources every day, and all of these influences will affect the way that people think and may even influence their belief systems. There are three methods that can be used to change a person's way of thinking.

The compliance method is the method that some people use to force people to start believing certain principles regardless of the beliefs of the subject. Here, the subjects are given little choice to believe anything except the information that is being given to them.

The persuasive method is the method that's used by people to try to convince others to believe something else. This method relies on affecting a person's emotions. They tell others that they will feel good or happy if they do something or become successful if they follow the advice given to them.

The propaganda method gives people just enough information to start to question their old beliefs. Once they start to question their old beliefs, they will be more likely to believe other pieces of information that's given to them.

These three methods are commonly employed in social influence, but there is a fourth method that is far more dangerous than any of these three. Brainwashing is the most severe and dangerous form of all of these methods. Brainwashing is employed to change the thought patterns and belief systems of people without their consent and even against their will.

Why Brainwashing Works

Sadasivuni, V. (n.d.). *Depressed young man with blurred head in dark room* [Photograph]. https://www.pexels.com/photo/depressed-young-man-with-blurred-head-in-dark-room-3833370/

Brainwashing is one of the most invasive forms of influence and is easily one of the most destructive. Since brainwashing is so invasive, it will require an extreme amount of influence to completely change a person's way of

thinking. One of the reasons why brainwashing is hypothetically possible is because the subject that is being brainwashed will be put into complete isolation and removed from all external influences. This isolation starts to influence the subject's mind, and it will result in extreme susceptibility to influence.

There are people in the world, like kidnappers and cult leaders, who will intentionally isolate their victims to break their mental barriers. Once this occurs, the subject will become open to all sorts of suggestions. This type of isolation will result in dependency. This is why you primarily hear of brainwashing from prison camps, kidnappers, and extremist cults.

Brainwashers want full control over their targets. This means that they will use any method to accomplish this. There are certain people that believe, without a doubt, that everything that they think is the absolute truth. These types of people are known as extremists. Extremists will force participants to sleep, eat, and bathe at certain times, and this will make them more susceptible to adopting certain beliefs over time.

During the brainwashing process, the brainwasher systematically breaks their subject down until their initial identity doesn't exist anymore. Once their subject's identity has been broken down to such an extent, they will start to rebuild their subject's identity with their own belief systems. These belief systems will be completely functional and even 'understandable' in the subject's environment, and this makes it all the more likely that they will choose to follow this new path of subjective thinking.

Most psychologists believe that brainwashing is possible in the right types of conditions, most view it as highly improbable. These psychologists believe that the media has developed a certain belief system when it comes to brainwashing, and many of these psychologists believe that it won't work on most of the world's population. That said, many psychologists believe that brainwashing will only occur when a person is pushed beyond what they can handle. This threat normally includes threats of physical harm (Stein, 2016).

Because of this, many extremist bodies believe that they're doing nothing wrong and will continue to do so because they feel what they're doing is the correct decision. This becomes detrimental to anyone following the group or the leaders because they will inevitably struggle to adopt the extremist views of their leaders.

Even though most psychologists believe that brainwashing is possible in the right types of conditions, many of these professionals view brainwashing as highly improbable. Many of them believe it to be a much less severe form of manipulation and influence than Hollywood portrays it to be.

Generally, brainwashing a person to obey commands regardless of their beliefs is highly unlikely, but many brainwashers know how fear can play an integral part in the changing of a person's thought patterns. Research has found that the threat of physical, mental, or emotional harm may be enough for people to disregard their old ways and move into adopting new ideas as their own. That said, most extremist groups and cults don't usually resort to physical coercion or pain to brainwash their followers and won't resort to openly abusing their followers to obtain the results that they desire. They will use whatever methods they believe are necessary to convert their followers, regardless of how detrimental it may be.

The ultimate purpose to brainwash a person is to change their way of thinking and make them unquestionably follow specific narratives. Some brainwashers have been able to accomplish this by forcing their ideals, beliefs, and understandings on others. Brainwashers hope they will be able to destroy the primary identity of their victims and leave them in such a state that is completely impressionable.

Research has found that the effects of brainwashing may be shorter in duration than previously thought. Brainwashers desire to gain complete control over their victims, so having only temporary results is unwanted by these types of dark psychologists (Layton, n.d.). It's believed that the "old self" of the brainwashed participant is merely hiding and not completely destroyed. This means that there's a potential for the old self to return after the brainwashing influence has been removed.

To completely rewire a person's thought patterns will take time, patience, and a lot of determination. Many psychologists believe that the POWs in the Korean War changed their way of thinking because they were tortured so regularly and not actually brainwashed. The constant threat of pain created such a fearful environment in their minds that, ultimately, changed the way that they thought because they wanted to remove the painful stimuli. This means that many POWs did not convert to communism at all and merely stated that they would follow communist ways if it meant that they would no

longer be tortured.

This does spark the question of how effective brainwashing is. If POWs in the Korean War weren't actually brainwashed and only following communism to avoid further physical pain, then is brainwashing possible in other scenarios? The answer here lies in the susceptibility of the participants. Just like with hypnotism, brainwashing will only occur in individuals that allow their thought processes to be changed.

Brainwashing Techniques

Robert Ray Lifton was a psychologist in the mid-1950s who studied former POWs from the Korean and Chinese War camps. He was one of the psychologists that believed that there was a multiple step process being used on the prisoners in order to brainwash them. He realized for brainwashing to begin, people need to be subjected to relentless attacks on their own self-worth. Once this begins, it's much easier to start implanting new ideas and beliefs.

In all of the cases of brainwashing that Lifton studied, he noticed a discernible pattern in all of them, and he managed to narrow the brainwashing method down to 10 steps. These 10 steps are:

1. The process begins by completely assaulting a person's identity and breaking their self-worth.
2. The person is then made to feel guilty through emotional and mental manipulation.
3. Once the new beliefs and ideas are successfully implanted, a brainwashed person will start on the route of betrayal. This betrayal includes self-betrayal and the betrayal of others.
4. After a person has been forced to this stage, they will reach their breaking point, and the brainwashing effect will most likely remain permanent.
5. The subjects will be shown leniency after their breaking point, and this will create a sense of bonding with the brainwasher. This is similar to Stockholm syndrome, where kidnapped people start to develop feelings for their kidnapper.

6. After this leniency period, many brainwashed subjects will feel the intense desire to confess everything to the brainwasher. Everything that they have been keeping to themselves tends to come out at this point.
7. The brainwasher will then channel these confessions into new feelings of guilt in the brainwashed subject.
8. Once the guilt has been recognized, the brainwasher will help the subject through those feelings of guilt and help them release those feelings.
9. The brainwashed subject will start to move into a more harmonious setting with the brainwasher as their relationship starts to develop. This relationship can vary from a sexual and physical one to a new camaraderie.
10. The last step to brainwashing is where the subject feels the need to leave everything that they have known in the past and start living life as the new person that they become. This is known as rebirth.

For brainwashing to be effective, it needs to occur in a place of complete isolation. Subjects that are able to rely on one another are less likely to be brainwashed. However, isolation creates a form of reliance on the brainwasher. As soon as this happens, it's much more likely that a person will be brainwashed.

Brainwashers will also use other techniques to accelerate the brainwashing attempts. This includes mind-clouding techniques, sleep deprivation, and various forms of torture. Physical torture can be effective at accelerating brainwashing, but research has found that employing tactics of emotional and mental torture are far more effective at brainwashing subjects (Layton n.d).

The 10 steps that Lifton identified are used by practically all brainwashers to some degree. But, these 10 steps can further be categorized into three categories.

Breaking Down Self

When a person's identity is constantly attacked, it's not only emotionally

destructive. It can become mentally destructive, too. When American soldiers were captured in Korea and China, they were immediately isolated from one another. This allowed the captors to start the onslaught of degrading phrases. They would say things like "you aren't a soldier" and "you aren't even a man" to many of the prisoners. These systematic attacks would affect the psyche and the ego of the prisoners. The prisoners would be able to withstand these attacks in the beginning, but over the course of a few weeks and even months, they would become exhausted, disorientated, and confused. This state would cause the soldiers to question their own beliefs.

The soldiers moved into deep feelings of guilt once they started to question their own beliefs. The identity crises that they were experiencing created confusing levels of guilt, and the brainwashing captors would monopolize on the developing guilt. The captors would mercilessly attack and abuse the prisoners for any 'indiscretion' that they felt they'd committed, and they would continue to criticize the soldiers no matter what they did. The subjects then replaced their feelings of guilt with overwhelming feelings of shame, because they would be belittled, criticized, and abused for anything they did wrong. This sense of belittlement is what a brainwasher needs to plant their own beliefs into their subjects.

The next stage of the brainwashing occurs when the brainwasher forces their subject(s) to betray their own morals and beliefs. They would make them believe that they weren't worth anything and not capable of anything. They would reduce them to feeling less than human. This isn't difficult because the constant torment and isolation will cause enormous amounts of confusion to develop in the subject, and they will be forced to make radical changes. The prisoners in Korea and China were forced to denounce their names, families, and loyalty to their country. Once the subject has denounced everything they hold dear, their feelings of guilt and shame will be exponentially increased.

The subjects will reach a breaking point when they fully question their identities. Once the subject reaches this point, the brainwasher normally allows for a certain amount of leniency. This kindness and break from the abuse is paramount for the subject to developing new beliefs in their captors and in themselves.

Possible Salvation

Once the subject reaches this critical stage and feels overwhelmed with the crisis of the loss of identity, the brainwasher steps in and offers a way out. This sort of leniency and unusual caring throws the subject off guard and makes them even more susceptible to the brainwashing techniques that are being used on them. Prisoners of war were normally offered a small blessing like a drink of water or something to eat. Their captors would also ask them about what they missed most about their homes and how they felt about certain things. The captors would, for the first time, treat the prisoners as human beings and show a fair degree of empathy—even though this empathy isn't real empathy and is only employed to accelerate the brainwashing process.

The captors knew that by showing these small acts of kindness to the prisoners, they would show gratitude that would be out of proportion to what was given to them. The gratitude the POWs exhibited was very similar to the gratitude that someone shows when someone else saves their life. This gratitude is shown because of the mental and emotional breakdown of the subject. Any type of small kindness is vitally important to creating a concreted brainwashing technique.

After the acts of kindness are shown to the subject, then the brainwasher will move back to more severe tactics. Offering a chance to confess their crimes/sins/indiscretions makes the subject believe that if they do confess, they will be able to help themselves. The subject will go through a myriad of emotions at this point. They will feel an enormous contrast between the pain of the assaults performed on them, and feel guilty for their diminishing identities. This is then coupled with the contradictory confusion of the kindness that was just shown to them by their captors. Since these emotions can become very convincing, offering a way to confess and be rid of those conflicting emotions does become very appealing to almost all subjects.

The brainwashing process takes a very long time, and after months of constant onslaught, it's not difficult to see how a few acts of simple kindness can bring about enormous amounts of confusion and guilt within a subject's mind. At this point, the subject's guilt becomes all-encompassing, even though it's actually meaningless. The subject feels guilty for things that they've done wrong, even though they don't actually know anymore what they've done. They just know that everything that they do is wrong, and that creates deepened senses of worthlessness and guilt.

Once the guilt of the subject becomes meaningless, the brainwasher can attach the subject's guilt to whatever they desire. At this point, the mind of the subject will become very susceptible to all types of influences. Their minds not only become completely confused, they also become blank. The brainwasher is able to fill in those blanks with whatever information that they desire, and they will most likely attach the feelings of guilt to the belief system of the subject. This will allow the subject to start viewing their belief system as the source of their shame and guilt. Here, the contrast between the old and the new is made. The subject quickly realizes that their old belief system is what's caused them physical, psychological, and emotional agony, while the new belief system offers them a way to escape the onslaught and the agony.

Once the subjects have reached this point, they start to believe that their beliefs have made them make the wrong decisions in the past. They believe that they're inexplicably bad and will make bad decisions if they're left to their old selves.

Chapter 8: NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming)

space, N. E. G. A. T. I. V. E. (n.d.). *Pink white black purple blue textile web scripts* [Photograph]. https://www.pexels.com/photo/office-working-app-computer-97077/

Your life will be no better than the plans you make and the action you take. You are the architect and builder of your own life, fortune, and destiny.
—Alfred A. Montapert

First developed in the 1970s, it would take about 20 years for this psychological technique to reach mainstream circles. Variously referred to as a therapeutic technique, a New Age self-discovery tool, and even a form of mind control, NLP is a practice that is often misunderstood and misused. As with many things that are shrouded in so much mystery and misinformation, the best introduction to NLP is with a story.

Meet Tom Hoobyar. In 2002, he was a retired former preacher and grandfather with a deep personal interest in psychology. But this all came crashing down when his granddaughter was hospitalized for severe malnutrition and heart damage caused by anorexia. After she went through a series of surgeries and a stay in a psychiatric hospital with no sign of improvement, Tom was desperate for a way to help her.

That's how he found NLP. Using NLP techniques that he taught himself, he was able to help his granddaughter make a full recovery where surgery, psychiatric medication, and psychotherapy had all failed. Today, not only is his granddaughter a thriving, happy, and healthy young woman, but Tom went on to become one of the best-down NLP practitioners in the world. His writings, workshops, and online "NLP Cafe" have helped thousands of people around the world manage everything from abusive histories to chronic pain to simple yet distressing day-to-day inconveniences.

Tom's story is one that's quite uplifting and powerful. It hardly seems like the right material for a book about 'dark' psychology. Yet, NLP often makes an appearance in books, blogs, and articles about manipulation, dark triad personalities, brainwashing, and other dark psychological techniques. How can the same technique be so positive for some and so sinister for others?

The 'dark' aspects of NLP are not inherent in the techniques themselves. At its core, NLP is an alternative method of understanding the processes behind human thought. Scientific circles often regulate NLP to the status of 'pseudoscience' because it's not based in traditional psychological or neurological study. NLP doesn't work with the brain, it works with the *mind.* Specifically, it aims to understand how your mind creates your unique experience of the world—not in terms of psychological impressions or neurological maps of the brain, but in terms of how the mind itself becomes entwined with your identity and how that identity expresses itself throughout your life.

NLP began as a special research project at the University of California, Santa Cruz in the early 1970s. Today, its influence can be found in as such diverse fields as education, psychotherapy, communications, business, entertainment, and even sports. The popular educational theory of different "learning styles" has its roots in NLP. CEOs, executives, and even middle management at many companies are trained in NLP techniques to use in a variety of

interpersonal settings, including interviewing, hiring, and training. NLP coaching has been used by both professional and Olympic athletes to improve their performance (Hoobyar, 2013).

The real trouble with NLP is that it works. While its techniques are extremely beneficial when used for self-discovery and self-improvement, the terms of its ethical usage become very blurry indeed when they are applied to other people. NLP doesn't just teach you how you think—it also aims to teach you how other people think. When that knowledge is used to improve your communication skills or become more productive in the workplace, then that knowledge makes you happier and easier to get along with. But when that knowledge falls into the hands of a manipulator, it can be a very powerful tool for controlling, gaslighting, and influencing others in destructive ways.

In the beginning, NLP researchers studied renowned therapists who, at the time, were famous for achieving near-miraculous results with their clients. One of these was Virginia Satir, whose theories of family relationships still form the groundwork for contemporary family therapy. Another was Milton Erickson, who enjoyed a certain degree of infamy in the 1970s for his use of what he called "clinical hypnotherapy," or hypnosis.

The theories of Satir and Erickson form the core of NLP theory. And while each of these therapists took very different approaches to psychology and psychotherapy, they both shared a few core beliefs that are the underlying principles (or 'presuppositions') of NLP.

The first of these states that **there is no such thing as an inner enemy.** In other words, when people do things that aren't good for them, whether it's biting their fingernails or serially murdering others, it's not because they're somehow broken, but because they've somehow been led to believe that this behavior is necessary for their survival or wellbeing.

The second presupposition states that **behind every behavior is a positive intention.** No matter how strange or inappropriate the behavior may seem, the underlying problem that the behavior seeks to solve is something benign, like keeping you safe, persevering your self-respect, or even preserving your self-love. NLP techniques are designed to help you look inside your mind (or someone else's) to determine the root cause of any behavior, and then take steps to change the mental patterns that are producing problematic behaviors to something more beneficial.

At least, that's the theory. And the vast majority of NLP practitioners use it for these positive and good-natured reasons. But there are some people that use NLP techniques in an attempt to alter the behaviors of others in ways that benefit them, without any concern for what may be best for the person they are seeking to manipulate (Hoobyar, 2013).

Many people study NLP simply because they're curious about human nature or want insight into their own thought patterns. Those who seek to actively use NLP techniques in the real world are called NLP "power users." These are often people who want to put these skills to good use—people like hostage negotiators, actors, and therapists. But every so often, a manipulative or dark triad personality type also becomes an NLP power user.

For example, one powerful NLP technique is called the "special memory trigger." This is a certain movement, sound, or other sensory stimuli that you train your mind to associate with an extremely positive memory, one in which you feel a deep sense of achievement, positivity, power, love, or other positive emotion. The idea behind this technique is that when you are feeling depressed, anxious, or angry, you can simply use the special memory trigger to bring yourself back to a place when you felt happy, powerful, or content. NLP power users employ this technique to help them get through moments of fear, doubt, and frustration, enabling themselves to face just about any situation with feelings of pride and confidence.

When used on yourself, this is an extremely powerful tool for boosting self-confidence and facilitating personal success. But this technique can also be used on other people. An observant, manipulative person can slowly train another person's mind to respond to a special memory trigger (sometimes called an 'anchor'). If the other person starts to get angry or feel uncomfortable, the NLP user can simply initiate the trigger to diffuse those negative feelings and make the other person feel happy and comfortable once again, even if the situation is not good for them.

How NLP Works

Tastet, T. (n.d.). *Free code* [Photograph].

NLP studies how thoughts (neuro) and language (linguistic) are related to the internal scripts and narratives that dictate the way a person perceives the world (programming). The theory is that the combination of descriptive language and sensory input from the outside world creates certain inner systems through which each individual uniquely perceives reality. The main goal of NLP is to learn those inner systems so that they can be intentionally modified to create the best possible version of yourself.

Understanding the language of the mind gives the NLP practitioner insight into every aspect of a person's life, from their relationships to their communication style to their ability to succeed at work. NLP conflicts with modern psychology and neurology in the sense that NLP practitioners believe that no two people think in exactly the same ways or use the same processes. NLP users also believe that the subconscious is not merely a passive observer of the world, but plays an active role in the way that we behave, feel, and

think. Since the subconscious is where we store our core beliefs, values, and assumptions, this idea is hardly far-fetched.

In the language of NLP, the unique ways that we all think and interpret reality are called "inner representational systems." These systems are sorted into different "modalities," which are:

- Visual—dealing with both pictures and visual metaphors
- Auditory—sounds and hearing
- Kinaesthetic—deals with the senses of touch and movement, including gut feelings

(Mind, 2020). The basic idea is that, if you learn the language of your own inner representational systems, you can actively change those systems to master any behaviors or emotional responses that you wish. Some therapists use NLP techniques to access deep-seated subconscious beliefs or perceptions that are limiting a person's ability to succeed in life. But you don't have to see a trained professional—NLP techniques are designed so that anyone can have the tools they need to gain understanding and control over their own thought patterns.

NLP Discovery Activity—Accessing Personal Resources

To get a taste of how NLP works as a self-discovery tool, let's begin with a basic exercise. First, find a quiet place where you are unlikely to be disturbed. This will probably feel very different from the way that you're used to thinking, and so it's useful to find a place where you will be free of distractions. The more comfortable you become as an NLP user, the easier it will be to complete these kinds of activities.

Take a few slow, deep breaths. This will help you to slow down your mind and its thinking processes. It will also help you to relax, which will make it easier to access the parts of the mind that NLP encourages you to explore. Once you're feeling relaxed, recall a personal memory of a time when you were experiencing a sense of excellence or easy flow. Relieve that experience as completely as you can, remembering everything you saw, heard, and felt.

Now imagine a small circle of light appearing on the floor, just in front of your feet or seated body. Notice that it's just big enough that, were you to step inside, your entire body would fit. What color is the circle of light? Would you like to change the color?

Does your circle make a sound? Perhaps it's something subtle, like a soft or steady hum. Perhaps you hear a song or even the sound of applause. Do you hear anything at all?

What feelings are you experiencing right now? Are you feeling a tingling sensation anywhere in your body? What is your posture like? Are you feeling confident or proud?

Once you've fully experienced your memory of excellence and ease, step into the circle of light, bringing all of your positive feelings into the circle with you. In a moment, you will step out of the circle, leaving those feelings behind to access whenever you need them. This may seem like a strange thing to do, but it's necessary for a deeper analysis of your thought processes. When you're ready, step out of the circle, leaving your positive memory and its associated feelings behind.

Now think about a time in the future that you want to experience those same feelings of excellence and focus. Take a moment now to envision that upcoming experience. What do you see? Hear? Feel? Don't try to influence your thoughts or feelings yet—just allow yourself to experience the future event and observe what happens.

Once you've fully experienced the future event as you think it's going to happen, take a step back inside the circle of light. Re-experience those feelings of flow and confidence, but now apply them to the future event.

Step out of the circle again, leaving those powerful feelings behind. Once you're outside the circle, think about your future event again. You'll probably find that you automatically associate feelings of confidence and flow with that future event. This means that you've already reframed your associations with that upcoming event. You're already starting to feel better about it. When it does arrive, you'll be able to easily access the feelings of focus and confidence that you left in your imaginary circle, bringing them into your real experience and increasing your chances of real-world success.

Whenever you try something for the first time, it's unlikely to work perfectly. Be patient with yourself as you begin using this and other NLP techniques. The first time you try this exercise you're unlikely to notice any major changes. But the more often you repeat this exercise and others like, the more you'll start to see tangible results.

When you apply NLP techniques like this, you're making the decision to take charge of your own life. You are deciding for yourself how you want to feel and act in a certain situation. In this activity, you are making the choice to feel ease and flow in a situation that you may normally have felt uneasy or nervous about. You can adapt this same activity for any future event, with the intention of accessing any kinds of feelings you wish (Hoobyar, 2013).

That being said, it takes years of disciplined study and practice to become an NLP power user, and it takes even longer to master the art of using NLP techniques on other people. NLP users learn to read subtle cues in behavior, such as eye movements, blushing, and dilation of the pupils to learn how their target thinks, including:

- The side of the brain that the target predominantly uses.
- The modality (or sense) that the person uses most often when constructing inner representational systems.
- The way the target processes and stores new information.
- Whether or not the target is lying.

Another common NLP technique is called 'mirroring' and is employed as a way to make the target feel comfortable around the NLP user. The NLP practitioner will literally mimic the way that the target moves, adopting the target's posture, body language, and even their breathing patterns. The human brain is trained to feel at ease around the familiar, and so when the target's mind unconsciously recognizes its own behaviors in another person, it automatically starts to feel relaxed (Mind, 2020).

When used positively, NLP has helped people to transform their lives in extremely powerful ways. Not only has it helped people to transform limiting behaviors or habits, but it has also paved the way for people to improve their interpersonal skills, especially in business and customer service settings. When used with good intention, NLP skills make people better negotiators, more confident public speakers, and can even help people to improve their personal relationships. These techniques have been used to help people dramatically improve their lives in all of these different areas. It's an especially powerful tool for people who are trapped with destructive or limiting habits that they can't seem to quit using conventional methods. NLP techniques are so effective that they are slowly becoming part of sales and teacher training and have been endorsed by a number of life coaches and self-

development experts as a way for people to regain control over their lives.

Dark NLP, however, uses NLP techniques and turns them inside out. Rather than using these techniques for personal growth or to facilitate positive interactions with others, dark NLP users employ these techniques for the purposes of manipulation and control. As with 'normal' NLP users, those employing dark NLP will study their victim very closely, listening intently to every word that they say. This often lulls the victim into a sense of false safety, believing that they've found someone who's a really "good listener." But the more you confide in a dark NLP practitioner, the more weapons you are giving them.

To effectively employ dark NLP, you have to first learn what the victim loves about themselves, hates about themselves, what they want, what they fear, and what they have doubts about. These things are all related to a person's identity, and so are the inner systems that make us the most vulnerable. Dark NLP users understand this, and so will target these aspects of a victim's personality in order to change and control the way that they think. It's very easy to hurt someone through their doubts, fears, or dislikes. It's also easy to emotionally cripple someone by removing (or 'reframing') the things that they like about themselves or the things that they want.

Dark NLP users are astute listeners. They understand that most people avoid talking about the things that they are afraid of or get nervous when they talk about things that they are insecure or unsure of. On the other hand, people get very excited when talking about their hopes and can't resist bragging a bit when talking about their personal achievements or sources of pride. Sometimes, the NLP user will prompt the victim to share by sharing themselves. The NLP practitioner will share their hopes, fears, or doubts (whether true or fabricated) as a show of vulnerability, encouraging the victim to open up in kind. But this is a trap, one that's all too easy to fall into (Weiss, 2019).

Many psychologists simply dismiss NLP as a 'pseudoscience.' Others decry it as an inherently harmful practice because of the manipulative uses to which some people put its techniques. Still others hold it up as the ultimate psychological tool, a kind of magical solution to any and all of life's problems (Weiss, 2019). But all of these views inherently misunderstand what NLP actually is. Simply put, NLP is a series of tools that enable people to learn

more about their own minds and the minds of others. Like any other tool or skill set, NLP is neither inherently good or bad. Whether it exerts a positive or negative influence depends on the user and their intentions. NLP itself isn't positive or negative, destructive or constructive. What makes NLP 'dark' is the purpose behind the techniques.

NLP is a specialized system of behavior transformation that deals almost exclusively with the subconscious mind. The subconscious is incredibly impressionable, and therefore vulnerable to external stimuli. This is what makes it such an effective and destructive tool in the hands of those who would use it for manipulative purposes—it allows a manipulative person to not only influence another person's thoughts and feelings, but *understand* them, perhaps even better than the victim understands themselves.

An NLP Glossary of Terms and Techniques

NLP power users study for years before they become really adept at applying their techniques. However, understanding some of the more common techniques and language used by NLP users can help you to recognize one, especially in high-stakes communications like interviews or business negotiations. If you're interested in learning NLP yourself, there are hundreds of books, blogs, and websites dedicated to NLP and its various techniques. These terms will help to get you familiar with the basic concepts (Hoobyar, 2013).

Accessing Cues

Eye movements, tone of voice, posture, and breathing are all behaviors that give NLP users clues to what is really going on in another person's mind. Once the NLP user learns which inner representational system their target is accessing, they can work to subtly change the way that their target thinks, feels, or behaves.

Creating an Anchor

An anchor is a kind of cue or trigger that initiates a certain emotional response, either within oneself or within another person. These cues can be auditory (a certain word, sound, song, etc.), visual (a certain color, image, light, etc.), kinesthetic (a tap on the shoulder, a certain gesture, a certain movement, etc.), or even spatial (emotional responses to being in certain

rooms, environments, weather, etc.).

"As If" Frames

This is a confidence-boosting technique in which a person imagines that a certain goal is possible or even already achieved, and commits to behaving accordingly.

Asking Well-Formed Outcome Questions

In NLP speak, "well-formed outcomes" are ones that are both obtainable and worded in positive terms.

Associations

"Being associated" in NLP speak means experiencing a memory, fantasy, or visualization fully and completely, engaging in all the five senses.

The Auditory Swish Process

This technique aims to change the target's emotional responses to certain sounds, and is most often employed as a way to change habits and behaviors.

Backtracking

A rapport-building technique during which the NLP user will repeat back or summarize information given to them by the target.

Behavioral Flexibility

This is the NLP user's master skill, the ability to change one's behavior until the desired response has been elicited from the target. This is why there are so many different NLP techniques. If one technique isn't working, a proficient NLP user will quickly and easily switch to a new technique.

Beliefs

Generalizations that one person has about themselves, other people, and the world.

Breaking State

To 'break' someone's state is to suddenly and dramatically change their emotional landscape. This technique is most often used to bring someone out of an unpleasant mental state.

Channels

Another word for 'modalities,' channels are inner symbolic systems that people use to process their emotions, thoughts, or experiences. Each channel corresponds with one of the five senses.

Chunk Size

'Chunking' is a technique used to subtly shift someone's inner symbolic systems. "Chunking up" means shifting to a more general category, "chunking down" means shifting to a more specific category, and "chunking sideways" means shifting to another symbol of the same type. For example, inner associations with the word, image, or experience of being in a 'car' could be chunked down to a Ford or carburetor, chunked up to any vehicle or method of transportation, and chunked sideways to a plane or a train.

Congruent

When a person's internal strategies, behaviors, and desires are all working together harmoniously.

Content

This refers to what NLP users call the five 'domains'—people, places, information, activities, and objects.

Context

This is the environment in which a certain conversation or emotional response occurs. NLP users will often engineer certain conversations to take place in contexts where the target is more likely to be agreeable or do as they ask.

Context Reframing

This technique aims to change a person's emotional or behavioral associations with a certain physical space.

Counter-Example

These are simple words or phrases used to subtly contradict the target's inherent beliefs or worldview, for example using the phrase "any hardworking teenager" in a conversation after the target has made the statement "all teenagers are lazy".

Criteria

These are the labels that individuals assign to certain behaviors or events. For example, different people may label the same experience as fun, exciting, inexpensive, interesting, high-quality, bold, practical, or new.

Deletion

This is a mental process that occurs when someone excludes certain experiences from their inner symbolic systems and/or from their speech.

Disassociations

The opposite of being associated, being 'disassociated' means looking at an experience from an external or observant point of view rather than being grounded in the experience itself.

Distortion

Inaccurate recreations of memories or past experiences. NLP users listen for highly inaccurate comments in the target's speech to learn how they've reconstructed or misinterpreted events from their past.

Enhancing Self-Concept

Sometimes called 'self-position,' this technique involves becoming fully anchored in one's own body and perspective.

Ecology

NLP users are urged to consider how the applications of their techniques will affect their lives beyond the moment, including how achieving their desired outcome will support their beliefs, values, and/or important relationships.

Eye Movement Integration

NLP power users learn to study the unconscious movements of another person's eyes for clues to what modalities or inner representational systems they are accessing in the moment. Once the user understands their target's inner representational systems, they can use their own eye movements to subtly change the other person's inner modalities to encourage them to think or behave in ways that benefit the NLP user.

Feedback

The way that a target responds to a certain NLP technique gives the user information that they can use to further influence the target, or use as a signal

that they need to try a different technique.

First Position

When you are in "first position," you are experiencing the world from your own, subjective perspective.

Future Pace

"Future pacing" is the process of slowly and subtly linking a specific behavior or set of behaviors with the right external cues so that, in future situations, the behavior will occur both naturally and automatically.

Generalization

This technique involves taking a very specific situation or behavior and broadening it to include a much wider context (for example, saying "that's just the way human beings are" in response to someone venting about a specific person or situation).

Generative Intervention

An intervention that both solves the immediate problem and improves the other person's life in other, related areas.

Gustatory Modality

Inner representational systems that are based in the sense of taste. This often takes the form of specific emotional associations with certain foods, spices, and beverages.

Hallucination

An internal representation that has nothing to do with the person's current, physical reality.

Incongruent

When a person's inner representations, parts, and programs are misaligned. For example, finding yourself unable to motivate yourself to work hard on a project that you really enjoy may be an indicator that your conscious desires and your internal programs are not working together in harmony.

Installing

Learning or teaching a new NLP strategy or technique.

Intention

The true, underlying desire or goal behind a certain behavior.

Kinesthetic Programs

Inner representational systems that are related to movement or touch. This is often divided into three distinct categories: tactile feelings (touch, physical sensations), proprioceptive feelings (movement, sensations within the body, such as chest pain or muscle tension), and meta feelings (emotional responses to physical objects, spaces, or environments).

Lead System

This is the representational system most commonly used to access stored emotional information (for example, visualizing a friend's face to evoke feelings of love or respect).

Lost Performer

A way of speaking that eliminates the person or thing performing the action of the sentence (for example, "It's important to arrive on time").

Map of Reality

This is a person's unique, subjective perception of the world around them. This map is navigated through a person's inner representational systems.

Meta Model

These are language patterns related to the ways that people delete, distort, generalize, limit, or specify different aspects of their reality. These models are often paired with well-formed outcome questions designed to make communication more specific, recover lost or vague information, and loosen rigid thinking patterns.

Meta-Outcome

The true outcome behind a superficial outcome (for example, "achieving financial security and freedom" may be the meta-outcome behind the goal of "getting a better job").

Metaphor

A story or parable that symbolically relates one situation or experience with another.

Meta-Program

A thought pattern based on generalizations that the brain often uses for the sake of efficiency. They act as filters, helping us to make quick decisions. There are five meta-programs that all combine to influence a person's behavior when faced with certain situations. The first and most important of these is a person's **motivation direction,** which indicates whether a person moves toward or away from new experiences.

Mind Reading

Imagining what someone else may be thinking or feeling in a vivid and all-encompassing way.

Mirroring and Matching

This is a rapport-building technique, in which the practitioner subtly mimics the movements of their target, mirroring and matching the other person's posture, breathing patterns, and even tone of voice.

Modal Operators

Sometimes referred to as a person's "mode of operating." This refers to which of the four primary motivators lies behind a person's behavior—desire, possibility, necessity, or choice.

Modality

'Modalities' are how NLP users refer to the five senses—sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste. A great deal of NLP practice is spent learning one's inner modalities (and the inner modalities of others), or the representational images that we associate with certain thoughts, behaviors, and experiences.

Modeling

This technique involves observing how someone else does or says something, and then mimicking them as closely as possible until you've taught yourself to do the same thing.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)

This is not to be confused with another NLP—Natural Language Processing, which is a type of artificial intelligence program.

Nominalization

The process of creating nouns for 'things' that have no concrete existence. Love, freedom, happiness, respect, and frustration are all examples of nominalizations.

Observer Position

This refers to the perspective you are taking when viewing or observing a certain situation.

Olfactory Programs

These are inner representational systems that are related to the sense of smell. These most often take the form of certain emotional responses to specific scents.

Outcome

The desired goal or result of a specific program. Before employing any NLP technique, whether it's on yourself or someone else, you should always be clear about what you wish the outcome to be.

Pacing

Pacing with someone is another way to refer to the process of mirroring someone's behavior. You can pace yourself with someone else's breathing or speech patterns, for example. Perhaps you pace yourself with their tone of voice or their posture.

Paralanguage

How something is said. Paralanguage includes things like volume, inflection, speed, intensity, tone, rhythm, and pitch, all of which serve communicative purposes of their own. To truly understand what someone is saying, it's not enough to listen to the words themselves—it's important to pay attention to their paralanguage as well.

Parts

Parts refer to the different aspects of a person's experience. Each of these parts will ultimately manifest themselves in a person's life as behaviors.

Perceptual Filter

This is a certain attitude or bias that a person has about another person or object. This point of view will change the way that a person experiences a

certain situation or interacts with another person.

Perceptual Positions

First position is when someone is experiencing an event from their own perspective, second position is when someone is experiencing an event from someone else's perspective, and third position is when someone is experiencing an event from an entirely objective or omniscient perspective.

Predicates

Words that have some kind of relationship to the subject of a sentence. Verbs, adverbs, and adjectives are all predicates, while nouns are not.

Preferred Representational System

This is the sense (sometimes two senses) through which a person primarily uses to process new experiences or information, and is the mode in which a person can usually make the most detailed observations.

Presuppositions

These are the underlying psychological principles that make up the discipline of NLP.

Rapport

When two people feel safe or trusting around one another.

Reframing

This technique aims to alter someone's perception of a certain situation or behavior and subsequently change their emotional response to that situation or behavior. When used positively, this technique can be used to transform bad habits or eliminate phobias, but when used manipulatively, this technique can be a powerful method of mind and behavior control.

Representational Systems

These are internal, symbolic methods of understanding reality through each of the five senses.

Resources

A piece of knowledge or understanding of the world that contributes to the achievement of an outcome. Resources can also take the form of beliefs,

behaviors, and skills.

Resource State

Employing an ability, attitude, or behavior that is somehow useful in the current context.

Second Position

When you are experiencing something from the other person's perspective, you are in second position.

Self-Position

This is another term for first position, when you are experiencing an event entirely from your own perspective.

Sensory Acuity

The ability to use different sensory information to make distinctions between different states or events.

Sensory Based Experience

Information that is directly related to sensory input from a person's current reality. This is the opposite of a hallucination.

Sensory Modalities

These are the five senses: sight, sound, feeling, taste, and smell.

Separator State

Achieving neutrality between two states to prevent them from combining or connecting with one another.

Shifting Sub-Modalities

This is the process of subtly changing one's inner representational systems with the intention of initiating beneficial changes in behavior.

Six-Step Reframing

A deep reframing process in which the part or parts responsible for a problematic behavior are accessed directly, the intention behind the behavior is revealed, and new behaviors that satisfy the same intention are implemented. This technique is most often used to resolve interpersonal

conflicts, especially in the workplace.

State

A particular mode of being or condition of a body/mind response to external stimuli.

Stimulus Response

A repeated association between a certain experience and a specific response.

Strategy

The method used to achieve a certain outcome, such as decision making, learning, motivation, or employing specific skills.

Swish

A pattern used to transform habits and stimulus responses.

Third Position

When you are observing an event from a neutral or objective perspective, you are in third position.

Universal Quantifier

Words like all, every, always, never, and none, that assign all things in a certain category with a particular quality.

Visual Programs

Inner representational systems that are related to vision and sight. These often take the form of specific emotional responses to certain colors, lighting, or images.

Using Metaphors

To elicit certain emotional responses in their targets, NLP users often use stories, parables, or analogies when explaining concepts, making requests, or giving directions.

Conclusion

Dark psychology, at its heart, is the study of control. From manipulation to persuasion, from hypnosis to NLP, all dark psychological techniques are employed for the purpose of influencing and controlling the behavior of others.

Now that you've learned some of the basic disciplines of dark psychology, you have a great deal more power than you had before. At the very least, you will be better able to recognize controlling techniques and behaviors when other people try to use them against you. If someone is trying to manipulate or even persuade you, you now have the ability to see through their tricks and resist.

But you also have the unique opportunity to use dark psychology for your own personal growth and improvement. Just because these tools and techniques are labeled 'dark' doesn't mean they're inherently destructive. In fact, many techniques, including hypnosis and NLP, were first developed as self-improvement tools. Only when people learned how to turn these techniques against other people did they become relegated to the field of 'dark' psychology.

NLP, persuasion techniques, body language, and even hypnosis are all regularly taught in social spheres that we would not normally consider 'dark.' Athletes, business people, teachers and educators, actors, entertainers, and marketers all regularly use these techniques to improve their performance, increase their productivity, make themselves better negotiators, and yes, to convince others to do what they want. There's nothing inherently amoral about social influence, especially if the thing you're persuading the other person to do is good for them. Using NLP techniques to persuade your alcoholic partner to get help is hardly an act of evil or manipulation. Neither is learning to read your teenager's body language to improve your communication and defuse potential conflict.

With great power, however, does come great responsibility. Whenever you decide to employ any of these techniques against another person, always take a step back and ask yourself, "What are the consequences for the other person if I get my desired outcome? Will the other person be hurt? Will this put them

in danger? Will this compromise their core values or beliefs in some way?" If the answer to any of these three questions is yes, then you have to find another way to get what you want without resorting to manipulation tactics. All of the techniques that you've learned are extremely powerful. With patience and practice, they *do* work. If you become skilled in any of these disciplines and decide to use them for the wrong reasons, you could cause some serious damage to another person's psychological well being, and risk losing your important relationships if someone else becomes aware of what you're doing.

It's my hope that, after reading this book, you re-enter your life as a more secure and empowered person. I encourage you to engage in further study for any chapter that interested you. If you'd like to try any of the techniques outlined in this book yourself, remember to go slow, and be very patient with yourself. Psychological techniques are subtle and often context-based. It's normal to be clumsy when you first begin, and you should always be aware of how the other person is responding so that you can make necessary and appropriate adjustments to your techniques.

With these tactics at your disposal, you are no longer at the mercy of other people. If you find yourself constantly rubbing other people the wrong way, perhaps receiving labels like 'bossy' or 'pushy,' you now have a variety of more subtle ways to get what you want. If you're someone that's constantly fighting and barreling over others, you know that sometimes being straightforward isn't the best option. In fact, being too blunt can often backfire on you. Asking for what you need in a more subtle way won't only get you more success in life—it may even make it easier for you to build healthy relationships with other people.

If you find yourself in the opposite position, these tactics can work for you, too. If you feel that you're just too timid to get what you want, or find yourself easily pushed around by other people, you now have a way to succeed. Instead of running headlong into conflicts that scare you, you can try a different approach, one that may feel much more comfortable. As you start to achieve results, you'll probably feel a big improvement in your confidence. And the more confident you feel, the more comfortable you will be with straightforward communication, making you a much better communicator all the way around.

Most importantly of all, now that you are aware of dark psychology, those who would wish to do you harm have significantly less power over you. If someone does try to manipulate, persuade, or use NLP against you in the future, you will be better able to recognize their tactics before something bad happens. And if you are currently in a relationship with a manipulative person, you now have a better idea of their tactics, and can therefore take steps to free yourself of their influence.

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