



DARK PSYCHOLOGY

Uncover the Secrets to Defend Yourself Against Mind Control, Deception, Brainwashing and Covert NLP. Master How to Analyze People, Read Body Language and Stop Being Manipulated

ROBERT GOLEMAN

Dark Psychology

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Brainwashing, and Covert NLP. Master
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Robert Goleman

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Introduction

Congratulations on purchasing *Dark Psychology*, and thank you for doing so.

Humans can be directed to whichever way you want if you simply know how to pull strings. Yes, you have heard it right! Every human has strings attached to them, and in order to control their behavior, it is these strings that need to be manipulated. If you want to know how you can become that active and expert puppeteer, this book is exactly where you need to be. One of the most important things that you will learn in this book is the tactics of persuasion. If you search other books on the internet, most of them will simply immerse you in an ocean of tactics without explaining the science behind them. But in this book, every strategy has been explained in detail and a step-by-step process. So, if you have a specific task in mind that you want someone else to do, persuasion is the way to go, and this book will teach you how to do it like a pro.

One of my goals is to teach you all the main aspects when it comes to dark psychology. There is no 'fluff' here because everything has been described in the most concise manner possible. But before we move on to the chapters, there is something that I want to bring to your notice. The strategies and tactics that you will learn in this book are neither unethical nor ethical. They are simply strategies and whether you adopt a moral outlook while implementing them depends entirely on you. But I would definitely advise you to use these tactics with the best interests in mind and with proper concern.

There are plenty of books on this subject on the market; thanks again for choosing this one! Every effort was made to ensure it is full of as much useful information as possible; please enjoy!

Chapter 1: History of Persuasion

It was with the Greeks that the concept of persuasion was born. They defined a politician to be successful only when he/she displayed excellent skills of elocution and rhetoric. The Assembly was where the trials were conducted, and if the speaker was persuasive enough, he/she could make the defense and prosecution rest. A similar system is followed even today.

Every one of you must have heard the name of Aristotle – the great Greek philosopher. While stating the reasons why you should learn to be persuasive, he outlined four reasons –

- Defending yourself is best when you are persuasive
- You can be an excellent rhetorician only when you fully understand both sides of the story and all the options that are open in front of you
- Persuasion is a very good strategy when it comes to teaching
- It is the speaker's fault if a case is lost because both justice and truth are perfect

Before we dive deeper, let me explain to you what rhetoric means. In any situation, your ability to look for the means to be persuasive is known as rhetoric. There are three rhetorical proofs as outlined by Aristotle, and they are as follows –

- **Ethos** – This is a Greek word, and it translates to credibility or character. It is often used while talking about the ideals that are represented by a nation, community, or ideology. You will also find the Greeks used this word with reference to expressing emotions through music. The reputation of the author or speaker is what greatly affects a piece that is ethos-driven.
- **Logos** – This is a word that is most commonly found in Western rhetoric, psychology, philosophy, and religion; however, the word has a Greek origin. When translated, it means 'reason.' If we are talking about a topic at hand, then the term 'logos' will be used to

refer to the credible statistics and facts of that topic, and for this, several credible sources can be cited. You can also use deductive reasoning and allusions.

- **Pathos** – Your audience already feels something about what you are saying, and the term pathos refers to those emotions. Pathos is used in several places, including films and literature, apart from being a communication technique in rhetoric. The usage of vivid connotative language, emotional anecdotes, and figurative languages like simile, metaphor, and vivid imagery falls under this category.

Now, let us see how persuasion has evolved over the years through advertising. It was mostly in the late 19th century that modern advertising came into existence. In the early days, the development of advertising was mostly linked to the Industrial Revolution, and this led to the circulation of papers on a massive scale. Before the 19th century, short and concise ads were present in the European and American newspapers, but the persuasive element in them was occasional. But towards the last twenty years of the 19th century, advertising revenue determined a lot for the newspapers, and thus, large advertisements replaced the small factual ones.

Since a greater amount of color, pictures, and large print were used in the advertisements, the main intention was no longer about informing the people about certain products but more about persuading them to buy. Brand names came into existence in the 1880s. People became distinguishing between similar products through brand names, which led to certain brand names being associated with desirable attributes. In the years 1890-1914, mass persuasion was born because of the commencement of full-fledged advertisement strategies.

Then, during World War I, came behavioral psychology, and it was used in introducing psychological advertising. It was found that instead of claims, emotional appeals were most successful in persuading the customers. It was also along these lines that the fascists began their propaganda.

Chapter 2: What Is Persuasion?



In this chapter, we are going to talk about the basics of persuasion and why it is so important. What picture pops up in your mind when you think about persuasion? I know that most of you are thinking about the political candidates who try to persuade the voters into electing them, but there are also advertisements that persuade you to buy certain products or avail their services. Similarly, if you think about your daily life, there are many such instances where persuasion plays a major role not only on individual people but on society as a whole.

The power of persuasion is visible everywhere, from politics to news and even legal decisions. People often prefer to think that they cannot be affected by persuasion but is that so? We often think that we can see right through the advertisements and sales pitch to the persuasive nature of the brand and that we can do that all on our own. But this does not happen as often as you think. The main reason is that you cannot define or identify persuasion in your daily life by that one pushy salesman at your door. Sometimes, persuasion is present in our daily lives in the subtlest manner possible.

Most people will think about the several negative instances where persuasion is used but is that all? No, because there are several positive instances as well. Think about all those campaigns that urge people to quit smoking – they use persuasion tactics as well, but for a good cause. Similarly, any of the public service campaigns fall under the category of good persuasion.

But, how can we define persuasion? Well, it is relatively easy to understand. Perloff, in his book *The Dynamics of Persuasion*, has given a definition of persuasion, which states that it is a symbolic process that takes place in a free state atmosphere, and the communicators use several strategies to urge others to transform their behaviors or attitudes with respect to a particular issue. Keep in mind that you can call it persuasion only when there is a deliberate attempt to change others' perceptions. The people who are being persuaded should make their choice using self-persuasion and, thus, should not be coerced by someone. There is a reason why persuasion is described to be symbolic. It is because it uses sounds, images, words, etc. There are different methods through which your persuasive message can be sent either nonverbally or verbally.

Persuasion Is Different Today Than in the Past

In the first chapter, we talked about the history of persuasion, how it came into existence, and how it was used in the earlier times. But is it the same as before? No, because now there are some significant changes as to how persuasion is used in our daily lives. Here, I am going to talk about the most prominent ways in which the tactics of persuasion today differ from that of the past.

- Businesses are more and more dependent on persuasive techniques to make sales. This is not only true for those companies who solely depend on persuasion but also for those who are big names in the industry.
- As compared to the earlier years, persuasion has become more frequent in our day-to-day lives. Sit down and think about how many advertisements you see in the day, not only on the television but also on the banners by the side of the road. I am sure you'll lose count.
- There are plenty of choices available in every field, which makes the competition even more intense. It also means that consumers have become diverse. So, the message that is used in these persuasive advertisements has to be savvier, and the medium also has to be chosen with great consideration.
- Compared to the past, a persuasive message in today's world can be sent to someone more quickly. There is the ultra-fast internet, radio, and television, all of which aid in the fast communication of the message.
- The persuasive messages are more subtle in today's world. Yes, you will come across ads where they are a tad bit too obvious, but the majority of ads are subtle. You will often come across ads that try to inculcate in the viewers that the projected lifestyle is what they should strive for, and for that, they have to buy the products or avail of the services, as shown in the advertisement.

How Is Persuasion Used in Sales?

When it comes to marketing and sales, a person's persuasion skills are of utmost importance and can even become the determining factor. The main reason is that marketing, in today's world, is about talking to potential customers and steering them in a direction where they become convinced about buying a product or availing a service. But even though it might seem that it is an easy task, it's not. In order to convince someone to spend his/her money, you need to be really good at the task of persuading. You also have to understand that persuading someone and pressurizing them into buying is not the same. When you make someone feel pressured to make a certain decision, they develop a distaste for your company. But when you manage to successfully persuade them into buying, it is their own decision – you have simply changed their mindset. So, the idea is not to be too pushy in your attitude.

When you become an expert in the art of persuasion, you will be able to bring several clients and customers to your company and hefty incentives. These clients, in turn, will bring more clients – that is, the power of persuasion. When you are talking to a potential customer or client, you should inform them about all the features that make your product or service unique. Then you have to give them time so that they can think about it. The customer/client will want to do their homework and research, and so you need to give them ample time. Allow them to talk to others and take their opinion on the matter. This is something that they are going to do and is expected of them because they are going to spend their hard-earned money. That is why it is essential that even when you are trying to sway the customer to your side, you should never claim something that you cannot provide. Sometimes you will find that your client has some preconceived notions that prevent them from making a choice, and that is when you have to use your persuasion skills and break those notions.

One of the most important things to keep in mind while persuading someone is that you have to remain confident. You also need to gather as much information about the subject as you can. Don't copy others blindly. Wear confident yet comfortable clothes. You also need to understand the customer/client's mindset to appeal to them and clarify their doubts.

Is Persuasion Important in Negotiation?

We all know that negotiation means striking an agreement and one of the key skills required for this is persuasion. In order to arrive at a negotiation that suits your interests, you have to be able to convince others to believe what you say. Persuasion skills will also help you change other people's views regarding a certain situation. Some people inherently have amazing persuasion skills, but even if you don't know how to persuade others, it can be learned. If any disputes arise at the time of negotiation, they can be solved with the help of persuasion. And here, we are not only talking about the negotiations that take place in business deals but also the ones happening in our day-to-day lives.

But in order to make someone believe what you say, you need to have self-confidence and firm belief in your own views. Convincing the person in front of you becomes so much easier when you are confident. But since you are negotiating, you also need to weigh all your options and then decide which one works the best for you. Collect all the facts that you can and then evaluate them. When you have all the facts straight, you can use them strategically during the persuasion.

Persuasion in Relationships

Persuasion is not only required in work settings but also at home and with your friends. There are so many positive consequences of being able to make others see things the way you see them. To make it easier, let me give you an example – think about the last time you had a bad argument with your partner or spouse. You will notice that most of the time, arguments happen because your partner did not see things your way, and at that time, wouldn't it be great if you can change that person's view?

This was an example of how persuasion can be used when two adults are in a relationship. But it can also be used in other interpersonal relations, for example, a parent and a child. There are so many times when a kid throws tantrums for eating junk food or for buying a very costly toy that you cannot afford. In those moments, your persuasion skills will help you convince your child what is good for him/her.

What Does Successful Persuasion Look Like?

Not everyone is successful when it comes to persuasion. But what does it look like to successfully persuade someone? We are going to discuss it in this section. There are certain specific characteristics common to successful persuaders that people prefer. These include being honest and genuine, taking responsibility, showing sincerity, keeping promises, being reliable, ability to build rapport, providing effective solutions, and not arguing. But if we are to talk about the skills needed to be an effective persuader, the list is quite long, and here are some of the important ones that you should know about –

- **Self-Belief** – If someone wants to persuade others of certain things, the persuader has to have a firm belief in themselves. Without self-belief, they will never be 100% sure of what they are talking about. If you want others to believe in what you are saying, you have to believe in it too.
- **Enthusiasm** – Even when you believe in what you are communicating, if you are not passionate or enthusiastic about it, you will have a hard time convincing others.
- **Empathy** – In the next chapter, we are going to see in detail how important empathy is in order to be a good persuader. For now, you should know that if you want to convince or persuade someone, you have to learn to walk in their shoes and understand their point of view. This will also help you figure out what the person holds dear. If you want someone to do something and they are not doing it out of fear, you cannot simply scold them and tell them not to act like a child. You have to understand the reason behind their fear, and then, with that knowledge, you can find a way in which you can change their mind. The strategies you use to persuade a person have to be relevant to that particular person's journey, and only then can you outweigh their insecurities and fears.
- **Knowledge** – When you are talking about something, you need to have complete knowledge about that topic. If you want to make a strong case and persuade a person to your demands, you have to

present statistics, figures, and facts, and this can be done with a little bit of research.

- **Persistence** – The next most crucial thing that should be present in a persuader is persistence. When you place a proposal in front of someone, it is quite natural to get rejected once in a while. Not everyone will like what you are saying. But you cannot let those rejections make you give up. You have to be persistent, but at the same time, you cannot be rude. If you maintain a positive attitude and be persistent, people won't take it negatively. But the moment you go into the defensive mode, you will end up ruining your relationship or rapport with that person. Being a nuisance and being persistent are two completely different things, and you need to understand that. Simultaneously, you need to keep analyzing the person throughout the conversation. If you notice anything that makes you feel that he/she is now feeling uncomfortable with your persistence, you need to draw a line and stop.
- **Energy** – When you are talking with others, you have to be energetic. If you appear to be all lethargic and tired, no one would be interested in listening to you. One of the enablers of being enthusiastic is being energetic. Think about all those salesmen who persuaded you into buying something – did they appear to be dull and tired to you? No, in fact, they were quite the opposite – they were energetic, maintained eye contact, and spoke with passion – that is what persuaded you into listening to them. So, if you want to persuade someone, you have to maintain that same vibe about you.
- **Consistency** – Lastly, another important skill is to remain consistent. Let us say that you are trying to convince someone to keep up a promise. Then, you should also keep yours; otherwise, that person would be inclined towards breaking their promise. If you tell them that you are going to meet on Monday, don't reschedule. Be consistent with everything you say.

Developing these skills does not happen overnight, and I will agree with you on that. But you also have to keep trying. You cannot expect yourself to

wake up and suddenly gain all the necessary skills to become a successful persuader.

Some Common Barriers to Persuasion

In this section, we are going to talk about the common barriers that pop up in your plan to persuade someone. Knowing about these obstacles beforehand will also help prevent them or devise strategies to overcome them.

- The first barrier is the most common one, and that is – when people are overconfident, and they think they are very good at persuasion, whereas in reality, they are not that good. The idea that they are already way good at it prevents them from honing their skills and being better at it. That is why it is advised that you take your time and analyze your skills – take a long and hard look at yourself and then honestly judge your experience and effectiveness at persuading others.
- Sometimes people are so desperate to persuade others that they keep trying over and over again. They try so hard that it becomes obvious to the other person and, thus, puts him/her off. That is why you should never pose yourself to be too keen.
- Persuading someone is no joke. It requires a lot of effort, and you need to understand that. There are times when people don't understand the amount of effort required to get the task done, so they don't try their best. Remember that nothing comes for free. If you want something, you need to earn it through your efforts.
- Persuasion doesn't mean that you have to talk too much to convince others. You have to be clever; you don't have to be talkative. But many fail to understand that. One of the downsides of talking too much is that you miss out on several details. You don't fully listen to the person, and this is wrong. You have to be a good listener in order to be a good persuader.
- People don't understand too many details, and even if they do, providing them with too much information will only delay the process of making a choice. When you feed others with a lot of details, they take time to understand, and they might even get

confused. In certain cases, this might also lead to the main idea of the conversation getting lost or worse – some people might have this notion that you are stuffing them with jibber-jabber because you want to blind them from the actual point. So, keep it simple.

- Like I told you before, never get too desperate. If you get desperate, people can spot it very easily, and it is going to do you more harm than good.
- Never fear rejection. People get rejected all the time, and it is these rejections that will teach you many new things. This fear of rejection should never be the cause of not trying to persuade someone.
- Another grave barrier to successful persuasion is not being fully prepared to do it. Some people take it way too casually and think that they can just wing it at the last moment. But that doesn't happen at all times. If you appear to be shallow, the person you are talking to will be able to see right through you, and that will be the end of your persuasion attempt. So, always do the research and be prepared.
- Never rely on preconceived notions or assumptions about your audience. Whenever you meet with someone new, be ready to analyze them with your skills and form your own opinions on them. If you start assuming things beforehand, your analysis will not be perfect, and it will become biased with your own thoughts.
- Everything that you say to the person is important. So, don't just wait for the part where you get to persuade them. Be engaged in the conversation right from the start. The whole conversation is equally crucial.

Throughout this book, we will discuss various strategies that will help you master the art of persuasion and get things done your way. Sharpen these skills every day. Don't neglect them because persuasion is something you need to do on a daily basis, from striking business deals to asking your teenage kid to clean their room.

Chapter 3: The Six Principles of Persuasion

If we are going to talk about persuasion, then one of the most important topics to discuss is the six principles of persuasion, as outlined by the famous psychologist – Robert Cialdini. He performed his own research in this field and then came up with these principles, and we are going to explore each one of these in detail.

Reciprocity

The principle of reciprocity is quite simple and followed in various social settings. It is when people feel that they are obliged to return the favor in the form of a service, gift, or behavior. There is always a mutual benefit involved. This need to reciprocate is present in almost every human being. Thus, it plays a major role in the process of socialization. Reciprocity is present in our day-to-day lives in many forms. For example, your neighbor has invited you to dinner at their house this weekend; you will immediately feel obliged to invite them back sometime later. If a friend has helped you out in a situation, you always tell them, 'I owe you one,' and this is also an example of reciprocity. And, if we are talking about social obligation, it has been noticed that people tend to say yes more easily to people to whom they owe something for a previous favor.

Even when we are talking about relationships, reciprocity plays an essential role. It is responsible for the continuation and development of every relationship. And reciprocity is important when you want to persuade someone to do something for you or understand your beliefs.

A series of researches were held at different restaurants in order to understand the principle of reciprocity. You must have noticed that whenever you visit restaurants, the waiter/waitress brings you a little something in the end along with the bill – it can be mint or a cookie or anything like that. If I ask you whether you are going to tip him/her better for bringing this little gift, you are probably going to say no. But research shows that the principle of reciprocity works in such situations, even without people consciously realizing it. Tips were found to increase by 3% when the restaurants gave mint in the end. Another interesting fact to note is when the gifts were doubled in amount, the tips not only increased but became four times the previous amount. But what is even more impressive is when the waiter/waitress provides the small gift, walks away, stops, turns back, and says, 'Here is an extra mint for you nice people,' the percentage of increase in tips goes through the roof and hits 23%. So, the manner in which the small gift at the end of the meal was given played a pivotal role in the percentage increase of tips. From this, a conclusion was made that the

principle of reciprocity is not only about doing something for others but also making it unexpected and personalized as much as possible.

Now, let us talk about the types of reciprocity that are commonly seen –

- **Generalized Reciprocity** – When an exchange of favor or service is happening among close relationships like friends and families, it is termed as generalized reciprocity. In such a situation, the person doing a favor does not expect anything in return. Instead, the one who is doing the favor has this assumption in his/her mind that the other person would be kind enough to do the same for him/her when the time comes. Altruism is often associated with generalized reciprocity.
- **Balanced Reciprocity** – Contrary to the previous type of reciprocity, people expect the favor to be returned in balanced reciprocity, and there is also a calculation of the exchange value. In fact, the person doing the favor has an expectation that the favor will be returned to him/her within a particular time period. The thing that is being exchanged can be a tangible item or a skill, and the exchange, in such a case, would have to be with something of similar value.
- **Negative Reciprocity** – This type of reciprocity is when one of the parties involved expects more than the favor already done. In simpler words, they expect to be repaid at a greater amount from the other person. An example should help you understand the concept better – if someone is selling you an item that you really need but is selling you at an exaggerated price, then it is referred to as negative reciprocity.

The concept of reciprocity is very commonly seen in various aspects of marketing. As you know, in order to market products, consumers have to be convinced by the brands that their products are good, and for that, different strategies are used. One such strategy is the usage of special promotions and coupons. But these are very straightforward. You will come across several

subtle strategies as well, where the principles of psychology are used. Some other examples of reciprocity being used are –

- Sending some valuable information to customers when they provide the brand with their email ID, which is then used by the brand to send marketing promotions in the future
- People staying loyal to a leader or a motivational speaker in exchange for mentorship or advice
- Sending freebies to potential customers with the hope that if they like the product, they are going to come back and purchase more

Philip Kunz, who is a sociologist, conducted an experiment to learn more about the principle of reciprocity. In 1974, he sent Christmas cards to 600 random people, along with a family photograph and handwritten message. Everyone to whom the cards were sent was a stranger to Philip Kunz. But soon after the people received the cards, they also sent him responses. Approximately 200 replies came to Philip. You might be thinking why so many people who did not even know Philip send him replies. Well, it is all because of the principle of reciprocity. Since Philip Kunz had sent them a thoughtful and handwritten note during the holiday season, they felt obliged to write back.

Consistency

If you think about it carefully, you will notice that people often resort to behaving in a way that is consistent with their behavior in the past. They do this unconsciously. In fact, there have been experiments in this field that have found that people are more inclined to perform bigger favors later if, at some point in the past, they have performed some trivial favor for that person. In simpler terms, people prefer to be consistent, whether it is about something they have done or said in the past.

Let me tell you about an experiment that was conducted to study the principle of consistency. The findings were quite surprising. People in a certain neighborhood were asked to put up a billboard in front of their houses, which were part of a 'Safe Drive' campaign. But only a handful of people were willing to do so. But close to that neighborhood, there was another locality, where people agreed to put up the billboard in front of their house. But what was the difference? Well, in this second neighborhood, the people had already agreed to put up a small postcard on their windows supporting the same campaign. So, that small postcard serves as the initial commitment in this case, and because they had committed to it, they now felt obliged to remain consistent with their behavior. The result was a 400% increase. People showed support towards the campaign on a small scale in the beginning. But when the second request was made (which was larger than before), denying would mean going back on their word, and so the people couldn't refuse. The people preferred not to lose consistency over accepting the billboard.

Can you see the relationship between how the principle of consistency can be used to persuade people? For example, a health center noticed that an increasing number of people were missing their appointments. Previously, it was the staff members who used to jot down the details of the next appointment for the patient. Now, the health center asked the patients themselves to note down the details on their cards, and guess what? This caused an 18% reduction in missed appointments. The principle of consistency applies here too.

You can also say that the principle of consistency shows an adaptive behavior in people. People prefer to follow the same way of doing things.

There are a lot of decisions that we have to make as we make our way through this complex world, and the principle of consistency makes people follow the same values while making these decisions.

Think about all those times when you didn't do what you promised or said you would do. You felt bad, didn't you? That is quite natural because human beings tend to remain consistent whenever they have committed to something. All the preexisting actions, values, and attitudes determine how we are going to react next. So, once we have said yes to something, either in writing or verbally, it is highly likely that we follow through with our promise.

Another common thing that has been noticed is that the principle of consistency is likely to become stronger with increasing age. Our values of consistency are strengthened further with age. This is also the reason why stubbornness is a common characteristic of older people.

But can this principle be used in your life to do something productive? Of course, it can, and I am going to show you how.

- Suppose you have a very important and big project and you don't want to make any mistakes with it. Your first task would be to break it down, define your goals, and write everything down. Once you have broken it down into actionable steps, complete the first step. No matter how small the first step is, completing it would mean that you have embarked on your journey of commitment. And once you have completed that first step, the principle of consistency will start acting, and you will feel obliged to be consistent with your actions and, thus, complete all the steps.
- Being consistent does not only apply to our actions but also the way we present ourselves. If there is an important task that needs to be done, tell it to your family or friends. In other words, make it public. You can also mention it to someone in your social network. The idea is that when you have already made it known to other people, there will be an internal urge to remain consistent with what you said. A

person is more inclined to complete a task when other people are aware of those pending tasks as well.

- Another thing to keep in mind is that the strength of the principle of consistency increases with the effort you put. So, in order to become more motivated and engaged in the task that you are doing, set up a rewards system for yourself. This will encourage you to invest more of your time in the task.

The principle of consistency is very popularly used in sales and marketing. Remember the billboard experiment we talked about earlier? It is quite similar to that. The power of 'yes' is a commonly known fact in the world of sales. Whenever a salesperson is pitching to the customer, all they want to hear is a 'yes.' But the chances of getting a 'yes' will increase only when you are able to make the customer agree to smaller things from time to time along the way. As the customer keeps saying 'yes' to those small demands, they will be more inclined to say 'yes' to your next proposal. That is why it is always advised that you should begin with small requests that have higher chances of getting you a 'yes.' Start with low-risk things, and then, you can move on to larger requests. It is of utmost importance that you start with reasonable things; otherwise, the principle of consistency wouldn't work. When you are just starting, engaging the customer is difficult, and a smaller request makes the task easier.

Social Proof

It is true that people do care about the actions of others, and sometimes, they do it consciously, whereas, at other times, they do it unconsciously. It is in our nature to go to restaurants that are crowded because we see more people going to it and immediately associate it with being good. We do this even when we know that going to a less crowded restaurant would mean that our food is served faster. You will notice that when Youtubers or bloggers ask you to subscribe to their channel or follow them, they also trumpet their popularity to you. This is also a classic example of social proof. When people see that a particular person has a huge following or subscriber count, they are more likely to subscribe to them than a person who has only 500 followers.

The habit of looking to others increases even more when people are not sure about the decision they are making, or they are confused. They look to others so that they can determine what to do in that particular situation. Let me give you an example to explain the concept of social proof further. Have you noticed how some hotels put up a small note in their washrooms where they urge the guests to reuse the linens and towels? The most common way of doing this is by stating facts related to environmental protection and how reusing can help. It has been noticed that in doing so, 35% of the guests comply. But social proof can generate better results.

It has already been seen that 75% of the people who book a room at a hotel for at least four nights have a tendency to reuse their linens and towels at some point or the other. And so, if we are to follow the principle of social proof and include this information in every room saying '75 % of our guests reuse their linens and towels', a 26% rise in compliance is noticed.

Similar examples can also be seen in the companies marketing their products where they claim that millions of their products have already been sold. And even if you feel like you are not going to fall into this trap, it does affect your thinking process even subconsciously. Social proof can be used in a variety of ways as far as marketing is concerned – we can include third-party reviews, customer case studies, and so on.

One of the major intrinsic motivations of humans is acceptance, and so instead of following our own path, we choose conformity. The different ways in which social proof works have been explained below –

- **The Multiple Source Effect** – As you can understand from the term, this is when multiple sources conform to the same thing, which ultimately lends more authority and credibility to the product in the customer's mind. One such example is the review section of various websites. The more the number of reviews under a particular product or service, the more a new customer will be inclined towards buying it.
- **Similarity** – Similarity plays a very important role when it comes to social proof. It strengthens the effect. If there is something common between the people who are being used as an example and the customer, then the effect increases by many folds. An experiment was performed to show this. You must have noticed the different television footage having laughter tracks, and the experiment was concerning these tracks. It was noticed that the audience seemed to enjoy the clip more when they thought that the audience in the laughter tracks were similar to them and people they can identify with.
- **Uncertainty** – Ambiguity is another factor that helps to strengthen the factor of social proof. A simple example should make this easier to understand. A brand launches a new product, and a customer is buying it for the first time – these customers can be persuaded even the brand can provide them with a majority opinion that the product is good. So, an anchoring effect is created on the customers by the power of social proof.
- **Attraction** – Who do you listen to more when you are in doubt – a complete stranger or someone you admire? It is someone you admire. It is also known as the halo effect. It is also what influencer marketing is based on. When glamorous and famous people, whom you admire, endorse something, you automatically feel that it is a good product and associate it with something positive.

- **The Authority Principle** – It has been researched in-depth on how the concept of authority affects people's perceptions of what is normal and what is not. There are multiple ways in which authority can be expressed and experienced. Group persuasion is done when celebrities and influencers endorse certain products or services.

Another example of social proof that Robert Cialdini had himself mentioned in his book was that of club owners in the disco era. There used to be long queues outside the major clubs, and the owners allowed those lines to pile up unnecessarily. The presence of so many people outside gave the impression of popularity and good service to other people who flocked to the line as well. So, the line kept growing even though there was ample room inside.

The power of social proof is also evident in the concept of brand ambassadors. You will often see celebrities and experts being brand ambassadors. They post on social media and speak proudly about the brand at certain events. This is what social proof looks like in marketing. For example, there are famous cycling brands that sponsor passionate cyclists and top cyclists globally. And these ambassadors then talk about the brand on their social media and use hashtags specially meant for the brand. Another common trend on social media that relies on social proof is curating content that is user-generated, for example, reposting the pictures from the social media posts of the users. In fact, you will also find brands on Instagram, whose feed is comprised of posts that are entirely user-generated. Think about the amount of social proof generated! New customers will be easily flocked towards such a brand.

Authority

You will often find people referring to those who are in authority when it comes to making decisions. When an authority figure gives a direction, the people may follow it consciously. And if we are talking about the non-conscious level, it has been noticed that people do consider the opinion of an authoritative figure with more importance than others. Most people think that social proof and authority are one and the same, but the difference lies in the fact that authority is more about the power, knowledge, and status of the individual and social proof is more about the numbers. In short, we all follow the advice given to us by those who are experts in a particular field, are knowledgeable, and are thus considered to be a credible source.

It has been noticed that when the medical diplomas of physiotherapists are kept hanging in their waiting rooms, it is easier for them to persuade their patients to follow through with the programs that they are recommending. Similarly, if the person collecting the parking money wears a uniform, he/she is more likely to get a change from the people.

So, if we are to follow the scientific explanation behind this, it simply means that we should be displaying or showcasing all those things that make us a credible source in order to be taken seriously by others. It makes the task of persuasion much easier. But this is not such a cakewalk as it seems. You cannot simply go about telling people how excellent you are at what you do. What you can do is that you can arrange other people who will trumpet your qualities for you. And you would be surprised to know that it has been found from research that it doesn't really matter whether the person who is saying all the good things about you benefits from it themselves or not. They can even be connected to you in some way or the other but what matters is that they paint a credible picture of you.

Thus, we can say that aesthetics is a very important factor for establishing authority. If you want to be taken as a credible source by others, you need to look like one. People will think that you have a high status when you wear fancy and expensive clothes and drive a costly car. But you don't always need such fancy things. The key is to dress up for success and maintain good personal hygiene. People often think that aesthetics are important only

for the first impression, but that's not it. It is equally important in the long run. You will be perceived as someone who is well-groomed and put-together if you appear so. There is nothing you can do about it because human brains are wired in such a manner. People will start having more faith and confidence in you when you set the aesthetics right.

In fact, if you think about it, you will realize that as children, we learn everything we know from authority figures in our life – be it our own parents or our teachers at school. We listen to them and consider everything they say as the truth because we think they have more wisdom than us. We also think that we will get a favorable result if we comply with what they are saying. When we grow up, we become skeptical but even then, when it comes to something that is outside our expertise, we rely on others who master those fields. For example, we go to doctors whenever we feel sick; we take the help of lawyers in legal matters, and so on.

In a study, the number of property appraisals and contracts thereafter saw a whopping rise for a group of agents in the real estate after they made a small change. What was this change? They trained their reception staff to frame perfect replies to the customers' questions where they would mention the expertise and credentials of their colleagues'. For example, they were asked to say 'Speak to Sarah. She has been selling properties for over 15 years in this area. I am putting you through right now.' So, the customer comes to know about the expertise of the agent and automatically sees her in a position of authority. This change brought an increase in the rate of appointments by 20%, and the number of signed contracts also increased by 15%.

When it comes to credibility, there are two types that you should be aware of. The first one is that of an expert. Such people have won several awards and have prestigious degrees associated with their name. These things make people refer to them while making a decision. For example, if a book has a blurb written by Stephen Hawking, you are going to pick that book up and trust it. The second type of credibility is that of a celebrity. These are those people who serve as an aspirational figure to others. For example, you will probably buy a book right away if Oprah or Emma Watson has endorsed it.

Think about the advertisements and commercials you see about health supplements. They use celebrities to endorse their products. The celebrities showing the products don't mean that those products will give you good results, but in your brain, you think about the credibility. And this factor of credibility is what boosts the sales of the brand.

But if you cannot find someone who will explain your expertise to other people, you can share your experience and knowledge with your prospective clients or audience and show them that you are the best. Your way of speaking plays a great role here. You need to come across as someone who knows what he/she is talking about, and only then will it be believable. You should also use plenty of statistics because they show social proof and help to strengthen your authority.

Liking

We are easily persuaded by those whom we like. The feelings associated with liking someone are not always so prominent. That is why sometimes we like someone consciously, whereas at other times, the feelings are subtle, and we are not aware of their presence. One of the most important factors of this principle of persuasion is that the people concerned should have something in common in order to build liking.

This is the reason why you will often see salespeople trying to cozy up to you by building common ground so that they can use the principle of liking to their benefit. They try to find out things like whether you have passed out from the same university, whether you have a shared interest in sports, or whether you like the same TV series. Anything can be used to build common ground and, thus, enhance the likability factor.

If we are talking from the business perspective, then it often helps if the company is able to show to its customers that there is something common between them and the customer. For example, if the company sells football gear, then the CEO of the company playing football can be quite convincing for the customers. But salespeople already know this, and that is why they try to build rapport with their customers the moment they start talking and then set the ground for the principle of liking to do its work.

In short, people are more likely to say yes to those they like. Now, you may be wondering what it is that makes people like others. Well, according to Robert Cialdini, there are five major factors that contribute to the principle of liking, and they are as follows –

- **Similarity** – The first factor is obviously similarity like we have discussed earlier in this chapter. When we find that people have something that is similar to us, we are more prone to liking them and being persuaded by them.
- **Physical Attractiveness** – It is true that we should not judge a person by his/her looks, but at the same time, physical attractiveness does play a role when it comes to the art of persuasion. When a

person is well-groomed and good looking or even wears good clothes, then they automatically give off certain vibes like that of trustworthiness.

- **Compliments** – Whenever someone gives you compliments, you automatically feel positive and happy. That's the power of compliments, and that is also what gives rise to liking.
- **Cooperation and Contact** – When we work with others and become close to them, we automatically like them more. They bring us a feeling of positivity.
- **Association and Conditioning** – Everyone has their own preferences in life. We build a soft corner for everything and everyone who are associated with our list of favorite things. For example, if you love the color red and you see a woman wearing red, you will automatically develop an extra likability towards her.

Understanding all of these factors or principles of persuasion is important for you to develop likability with others and master the art of persuasion. Something that I want to mention here is that having physical attractiveness to general likability does not only mean that you need to have good looks. You should be reliable, have good humor, be honest, and so on – anything that makes people like you. By physical attractiveness, I am not exactly referring to dressing well and looking attractive. However, I would agree with the fact that your wardrobe choice definitely plays a role.

A very famous study was conducted on some groups of MBA students studying in two of the world's most famous schools. One group was advised that time is money, and thus, they cannot waste time on anything else and get going immediately. In that group, when negotiations were made, only 55% were able to arrive at an agreement.

But, in another group, the approach was changed. They were asked to get to know each other before they started the negotiations. So, the students shared some personal information with each other, and eventually, they found that they have many things in common. When they started the

process of negotiation, around 90% of them were in agreement, and successful outcomes were achieved.

Mastering the art of persuasion through the concept of liking is very important in our everyday life. For example, at work, if you are able to make your employees like you, they will be more easily persuaded, and this will make things easier. If there is likability among the employees themselves, then everything happens with more agreement, and the process speeds up. Moreover, you can ensure that your employees actually love the task they are handling if they can associate it with something that is on their list of favorites. That is why it is advised to an employer that he/she should always encourage the employees to get to know each other well.

If you want to persuade someone, be it at home or at work, you need to engage in conversation with that person and develop some common ground first before you can move on to the part where you try to persuade them. You can even comment on their achievements and appearances. Such small comments here and there will actually remind them that whatever you are saying is not a rehearsed sentence but actually meant for them. So, the idea is to lend a touch of personalization to everything you say.

So, start harnessing the power of liking today, and you are going to see some major changes in your life. Remember that before you get down to business, you need to make a person like you and so compliment whenever you can.

Scarcity

The principle of scarcity is quite simple to understand. You will see that people usually crave those things even more, which they can have only in lesser amounts. And it has been noticed that people are not even aware of the fact that the principle of scarcity does play a role in their choices. If you open an e-commerce platform, you will notice some products being listed as 'only 1 left' or 'only a few left.' These phrases act as motivators for the buyers and persuade them to buy the product right away. Similarly, phrases like 'offer expires at midnight' follows the same principle of scarcity.

In the year 2003, British Airways reduced its flights between London to New York. Previously, it was twice daily, and from there, it became once daily. They said that they could no longer bear the costs without significant losses and so it was uneconomical for them. But the day after this announcement, their sales took off. This is a classic example of how the principle of scarcity plays a role in our day-to-day lives. There was no special change in the flight itself. It certainly didn't promise any special amenities, nor did it reduce its flight time, and most importantly, there was no drop in the price of the tickets, and yet people flocked to buy them. The only difference is that now, flight tickets became a scarce product making people want them way more than before.

There are two primary ways in which you can use the principle of scarcity as per the research of Robert Cialdini in 2009 –

- **Short Supply** – The first method of scarcity is by showing that the supply is less. The option in front of the user would then seem to be limited. For example, if a sale is going on, you can say that the product is limited to ten units only. Or, you can come up with any other reason for the shortage you deem fit. Your ultimate aim is to produce a notion in the minds of the buyer that the availability of the product is limited and scarce.
- **Limited Time** – Another way in which you can bring about the illusion of scarcity is by suggesting that the product would be

available only for a limited period of time. Every weekend sale that you have ever been to is an example of this type of scarcity.

Apart from the ways mentioned above, further research into the principle of scarcity suggested two other ways in which this principle can be used to persuade people –

- **High Demand** – When you tell people that something is in high demand, they automatically develop a fear of losing it and, thus, want to act now. So, whenever you say that an option is scarce, you should also mention that it is in high demand. This would double the effect of your strategy. This strategy proves to be really fruitful when the actual supply is something you cannot control.
- **Unique Opportunity** – Another way of portraying scarcity is by showcasing a unique opportunity. I know that this is a completely different approach altogether. But trust me, it works. Let me give you a simple example. Have you ever noticed how people jump to the chance of getting their hands on VIP accesses and preferred memberships? Memberships are shown to be unique in order to garner people's attention and persuade them to get these memberships.

I think by now, you have understood what it means to use the principle of scarcity in order to persuade others. If you go and tell people the range of benefits and features they are going to get if they choose a particular service or product, it is never going to have the same effect as it would if you tell them that their option is now scarce. But remember, while you make your case in front of your potential customer or client, you also need to state the uniqueness of your proposition explicitly, and in case they don't accept it, what do they stand to lose?

The word FoMO that circulates on social media these days translates into 'Fear of Missing Out,' and this is also a concept related to the principle of scarcity. It refers to this feeling of not being able to do certain things that others, especially your peers, are doing, but you are missing out on them. Remember that feeling when you were not able to attend that cool high school party that every other kid went to? Or that gut-wrenching feeling

you get when you find a neighbor is spending their holidays on an exotic island in the Bahamas? That is what FoMO is, along with a little bit of jealousy. When your brain senses scarcity, it results in FoMO.

Are you wondering how you can use the principle of scarcity to your advantage in the workplace? The most common usage of this principle is to motivate and encourage other employees to take different training sessions. You can tell them how 'this many' employees have already signed up or how this chance won't be coming any soon to them, so they must sign up for this one. When everyone in the office is eager to take the training sessions, it only gets easier for you but also a whole lot more exciting. It will also feel less of a burden and more joyful.

The principle of scarcity is all about 'loss framing' your sentences. This means that instead of saying something like 'You will live a long life if you stop smoking,' you have to frame it with a touch of loss – 'You will die an early death if you keep smoking.' No matter how minor the loss is, its impact on the brain is definitely significant and helps a lot during persuading. It has been noticed that every human being is more sensitive to the idea of loss than the idea of gain, and you have to use it to your advantage. Loss-framing is something that can be used in every sphere of life. Make them feel that if they don't do something, they are going to lose out.

So, there you have it! All the six principles of persuasion have been explained above with sufficient examples so that you don't get confused between them. Learning these principles by heart is your path to mastering the art of persuasion.

Chapter 4: Mind Control Secrets

A majority of people believe that mind control, also known as thought control, thought reform, or brainwashing, has been present around us ever since the beginning of history. Even though this concept might be somewhat true, it has gained popularity as an area of investigation and study only during recent years.

For centuries, people have been using mind control and manipulation as a means of revenge, political gamesmanship, sexual and social control, etc. For instance, consider King David. One morning, King David looked out across the city and noticed Bathsheba taking a bath on a nearby rooftop and started lust after her. Soon, he got her husband killed by getting him drunk and sending him off to a raging war. David lusted after Bathsheba, but her husband was in the way, and therefore, he manipulated him in such a way so as to remove him from his way.

Another great example was that of Borgias and their chief manipulator Machiavelli who were the masters of mind control and manipulation. Not only were they able to neutralize the Orsinis, but they also made them believe that peace had been made and made them return to the crime scene on their own steam. Machiavelli was a master politician, an exemplar of the manipulative mind who always stayed a step ahead of anyone who wanted to bring the downfall of the princely Borgias.

However, manipulative mind control is different from brainwashing. The techniques of brainwashing are relatively new and focus mainly on the coercive and violent consent on the ones it is practiced on. The term brainwashing was first used during the Korean War and then inserted in the dictionary. However, because of its malicious use during the Korean War, it was given a negative connotation. The term was originally used to describe why twenty-one American prisoners among the twenty thousand abandoned their country in favor of their communist enemies. There was another incident where some of the American prisoners of war were made to confess to having started biological warfare even though they hadn't done that in reality.

However, there is a fine line between brainwashing and mind control. People tend to use the two words interchangeably for two different concepts, even though they work very differently. Understanding the two terms will help you differentiate between the two and also make you understand that one of them is not the kind of manipulation that can help you in your everyday life. When someone compels you to make a drastic change in your life solely based on their personal agenda, it can never be a positive change irrespective of how you phrase it.

Brainwashing

The main difference between mind control and brainwashing is the process that the subject in question undergoes. When a person is being brainwashed, they know that the people who are manipulating them are their enemies and that they are being forced towards a particular mindset or behavior under the control of those people. They often choose to submit to the imposed belief system in order to avoid the possibility of violence or physical force that might be inflicted on them. The victim might fully or partially recover if the brainwashing method is discontinued and regain his or her powers of independent thought and their original individuality. However, some people might never regain their ability to make choices for themselves. They stay brainwashed. People subjected to brainwashing for a prolonged period of time, which has been reinforced for years, often do not recover. Even though some people might recover after they acknowledge that they have been feigning acceptance of the brainwashing as a coping mechanism, other people might fail to recover their powers of individual thoughts.

Brainwashing is a malevolent kind of mind control. People have been using it throughout history as a method to make a single person or a large group of people to follow their personal agenda and thought process. This tends to end in a negative way. Groups of people or cults often use brainwashing to control the minds of several people. Malicious mind control is also used in romantic relationships where one person wants to control the actions or thoughts of his or her partner. Brainwashing is never good, no matter what situation you put in or how you put it.

Mind control

On the other hand, mind control techniques are much more subtle, whose effects last for a long time and can also be damaging at times. The manipulator starts to control the victim's mind by entering their lives as someone worth believing in and trusting, for example, a teacher or a friend. The victim of the manipulator might let their guards down from the very beginning and start to willingly participate in the process of mind control. It does not involve any physical force whatsoever, and the victim might also think that he or she is the one making all the decisions.

The primary aim of mind control techniques is to change an individual to the very core by changing their relationships, behaviors, values, beliefs, perceptions, and decisions. It is a slow and subtle process. Even if the person being manipulated is not entirely oblivious to it, he or she is often not even aware of how extensive the manipulation is. The techniques of manipulation, however, do include psychological and social force and pressure irrespective of whether the victim is aware of the effects or not.

The new identity of the victim that has been created because of the influence of mind control will continue to persist even when the manipulation is discontinued because the victims think that the new beliefs and values that they adopted were their own decisions and because of the fact that the manipulator is viewed as a trusted person. This suggests that people are more likely to passively accept resolutions when they believe that those changes that they are adopting are their own resolutions. They might even struggle to maintain such resolutions. This is why, when mind control is used with malicious intent and with the wrong motive, it can become very dangerous. Its effects are also more powerful as compared to that of brainwashing, and when a person is subjected to it for a long time, it can permanently scar and disable him or her.

However, mind control can also be used for good purposes, even though it is somewhat unethical. The techniques of mind control can be used on people suffering from addiction problems to help them recover from their habits. It is, however, also important to remember that people can also use such techniques on you and that even though you are following the subtle

directions of the manipulator, vulnerable people might think that they are the ones making the choices and following their own instincts.

Even though you might not realize it, your parents or elders have been using mind control techniques when you were growing up to help you become the person that you are today. They subtly steered you towards specific values, beliefs, and behaviors that helped groom you into a shape that is deemed acceptable and normal by society. You might also notice that your daily routines are also shaped by mind control. Your parents used it to teach you to wake up in the morning, brush your teeth, take a shower, brush your hair, wear good clothes, and make yourself presentable before leaving the house. This form of mind control is positive and can lead to positive results.

The Process of Mind Control

In a majority of cases, the main aim of the manipulators is to make a clone of them who would think just like them. They need to have a well-fed ego and a high sense of entitlement in order to achieve this. The key to being able to make others believe that they are above authority and should be emulated is by having no doubt in themselves. This simply means that the manipulators will force a new personality on their victims. The ultimate success of the mind control process is determined by the extensiveness of the process that is being imposed on the victims.

In order to successfully enforce their will on their victims, manipulators tend to follow a series of steps. A basic outline of the process is given below:

Reading People –

The manipulator needs to establish a bond or connection with their victim before doing anything else. The victim lowers all of their social and psychological defenses once the manipulator is able to form a foundation of their relationship via friendship. As the victim doesn't harbor any suspicion, intimacy gives access to the agent. After having gained the trust of the victim, the manipulator will then try to find ways of wielding control.

In order to finally arrive at a decision to target someone, manipulators scan the room to find potential targets. They need to know whether the person they are going to manipulate will be susceptible to their techniques of mind control. They need to know this before making efforts to bond with them so that it wouldn't turn out to be a waste of time if there was no potential for manipulation in the first place. Vital information like how you use your hands, the tilt of your head, verbal clues, and body language can inform others about the kind of person you are. Are you an introvert? Extrovert? Are you strong? Are you weak? Are you shy? Do you have self-confidence? While interacting with other people, we all give away a lot of information regarding ourselves, and an expert manipulator knows this very well. The manipulator will try to find any such signals that convey that you are going to be cooperative as a target.

Your body produces so much data by just existing in the world. Signs like keeping your hands across your body could signal that you are insecure. Walking with larger strides can indicate that you have low self-confidence. They also notice your posture, whether it's bowed and weak or confident and bold. Blinking could also signal that you are lying.

While scoping out a potential target, the manipulator also learns a lot about the victim's strengths, interests, and weaknesses and uses that information to identify their areas of vulnerability. Knowing the entry points of the potential target is important for the manipulative purposes of the agent as it helps them to determine whether they should proceed with their strategy of controlling and manipulating their target. They do this by assessing the person through their first impressions and body language. All of us have three personas:

1. Reputation
2. Public persona
3. Private persona

The private persona of a person is the reflection of their true inner personality. It is generally composed of emotions, values, ambitions, hopes, preferences, attitudes, and thoughts and forms the character that lives inside their heads. The public persona of a person is the character that the person portrays to the world. Here, people try to mitigate their negative traits and display only the positive ones. In addition to this, reputation indicates how the individual is perceived by other people, and it's something no one has control over. These three personas form the foundation of a person's first impression.

Manipulators will rapidly assess your usability and value as a target by analyzing the information that you unknowingly provided. They will continue to get to know your values, needs, insecurities, weaknesses, and strengths if they think that you are going to be an obedient follower and that you are appropriate to their manipulative views. On the basis of their assessment, they will change themselves into someone that they think will

attract you and make you can trust them. Their actions will always convey four of these basic messages:

- We are good for one another.
- You can trust me.
- We are the same.
- I like your personality.

Unfreezing –

All of us have a semi-fixed set of beliefs and values that have been with us since childhood. These beliefs and values get carried along as we become adults, and sometimes we also add new things to them or revise them as we move ahead. However, a majority of such beliefs and values have become fixed as a part of our identities. Our natural reaction to these beliefs and values being threatened, contradicted, or questioned is to defend them as a part of who we are.

We undergo a process called “unfreezing” when we are compelled or manipulated by another person to question our established beliefs and values. Certain life circumstances can also trigger this, for example, the repossession of a house, getting fired from a job, or the loss of a loved one. It is also triggered by instances where we come across a shift in our fundamental beliefs. For example, when we start to question the conventional ideas regarding the society we live in and how it works or anything that makes us question our core beliefs about why we are here or how life works. Therefore, machinations of a manipulator or even circumstances unfreeze and make us doubt many of our core values and beliefs.

When we go through a stage of emotional vulnerability that makes us question our belief system, it makes us more vulnerable and susceptible to manipulators. We become the perfect targets for such kinds of people. Manipulators use other people’s weaknesses to their advantage and tend to tell their targets whatever they want to hear.

A very common example of this kind of mind control process is when a person with little self-control enters a romantic relationship with a strong-minded individual. On the pretext of protecting her, cherishing her, and loving her, the strong-minded person starts to impose his will on his partner. In these types of relationships, the stronger partner appears to tell all the right things so that he or she can feel in control and obtain power over the weaker person. However, manipulation doesn't only take place in romantic relationships. Power dynamics are present in all kinds of relationships. Manipulators see a lack of self-esteem or self-confidence and vulnerability as an invitation. It is also seen within families where children manipulate their parents or vice versa.

The Process –

The primary aim in this stage is to compel the victims to let go of their semi-fixed beliefs and values and adopt those of the manipulator by untangling the victim from their past. In addition to this distancing, they will also try to make the victims believe that the previous events in their life are wrong, bad, or the reason behind all their difficulties. Because of this, the victims lose their understanding of the world and have no other way of defending themselves, and after this, the manipulator proceeds with the process of manipulation. This makes the victim susceptible to believing new ideas and concepts that are deposited by the manipulator. During the process, the victim is severely isolated from the outside world, and during this time, the manipulator makes full use of one-on-one meet-ups, focus group discussions, and seminars that are within his territory.

If the manipulator has developed a friendship with the victim for purposes other than trying to include the person in a cult or marketing scheme, the manipulator will try to create a situation in which the victim has little contact with other relatives and friends. He will have as much contact as possible by doing this; he improves his opportunity to inculcate his values in the target. Some methods of mind control also require the target to get involved in the process late at night when the target can't think properly as his brain is tired. During this time, the victim will agree to whatever the manipulator is saying.

Freezing –

In this stage of mind control, the pseudo-personality will start to form, and the victim goes through a huge internal struggle as his new identities start to clash with his old ones. The manipulator uses a reward and punishment method on them to solidify the beliefs and values that he is instilling in them. They reward good behavior by providing the victims with simple yet highly-prized privileges. The privileges include being able to visit home or permission to call home, a special title, involvement in the process of planning, or even a one-on-one conversation with the leader. On the other hand, punishments are harsh and swift. The degree of punishment depends on how bad the behavior of the victim is and can include restrictions on eating or speaking, public insults, or loss of leadership responsibilities. Punishments might also include physical beatings. This kind of reward and punishment scheme is also seen in workplaces, personal relationships, friendships, and romantic relationships.

The victim tends to accept the punishments willingly, thinking that he deserves it even though he is physically mistreated by the manipulator. A belief that justice is being served has been instilled in the victim's mind through the process of mind control. For example, women who are physically abused by their manipulative partners tend to stay with their abusive partners as they think that they would lose their children, be killed, or have no value outside the restraints of their relationship. This kind of mind control is also used in group situations.

The victims are also made to go out and recruit more people as a way to freeze their pseudo-personalities. Through this method, the members of a particular group disseminate the message of the group by speaking with the manipulator's voice and adopting this ideology. The members need to be fully invested in an idea to be able to sell it.

Another method of freezing the pseudo-personality is through re-indoctrination. This is why some groups make their members attend camps

or seminars every year, month, or week. Although the process of mind control might seem slow and take a long time to fully take root, it will take a huge amount of time to undo it once it does. It might also take professional assistance to completely dislodge from the psyche of the target. The effects of mind control can be removed by using therapeutic assistance. Firstly, the victim has to be completely separated from the environment in which they were being manipulated. Full recovery is almost always possible when the victim follows a diligent path with the help of a compassionate and competent therapist.

Controlling People With Your Mind

When employed for the right reasons, mind control can be constructive and helpful. It needn't always be used to harm or badly affect other people. If you know how to use it responsibly, it can benefit both you as well as those around you. There are several situations in which you can use mind control. Applying the power of your mind for the improvement of a situation is a good side of manipulation. Understanding the basic principles of mind control can help achieve positive effects and changes, including:

- Convincing people to join a worthy cause
- Influencing people to do good deeds for the world
- Raising socially aware and responsible children
- Saving a failing marriage
- Helping a friend overcome depression
- Calming down a brewing fight

Here are a few ways by which you can learn how to finesse situations in order to get a positive outcome:

Knowing the Personality of the Other Person –

One of the first steps to utilizing mind control techniques on other people is somewhat the same as those that cults use to attract new recruits into their ranks – by observing other people and trying to figure out their personality traits. You can gather clues about this by noticing how they manage their emotions and feelings, especially in situations of conflict. You also need to consider several other factors as well. Try to figure out your objectives. What are the results you are hoping to get? What are your intentions? Why do you need to or want to control the mind of that individual? Your tactics will work differently on different people. That is why it is important to ask yourself these questions. Is your target attracted by the potential of some kind of reward or because of financial gain? You can start to notice the route following which your strategy will be most effective once you get to know the personality of your target. Try to examine the kind of language your target uses, his hand gestures, verbal clues, and body language when

you are interacting with him. All of these will make you informed about the personality you are dealing with.

Four Basic Personality Colors –

People are generally categorized into four types by network marketers: those driven by competition (red), by familiarity (blue), by detail (green), and by pity (yellow). While approaching a potential customer, marketers first try to figure out under which category the customer belongs by initiating small talk. After getting an impression, they contrast their pitch in such a way that it matches the core motivations of their customer.

While trying to convince a person belonging to the yellow personality trait, the marketers tend to use phrases like “to help a friend,” “for charity,” etc., as these types of people are highly empathetic. They need to be assured that they could benefit a greater purpose or cause if they buy a certain product even if it is clear that the product will be of no use to them.

People belonging to the green category consider the effects of the product before purchasing a particular item. They tend to ask themselves how they can benefit from the product or what they will gain from it. As people having this kind of personality traits are extremely practical, marketers often try to learn the science behind the item in order to sell it to them. Reds tend to be the leaders, exuding confidence and strength. Marketers need to compare them to their peers in order to convince them to buy an item as they are extremely competitive by nature. Their personality prevents them from being outdone by anyone. So, to trigger their need to buy something, marketers often say things like, “your colleague actually purchased two of these.”

People belonging to the blue personality trait are one of the easiest groups to sell to. They are sure to buy something as long as you connect with them and are able to develop a friendship with them. Marketers often add language that compliments the customer in order to further their powers of persuasion. They can say things like, “this will really compliment your eyes” and even use other terms of endearment to improve the relationship or friendship they are building while pitching the product.

You are on to a good thing if you are able to figure out an individual's personality trait and connect them with their corresponding color, similar to a trained marketer or advertiser. This ability to understand people will give you a head start over those who can't understand personality traits and behaviors. Even if you get a general impression, having an insight into who they provide you with the information you need to draw on.

Irrespective of whether mind control is good or bad, it is used by all of us in one way or another. The motive to alter someone's state of mind or emotions is always present, even if in its simple forms. However, it becomes destructive when it is used to completely alter an individual's identity and mold his beliefs and ideas into something entirely different than what they actually are. It doesn't always have to be a negative thing, though. However, as you are trying to obtain a particular result by using your knowledge about them, it is always manipulative. You are engaging in the act of manipulation, even when you are trying to defuse a volatile situation or end someone's problems with addiction. What is important here is that you know how manipulators attain mind control so that if you are in such a situation, you can be aware of what's actually happening rather than being just an innocent victim.

Techniques That You Should Know

If you want to press the right buttons in a person, then you also need to know which ones and for that, I am going to teach you some techniques. But remember that using these techniques does not mean that you can get people to do anything you want, but you can definitely influence their actions to a certain extent.

Gaslighting

When you are using this technique on a person, you take a direct hit on their self-confidence and self-esteem. It is a very covert technique, and the main aim is to make the person fall into such a situation that they are confused and no longer trust their own thought process. They are not sure of their judgment, and thus, they start depending on you for suggestions. Even if the person had an independent nature in the past, all of that has changed now, and they depend on you for every decision they make. But if you use this tactic effectively, then the person won't be able to realize that you are trying to manipulate or control their mind.

A stress response is triggered in the person, and if you are persistent enough, then the subject has no other option but to surrender to you.

Fear of Alienation

Here, you have to befriend your subject first, and then you have to work on your bond to make it strong. The bond will become strengthened to a point where your subject would feel that this is the most precious relationship of their life. In short, the situation will become such that the subject won't be able to live without you and so they start depending on you for everything. This is also when you can exercise full control over their mind.

The fear of alienation works in a manner that the subject thinks if they don't do what they are asked, you will leave them, and then they are not going to find this precious bond anywhere else in the world. The fear starts kicking in, and they do whatever you say.

Repetition

One of the most effective tools that have enormous effects on influencing someone is repetition. This particular persuasive technique is useful in both written and verbal form. Various psychological studies have revealed how repetition changes an individual's way of understanding a particular subject. It even possesses a positive impact in such cases when the main concern is to agree with a message. People start believing things that aren't true by frequent repetition. The reason behind this is that people are not capable of distinguishing between familiarity and the truth. In other words, the brain of a human has a tendency to accept facts that are suggested. You may refer to the brain to be lazy as it does not prefer to perform the legwork.

The human brain tends to select a way in which very little resistance is involved. This characteristic is present in every single individual throughout evolution. Thus, when your mind confronts with a repeated fact, then it starts liking that fact more. It is then that you may feel the information to be true because of the repetition.

It works the same in the case of relationships too. A person often begins liking another person more if they see each other more often. It is because the brain becomes familiar with the other person's face and thus insisting or persuading to like him or her. It is not the exact way of falling in love, but it assists in forming a bond initially, for example – visiting the same restaurants or cafes, ordering similar food items, spending time with the same friends, practicing similar hobbies, having a similar taste of music, etc. help in creating a liking along with a strong bond.

You need to remember an extremely crucial thing about repetition. This strategy proves to be highly effective in such cases when the audience is not paying their entire attention to the message or facts you are trying to express. But, if you are willing to make the repetition strategy very much effective, then you need to stop yourself from overusing it. A lot of people do exist who hold a firm belief that repetition becomes more effective if you use it more. But, you will be astonished to know that in reality, things work just opposite to this belief. The reason behind this is that a time comes when repetition shows an opposite effect on the other person as he or she may get irritated. A very common example of active repetition where this tactic is utilized for persuading the masses is those situations when

politicians repeat certain points while delivering a speech. They do so for making the common people believe the messages they are conveying.

Sarcasm

You need to establish a firm and powerful voice if your desire is to convince or influence someone so that he or she obeys your commands. You may do so with the help of sarcasm. But, it is necessary for you to learn how to apply sarcasm properly. The main aim of the various methods of controlling the mind is convincing others to think as well as accept your point of view. Sarcasm will assist you in such matters.

Suppose an individual is narrating a certain point of view, which is not preferred by you, then you may surely mock his or her opinion through sarcasm. You may also create sarcasm by arranging questions, having hidden or indirect answers. Sarcasm can even be developed in another familiar way- make fun of the other individual's opinion simply by telling jokes.

People who are not sarcastic by nature may find it difficult to develop that tone in the initial stage. But, there is nothing to worry about it as you will be able to acquire that skill with time.

Flattery

Another useful thing for controlling the opposite person's mind is compliments or flattery. Utilizing flattery in any conversation possesses many advantages, and the end result is convincing someone to follow your commands. Firstly, you need to think about things that you are willing to use for complimenting a person – it may be their hair, their outfit, their talking style, dressing sense, etc. The entire concentration will turn to the compliment, and it will provide you an ideal opportunity of changing the topic as per your desire.

When a person is trying to drag all the attention to himself or herself, then the best possible way to do so is by taking the help of flattery. You just need to approach the person opposite to you and tell him or her that you are able to understand their point of view, and lending your ears to others is an

excellent skill. Flattery is also helpful in strengthening your bond with the other person. The person opposite to you will converse with or attend you with a friendly approach if you are capable of making him or her feel that both of you make an excellent match as you complement each other.

Diversion

One of the advanced techniques of controlling someone else's mind as well as persuading him or her is a diversion. This particular technique is not so aggressive by nature and has an ethical side. The sole purpose of utilizing diversion is hiding that part of your story, which you don't want the opposite person to notice. Suppose the conversation is proceeding towards such a direction that you do not like at all, then you may immediately divert that topic in some other direction as per your choice.

Guilt-Tripping

One of the strongest emotions that can be used against another individual is their guilt. If you are willing to exert guilt's power for convincing a person to make certain decisions, then it is necessary for you to step very carefully. If anything goes wrong with guilt-tripping, then the person whom you are trying to persuade may get angry, and nothing will work as per your plan. Thus, you need to be cautious while taking every single step.

You must not accuse a person straight away if you are trying to make him/her admit something. By doing so, that person will get driven away. You may get what you desire by asking them the perfect questions, as such questions will take you towards your desired conclusion. But, you must not lose hope if things fail to work according to your plan. In that case, you need to ask multiple questions as this trick assists in catching an individual in between a lie.

Playing the victim's role is another essential feature related to guilt-tripping. Or else, he or she won't feel sorry at all. You also need to make the other person feel that you deserve something better and make him/her realize that you are not meant to receive such treatment from them. Your ultimate goal or intention must be guilt-tripping the other person for all those things which you do not find to be correct at all.

Thus, these were a few techniques with the help of which you may get things done according to your desire by controlling others' minds. A common thing about mind control methods is that the techniques make every single thing personal. It is because individuals have a tendency to provide better responses only when something becomes personal.

Chapter 5: How to Analyze People?



Analyzing people is something that anyone can do once you have learned the tactics and the rules. In fact, if you want to engage in successful and good communication with someone, you first have to learn to analyze them. So, in this chapter, I will help you learn how to decode what people are trying to say either through verbal cues or through their body language.

Understanding Body Language

It is not only through words that we communicate. Our bodies play a very important role in communication even though we do not realize it as such. And by body language, I do not mean someone giving you a thumbs-up or using sign language. It refers to the subtler forms of movement in bodies that mean way more than you think they do. It refers to the small actions in people's bodies, facial expressions, or even the way in which people sit. In fact, verbal communication can be interpreted in different ways depending on the body language that the person is showing at that point in time. You cannot always trust the words on their face value until and unless you have analyzed the person's body language and what they are trying to say to you.

The most common question in people's minds is whether all these actions of body language are performed by a person in their conscious state of mind or not. Well, in the majority of cases, people react to things happening around them automatically or instinctively. And if you think about it, you will also come across situations in your life where your body communicated something for you that your words did not intend to do.

Now, let us see what the importance of body language in our everyday communications is. We have all heard of the phrase that says, 'Our actions speak louder than words' and it is so true. A simple handshake or posture can speak tons about a person even when they haven't said a word themselves. It is in human nature that whenever you say something, your body reinforces it in one way or the other. If someone is not sure about something, they can say it to your face, but you can also understand it from their body language, for example, a frown, raising eyebrows, shrugging, and so on.

When you communicate with someone, you want them to trust you, and that trust cannot simply be built by your words. Your body language has to be convincing, as well. Your audience needs to buy whatever you say, and this can be done by mastering the art of body language. This is an important lesson for public speakers and salespeople. Another importance of body language is that it helps you find out whether someone is honest with you or not. The signs of lying are not the same for everyone. There are some who

stutter; some make too many hand movements while some avoid eye contact. When you are talking with someone, that person might not express their true feelings in words, but their body language never lies, and if you learn how to read that language, you will be able to control almost everything.

When you meet someone for the first, that first conversation is very important. The human brain has already formed an impression of the person within the first half a minute, but when you can read body language, you will be able to truly understand the person right from the first day. In a typical situation, positive impressions involve –

- Straight posture with shoulders held back, and the chest is centered
- Maintaining a focus on one another
- Paying close attention to the conversation
- Maintaining eye contact but not like a staredown

Now, we are going to learn what some of the common types of body language mean.

Handshake

When we were in school, we were taught how to shake hands correctly. Your grip should be firm but not too hard to make the other person uncomfortable. In fact, most conversations are started with a handshake, and so, it needs to be studied carefully. A handshake basically sets the tone for the rest of the conversation. Here are some things to keep in mind –

- Sometimes, handshakes feel too weak, and it usually denotes a lack of confidence in that person. Whenever someone does a weak handshake, it is often taken as a sign of anxiety and shyness. It has been found that women have a greater tendency to have weaker handshakes than men. But if the handshake is a strong one, it shows that the person has a strong personality. Some other things to take note of while doing the handshake are strength, the texture of the skin, temperature, dryness, grip, eye contact, and duration. I know

what you must be wondering – all you are doing is shaking hands, but that means a lot on the inside.

- Another thing to keep in mind is how much pressure you are using while shaking hands. You don't need to squeeze too hard because that will hurt some people and make them feel uncomfortable. When a deal is being made, people usually squeeze the hands very gently so that they appear confident, and he/she feels confident about the kind.
- Some handshakes openly showcase how dominant they are. Such handshakes are powerful, and in certain cases, the person might even have the tendency to overcompensate.
- Then there is the fancy handshake. This is when instead of just shaking hands, people add a little something extra like they might have a secret fist bump. These handshakes are not usually seen in the workplace but mostly with friends.
- After that, there is also the lingerer. These are people who will hold your hand beyond the normal time period, and these people might even come off as desperate. A typical handshake might not be more than a couple of seconds.
- Just like lingering, taking your hand away too fast is also bad. When your subject's handshake is too fast, it either means they are anxious or that they are in a hurry. Too short handshakes will paint you as someone with a rude personality.
- Lastly, another thing to keep in mind is that when you are doing a handshake with someone, you are not only shaking hands but building contact, and for that, you need to look at the person. If you shake hands while looking away, it generally takes away the meaning of the situation. You will be passed off as someone who is shy and insecure. At the same time, your eye contact should be limited to a certain extent so that it doesn't seem too aggressive to your subject. Keep in mind that squinted eyes and pursed lips are also signs that you are an aggressive person.

Body Orientation

Next, we are going to talk about body orientation and how it is important in conversations. When you are talking with someone, you turn towards them and then engage in a conversation (you obviously cannot talk to someone

with your back towards them). Your body orientation speaks volumes regarding what you are thinking about.

If you examine two who are talking with each other passionately, you will see that they are not only facing each other, but the position of their shoulders are also parallel to each other. This is also known as the closed formation, and on the psychological level, it signified that these two people are so engrossed in the conversation that they are not paying attention to anyone around them.

Now, let us continue this conversation with respect to a group. Now that you know the parallel body orientation fact, whenever you are amidst a group of people engaged in a conversation, you will be able to tell who is engrossed in the conversation and who isn't.

Let us say that two people are talking about something with great attention, and their bodies are oriented in a parallel manner. But now, a third person is walking up to them with the intent of joining the conversation as well. Will that person be rejected or welcomed into the conversation? There is a way in which you can tell.

Welcomed

Let us say that the two people who were originally engrossed in the conversation plan to welcome the third person, then they will shift their positions in order to make room for the third person. Their body orientations will now have to be re-distributed, and each of them will be standing at a 45-degree angle to each other. If you see from a distance, it will appear as if they are standing in a small triangle.

Similarly, if two people are already engaged in a conversation but they are not standing parallel to each other; rather, they are standing at a 45-degree angle – this means that they are not highly engrossed in the conversation, and it would be great for them if a third person joins in.

Rejected

Now we are going to analyze another situation where a third person walks into the conversation between two people, but he/she is not welcomed. In this case, the two people won't turn their entire bodies towards the third person. They are only going to turn their heads slightly, answer the third person, and not try to make him/her feel inclusive. It is like telling the person to go away, but they are not saying it in words. They are saying it non-verbally. In usual scenarios, the third person can automatically sense that he/she is not wanted there, and they walk away until and unless the person is really desperate. And these types of situations are not only limited to these places where there are only two people. This happens even in groups with a lot of people.

The Way They Walk

Everything about a person's walk matters when it comes to analyzing their personality. You will notice that some people have the habit of walking fast; in other words, they have a faster gait. In such cases, it is more likely that the person has a very outgoing personality. They possibly have a higher level of conscientiousness. Similarly, if someone has the habit of walking at a slower pace than normal, it is because they have a cautious personality from the inside. And this does not always mean in a bad light because people who have shorter strides are often deemed as self-centered but in a good way. In simpler words, it means that the person is in the habit of looking out for himself. But a slower pace is also found in introverts, but they also walk with their heads facing down.

Now, let us quickly have a look at the different types of walking styles and what they really mean.

The Driver

Like the term suggests, in this type of walking style, the person usually puts most of his/her weight forwards, and then they move forward very quickly, just like a driver driving a car. When people have this type of walking style, it is found that they have the habit of multi-tasking. For example, they might be talking to someone over the phone and, at the same time, walking. It has also been noticed that when faced with an obstacle, these people know how to find their way around it. These people are also found to

possess some good characteristics – they follow logic; they are productive and clever. They can be very much competitive and bold, and that is also what brings their downfall. So, now you see how analyzing someone's walk can also help you understand the person and how you should deal with him/her.

The Corrector

These people usually have the habit of keeping their eyes fixated on the ground while walking, and they have a very light tread because they tend to walk on their toes. They have this constant thought in their minds that they don't want to step on anyone else accidentally, and so, they walk slowly and remain conscious. They don't like intruding into other people's spaces, and so, they keep their arms close by their side.

The Correctors are often introverts, and they also have a very polite demeanor. They are not one of those who say everything they are feeling. They kind of want you to understand and know how they feel, and so, their verbal communications are very limited.

The Influencer

These are those types of people who prefer working confidently with their heads held high, their chests out, and their shoulders straightened back. You will find them often shouting out 'hello' to whoever they meet on the way, and they walk with a certain springiness. They maintain full and direct eye contact with people. The most common example of this type of walk is seen in leaders, politicians, and celebrities. They simply love the spotlight, and they can even snatch it from others. If you see any clips of these people walking or see them in real life, you might think of them as a bit too much.

The Supporter

The Supporters are those people who follow a very medium pace, and they neither push their weight forwards, nor do they bend too much backward. They are never too choppy. They are not the ones to wave at you or shout at you from afar. Instead, they believe in making eye contact, and when put in

a team, they perform really well. In short, they are team players, and they also prefer spending time with their families.

Apart from these categories, there are certainly other things to keep in mind when it comes to analyzing the way people walk. When someone is feeling anxious because of some particular incident or is an anxious person in general, they have a tendency to move too much towards the left while walking. At the same time, if you know someone in your circle of people who is a harried walker, they probably pay much more attention to details than anyone else. Lastly, everyone who has a graceful gait has been found to possess a very high sense of self-esteem.

Arm Positioning and Movement

Next up, we are going to discuss what different types of arm positioning and movements mean and how you can use it to analyze people. When placed across the body, arms usually denote as defensive barriers. On the contrary, when kept in open positions, arms signify a feeling of openness. If you are trying to analyze how a person is feeling or what mood he/she is in, then arms can really be a very good indicator.

Let us first start with crossed arms, which you will often notice in people around you. What does it mean? The possible meaning of crossed arms is that the person is being reluctant and is in a defensive mode. This posture is often seen as a protective mechanism, but the cause can be a variety of reasons. It might be that the person is very tired and does not feel like putting up with anything right now, or they might be feeling severe animosity. Usually, when people are standing in front of their bosses or any such authoritative figure, crossed arms is seen as a sign that the subject is feeling threatened by someone's presence. But sometimes, people often confuse and misread because when the weather is cold, people cross their arms to make themselves feel warm.

Notice the fists of the person when their arms are crossed. Are their fists open or clenched? If they are clenched, then it is most likely that the person is feeling hostile. It might be a sign of aggression or stubbornness.

Other than this, you will also come across people who grip their own upper arms. Sometimes, people confuse this with crossing arms, but it isn't. This is a sign that the subject is feeling insecure. This is a type of self-hugging, and so when people experience unsafe or insecure feelings, they try to make themselves feel good by hugging. Similarly, if only one of the arms is gripping another upper arm, it shows the person is nervous and is trying to protect oneself.

Another common posture among people with respect to arms is when the arms are folded at the back, and hands are clasped. This is a sign of authority and confidence.

Head

We all know that when we have asked someone a question, and they nod their head to that, we take it as a 'yes,' and we predict it as a 'no' when they shake their head. Sometimes, we also greet people with a simple nod when they are at a distance from us. But did you know that there are several messages in the way people nod and the speed with which they nod?

I hope that by now, you have understood that you must always keep a check on the non-verbal signs of a person, especially when it doesn't match what the person is saying verbally. So, here are some points about the non-verbal signs of the head that you should learn–

- **Tilting of the Head** – When you are talking with a person, and they are genuinely interested in what you are saying, they usually tilt their head. So, if you find a person doing this, then either they find your topic of conversation interesting, or they like you or both. If you want to know which, then you should change the topic and see if the person still has their head tilted. If yes, then they are not only interested in the topic but more. Another instance where people tilt their head is when they are trying to understand or looking at something that they don't fully understand.
- **Chin Position** – The neutral position for the chin is when it is kept horizontally. But if the chin is above the horizontal mark, then the

person might be trying to show a fearless or arrogant attitude. On the contrary, when the chin of a person is below the horizontal position, then they are either sad or depressed. It can also signify that the person is deeply engaged in self-talk. They might be feeling threatened or judgmental.

Legs

If we talk about awareness and control, then it is the least with your legs when you are engaged in a conversation. You can easily fake a smile, but you might not be that much aware of what you are doing at that time with your legs.

There are four main positions in which a person keeps their legs, and I am going to explain to you the meaning of each one of them –

- **Parallel** – This is the posture where you keep your feet close together in a parallel position, and it is often considered a neutral form. This posture means that the person is feeling hesitant or is not confident about what they are doing.
- **Legs Apart** – This is a stable posture and is more commonly seen in men. It shows an attitude of dominance.
- **Cross-Legged** – We usually cross our legs when we are meeting someone we don't know. It is somehow deep-rooted in our subconscious. It can also mean that the person has a closed-off attitude.
- **Foot Forward Pose** – This pose means that the person is trying to be attractive, or they are trying to leave the conversation. It can mean either of these.

There is another point worth noticing about the legs of a person is whether they are fidgeting or not. If someone is fidgeting too much, then it is most likely that they have become impatient.

Some Psychological Tricks to Learn to Analyze People

Here you will come across some simple tricks or tips that are helpful in examining others and figuring out their real motives.

Look for Hot Buttons

The first and one of the best ways to understand the opposite person's motives is by recognizing his or her hot buttons. Those are actually an individual's pain points. By getting to know the hot buttons, you will be able to realize the other person's thoughts. First of all, you have to create a strong bond and rapport with the person you are willing to analyze. For that, you need to be an excellent listener. The trick to knowing a person better is by asking questions that are open-ended. Asking such questions whose answer will either be positive or negative won't assist you at all in this case. You need to know his or her strengths, challenges, etc., and for that, you are supposed to ask such questions so that he or she starts speaking about their own self. Another effective way of dealing with such situations is by sharing your own stories with the opposite person. You may also tell him or her about certain incidents where you went forward to help other people. Many times, you will notice that the person with whom you are sharing your life stories may end up relating himself or herself with such similar incidents. Such type of conversation proves to be quite helpful in analyzing others.

A few of the hot buttons that are very common include greed, fear, anger, etc., among which fear being the strongest. Fear reveals itself to be a powerful hot button when an individual tries to escape pain or look for pleasure. But, that does not mean fear will act in similar ways for everyone. It is entirely dependent on a person's experiences of life.

Anger is experienced by everyone and that too quite frequently. If you notice a person getting angry, then you need to observe how he or she is dealing with this emotion. You must also take note of the person's ability to make decisions when he or she is angry. If you are willing to utilize this particular hot button in a beneficial manner, then your first duty is to understand the exact reason behind his or her anger.

Almost every single individual possesses the next common hot button, i.e., greed in various forms. Its degree varies from one person to the other. Thus, if you hold a belief that the person just opposite to you does not have greed at all as he or she has almost everything, then you are actually wrong. The

moment you begin to understand a person's hot buttons, you will surely be able to recognize his or her motive or values. When an individual goes through a situation in which his or her hot buttons get triggered, then that person will naturally become defensive. If you get to understand this, then you will be able to know the exact reason behind an individual's behavior.

Reveal Any One Secret

Self-disclosure is extremely effective when you are trying to examine others. You just need to tell a secret to that particular person whom you are willing to understand. It is a proven method of building up a good relationship with others. As soon as the individual understands that you think him or her to be trustworthy, then a bond will be built automatically. It is not necessary that you have to tell him or her an authentic or real secret of yours. You may simply make up a false story and share it as a secret. Your duty is to show the person that you trust him or her. Only then will that person open up in front of you.

Observe Non-Verbal Communication Minutely

A maximum number of people have a tendency to overlook non-verbal communication. One of the best means of understanding people who are around you is by noticing their gestures. Every single movement made by a person has a certain meaning, for example, movement of eyes. Once you start keeping a sharp eye on such cues, you will definitely understand the signal that the individual is willing to send you. Thus, to analyze people in a better way, you may follow this trick of paying attention to a person's gestures. The various kinds of non-verbal communication include gestures, eye movements, voice tone and volume, physical movements like rubbing hands or chin, facial expressions, sitting or standing posture, etc.

Look Straight Into the Person's Eyes

Eyes are almost similar to an expressive door that will lead you to a man's mind. Or you may say that eyes convey a lot more than you can ever imagine. Thus, one of the best tricks that you must learn to analyze individuals is watching or observing their eyes. A lot of reliable studies state that if you are efficient in reading a person's eyes, then you will possess the capability of understanding whether he or she is telling you the truth or lying. Besides this, you will also get to know whether the person opposite to you is loving the conversation or disliking it by noticing the pupil size.

See the Individual In the Way He or She Wants to Be Recognized

Every single person holds a particular image of himself or herself in mind. Even if this fact is denied by some people, yet the truth is that everybody wishes that society must perceive them in a specific way. It is known as the self-verification theory. People having positive perceptions want to interact with such individuals who hold positive thoughts about them. At the same time, those having negative perceptions about themselves prefer interacting with critics. Various authentic studies state that analyzing a person becomes smoother if your perception about the opposite person matches with his or her self-perception. Thus, for examining a person properly, you must treat him or her in the same manner he or she wants to be seen.

Chapter 6: NLP Hacks to Get Things Done Your Way

Before I explain the different NLP hacks that you should know, let me give you a brief introduction to what NLP is. NLP stands for Neuro-Linguistic Programming, and it is basically a psychological approach to how you see things in life. It will teach you to control your mind and shows you a practical way of how everything is happening.

Now, you may be wondering how NLP works. The main principle behind NLP is that at the beginning, humans don't have that much control over their life, but something that they can control is what they are thinking about. There are so many belief systems and things that influence our thoughts and emotions, but with NLP, you will learn to control them. There are so many techniques of NLP that will show you life from a different point of view, and with time, you might even be able to deal with phobias, fears, and other traumatic events. It was first discovered in the 1970s by John Grinder and Richard Bandler, and today, NLP can be used by everyone in all spheres of life. Whether you are trying to close the biggest deal of the year or you are trying to write a very engaging blog that will drive traffic to your page, NLP is useful in all these places.

In fact, do you know why NLP is so called? The term 'linguistic' is used because NLP is mostly about how you use words (linguistic) and leave an impact on the brain (neuro) and reprogram it (programming) to suit your needs. But don't get me wrong here – NLP can be used both positively and negatively. You can choose to manipulate someone through NLP, or you can get things done your way without manipulation.

Every one of us faces some challenges in our day-to-day lives, and it is very similar to solving jigsaw puzzles on a daily basis. Every day is like a new puzzle that we have to solve, and we are not aware of the challenges that will come our way. The process keeps going on and on like this throughout our lives. But amidst all these puzzles, we also meet despair. But NLP will teach you certain skills that you can use in your everyday life and create something good and meaningful out of all the chaos. In this chapter, I am

going to walk you through some of the most important techniques that you need to learn.

Listen Carefully

Listening to others is very underrated, and so people often overlook it. But listening to someone will not only give you a full understanding of the person but also help you build a true connection with them. When you are listening, you are not only taking in words through your ears but also assessing the body language of the person. You are analyzing their tone and their choice of words. You are taking clues from every aspect of the person and figuring out whether they are confident, insecure, angry, happy, excited, or simply neutral. In fact, in order to be a good listener, you have to understand what your subject is trying to say and then ask him/her meaningful questions whose answers will, in turn, lend you a deeper understanding of everything related to the person.

There are various levels in which listening occurs, and I am going to explain them to you before I talk about the tips –

- **Surface-level listening** – This is when you are in a conversation with someone, but you are not really listening to them. You are pretending to be listening to them. When people engage in this type of listening, they usually make appropriate noises or nod from time to time, but they are not really present in the conversation. And the person who is speaking to you might even be aware of the fact that you are not truly listening to them. They might not be aware of it consciously, but on an unconscious level, they know, and this drastically affects your ability to build a rapport with them. I think if you take yourself back to the past, you will come across situations where you have done this because we are all guilty of doing this. And most of the time, we have also experienced what it feels like to be on the receiving end of surface-level listening.
- **Conversational listening** – This is the most common type of listening there is. We are listening to the person speaking with us, but we are not really engrossed in the conversation because, at the same time, we are also thinking about how we are going to respond to them. We talk to the person, listen to what they are saying, and simultaneously formulate our answer in our mind, talk again, and

this keeps going on and on. So, the main focus is not on the subject but on our response to what the subject is saying. We are fixated on giving the right response. In other words, we are engaging in conversation not to listen but to talk. If you want to build a deeper connection and a long-lasting rapport with someone, this is not the way to go about it.

- **Active listening** – This type of listening is when you are present in the conversation with all your senses, and you are not only taking in every word said by the person but also asking the right questions to draw out more information about him/her. In order to do this, NLP advised you to use clean language. Now, you might be wondering what clean language is. It is a way of talking where you don't interrupt the person who is already speaking so that their flow remains intact. For example, if someone tells you 'I want a better job' and you ask them 'Better in what way?', they can continue giving you more answers without being interrupted. But if you ask them, 'Wow, that's great. What is your definition of better?' This will be interrupting them and break their flow. So, as you may have understood by now, active listening is more about spinning words in such a way that you use the speaker's words to ask more questions and then summarizing the discussion in a clever and concise manner.
- **Deep listening** – Finally, we come to deep listening, which can be considered as one of the most important NLP skills to learn. In deep listening, you create a type of magical trance around your subject. It is not only about listening and answering your subject but goes way beyond that. You have to keep your mind entirely calm and listen to whatever your subject is saying without any biases or judgments. When you are successful in doing this, you start seeing the person for who they are. This helps you form a very deep connection with your subject. Deep listening is a skill that is applied in a variety of situations like counseling, coaching, leadership, and even sales. If you can harness the power of deep listening, your interpersonal relationships will undergo a complete change for the better.

Have you ever been in a situation where you felt like even though you are talking to the person, you are not really communicating with them on a

deeper level? If yes, then it is because you were not truly listening to them. Once you learn what I am about to say, your communication skills will rise to a whole new level with the help of NLP. I would advise you to follow these tips the next time you are in conversation with someone –

- **Don't think about yourself** – When you are in the middle of a conversation with someone, you need to forget about yourself. At that moment, it is your subject who is the first priority and not you. Usually, people are so concerned about their own replies or what they are going to contribute to the conversation that they omit several important details in the subject's speech. So, you have to focus entirely on what your subject is telling you. Is your mind wandering off to other places in the middle of a conversation, or there is too much chaos in your mind? Then here is a trick that you can follow – touch the roof of your mouth or your palate with your tongue while you are listening to your subject. This reduces the chaos in your mind, which is also known as sub-vocalization, and it will be easier for you to put your subject as the first priority.
- **Practice deep listening** – Deep listening skills are a very important part of NLP. Through these skills, you are not only going to understand what the person is saying verbally, but you are also going to understand what message they are trying to transmit to you on an unconscious level. This is done through understanding the facial expressions and body language of the subject.
- **Push yourself into the learning zone** – As I told you before, internal chaos in your mind is one of the biggest obstacles to listening carefully, but once you master NLP, you will be able to let go of that chaos very easily. And once you do that, you will be able to learn many new things about your subject only by listening.

Practice Dissociation

Before I explain how you can practice dissociation, it is important to learn what dissociation is. Dissociation is a technique that is very commonly used in NLP that helps you to overcome or diffuse negative feelings that are sometimes triggered by certain stressful situations. Once you practice it, all feelings of negativity will be eliminated, and a feeling of objectivity will be restored. The process requires you to overcome any personal association that you have with something (it can also be a scenario) and then approaching it from a third-person point of view as if you were watching a movie. The ultimate result is that all your negative feelings will slowly start to dissipate, and your involvement in the situation is withdrawn. You not only start finding solutions to the existing problems in your life, but you also become objective.

Remember that here, you are trying to intentionally dissociate from your life's problem or scenario so that you can gain a better perspective. You are not trying to avoid the problem here but rather trying to see it without any personal attachment or involvement.

But when we talk about the word 'dissociate,' the first thing that comes to all our minds is the kind of dissociation that happens after a person had endured heavy trauma, and they don't have any sense of what is going on in their life. If dissociation is so scary, why would NLP want you to do it intentionally? It is somewhat like helping yourself dealing with the anxiety of day to day life. Our brains often use dissociation after a traumatic event so that it can protect itself from the trauma. In a similar manner, you can use dissociation to detach yourself from any 'first-person' feelings that you have towards a situation so that you can view it from a distance without being affected by it.

What does anxiety thrive on? Emotions. Whatever emotion you are currently engaged in, anxiety will take it away and blow it completely out of proportion so that you start anticipating the worst things in your future and recall every bad experience you had in the past. In simpler terms, you become stuck in a toxic emotional loop of your own from where there is no

escape, and it prevents you from thinking things through or gaining a clear perspective on things.

But when you intentionally dissociate, you practice a certain level of self-compassion, especially in those times where compassion is what you need the most, and yet you seem to be unable to do so. This will prevent you from turning to toxic coping thoughts. All the maladaptive strategies that you use have not developed overnight but rather have been developed and nurtured over the years. So, if you want to see the situation for what it actually is, you need to take a step back and dissociate. Only then will you be able to use your rational mind to see and judge things. And when you are able to form a clear idea of every situation, persuading someone will become easier because you'll know which strategy to use.

Empathize

All of us try to be logical in our lives, but there will be times when we can't think logically and let our emotions rule our decisions. That is why people who are experts at persuasion know that you cannot simply depend on appealing to a person's brain, but you also have to appeal to their hearts. And, in order to do so with perfection, you have to be able to put yourself in their shoes and understand what they really feel – that is what it means to empathize with someone. It might sound very easy now, but it is not so in real life. It can be challenging, especially for a beginner. You will also need to practice it in order to master the art of empathizing. You should be willing to listen to the other person without letting any judgments pass your mind.

If you want to develop the skills of empathy, here are some tips for you –

- You have to listen more than you speak. I have already spoken at length about listening skills in the first half of this chapter. Only when you provide your undivided attention to that person will you be able to understand what they truly feel.
- The second step is to express what you think about their situation or let them know your perspective. But the statement you make must have a genuine touch. If you say 'I am really heartbroken to hear that,' then mean it. You have to experience the incidents dictated by the person as if it were happening to you and then express your thoughts. If you are able to do this effectively, you will be able to feel their emotions, and then all you have to do is voice them.
- Allow yourself to be vulnerable. When you are having a professional conversation with someone, then you'll find that you prefer staying in the safe zone. This is because people think that they might seem weak or foolish if they show their vulnerability to others. But on the contrary, if you show your vulnerability, they'll only think of you as human, and this is what you need to make the person feel that they can connect with you on some level. In short, it brings about a feeling of sameness. One of the effective ways of doing this is once you have listened to what that person has to say,

think of a similar situation in your life and share it with him/her. Try to remember how you felt when you were in that situation. You might have felt anxiety and apprehension. No matter what the feelings were, share it with the person in front of you.

- Avoid making any assumptions because empathy cannot be practiced through making assumptions. Whenever you are holding on to some assumption, you are allowing a preconceived notion to cloud your mind, and you often miss the bigger picture. The connection that you are trying to build with that person might start to seem unnatural and forced.

Use Subtle Commands

It has been noticed that people will listen to you when you use commands or suggestions instead of questions. But these commands have to be used subtly; otherwise, you might be deemed as someone rude. The difference is made in your ability to frame your sentence in a manner that it passes off as an inclusive suggestion. For example, if you want someone to go grocery shopping with you, then you'd probably ask them, "Would like to go pick up some groceries with me?" But this type of sentence framing is more likely to get you a negative answer. In order to sway things your way, you should try saying, "Let's go pick up some groceries." When compared to the former, the latter has higher chances of provoking a positive response.

Practice Choice Restriction

One of the most effective strategies of persuading someone is to limit their choices and especially limiting the chance of them saying NO to you. Let me give you an example to explain this concept in a better way. Suppose a salesperson asks you, “Would you like to purchase an extra warranty for this product?” then you are very likely to say NO to him/her because whenever it comes to paying more, the customer becomes sensitive to the price. But in order to get a positive answer, the salesperson could frame the questions in this manner “Would you like to get a one or two-year warranty for your product?” Here, the chances of saying would increase a lot provided that the warranty will actually be of help to the customer.

Keep It Simple

No matter what strategy you use, it is important to keep things simple. When things are simple, people can easily memorize it. So, no matter who you want to persuade – be it your boss or a friend – using simple language is of utmost importance. Ensure clarity in language. Also, make sure you are not referring to too many benefits or attributes at the same time because the more attributes you state, the more the person will become confused.

Now that you have learned about the NLP hacks that will help you in persuading others, I hope you can see the pattern that most strategies require you to reframe your words in a way that they can persuade the subject. Reframing involves looking at the same thing from a different point of view so that the focus of the conversation doesn't fall on any negative elements. In short and simple words, you have to change the meaning of negative experiences and present them in a rosy light. But none of these techniques is going to help you if you don't have the willpower to make the change happen. NLP works silently. So, even though you might not see any changes externally, don't lose hope because on a deeper level, it is going to guide you in your day to day interactions with people.

Chapter 7: How to Manipulate Someone Through Storytelling?



Are you willing to create an argument about such an issue that you yourself believe very strongly? If your answer is yes, then you need not use long speeches for making other people understand your words or your viewpoint. Instead of giving long speeches, it is better to tell one story to manipulate the opposite person. You will certainly be extremely glad to know that stories play an effective role in persuading others. Storytelling and manipulation are directly proportional to each other. Telling stories may serve you well in leadership if you are trying to persuade other people according to your perspective or way of thinking. But, for that, you need to be an excellent storyteller.

Often, rhetoric that is based on opinions is more demarcating than being influential. On the other hand, statistics enters through one ear of the listener and exits from the other. But, you will be able to change the minds of other people if you blend certain facts and rhetoric very carefully for creating a perfect story. You will be successful in manipulating others by hooking their interest and letting them get emotionally invested. Manipulating others by telling stories is not at all bad until and unless your intention or the stories are damaging in nature.

Manipulating an individual who always stays worried about his or her survival is very smooth and effortless. Such a person possesses obvious demands as well as triggers. You simply need to pull that trigger for controlling him or her. You just need to make him/her believe that you will meet any single need or requirement, and that person will start following you. Threats or demands are not at all necessary for leading people. Stories work best in this case. Almost every single individual loves stories. A maximum number of people love those stories where they get to play the central role. As stories are helpful in influencing a person's behavior, so if you are willing to manipulate an individual, then you just need to perform a simple task. Tell him or her one nice story. Give attention to the person to whom you are telling a story. Make him or her a crucial part of your story, for example, a hero or a protagonist. It is easier to expand or change the mindset and viewpoint of a person by using stories.

Creating an impressive story that has a particular viewpoint is actually a skill that you need to learn. You won't be able to attain this particular skill within a single day. It requires practice and a strong and clear mindset for manipulating people with the help of stories. It is not mandatory that your stories have to be real all the time. You may create them according to your requirement and convey the message efficiently. Here are some tips that will assist you in dealing with manipulation through storytelling.

Look for the Perfect Example

Before creating a story of your own, you need to check out the activities of the people who are around you. Then, you have to relate or find similarities between their activities and your viewpoint. It is easier to persuade people by telling them stories of incidents or events that match their habits or daily activities. Thus, observing what those people are doing is very crucial for effective manipulation. Suppose you are willing to manipulate individuals for adopting safety standards. You will definitely be able to do so if you tell them a story that describes what happened to a person when he or she failed to follow the necessary protocol.

On the other hand, if you are trying to display or explain the advantages of any new process, then you may take the assistance of a story for demonstrating the ways how the process would prove to be beneficial. People tend to get manipulated easily by hearing stories than by listening to direct statements. Hence, for finding out an ideal example for setting a story, you need to be an excellent observer. Observe the likings and disliking of an individual and also try to learn his or her mindset. It will assist you in making a story as per his or her point of view.

Know the Message That You Are Willing to Transmit

When you are having the intention of persuading the opposite person, then you must not directly say or dictate to him or her what to do and what not. The story that acts as the carrier of your message must be open enough so that it allows the listener to think about it. Thus, for effective manipulation, it is you who must have proper knowledge of the message that you are trying to communicate.

Good stories possess something more than just a viewpoint; such stories have a strong message. A well-framed message acts as an efficient tool of persuasion. You have to be very much clear while considering the things that you want your listener to do as well as state the reasons behind it with the help of a story. Thus, before framing a story, you need to input your message in the proper place and in a perfect way so that you become successful in manipulating the other person.

Set the Background of the Story Properly

Being a storyteller, or you may say manipulator, you are the one and only person who knows the direction where the story is moving as well as the events that occurred in a certain situation. But, the person who is listening to your story is not aware of such facts. You have to give your best so that the opposite person understands your story very clearly. For better understanding, it is your responsibility to introduce a few details at the beginning of your story, such as what, who, when, where, why, and how. Unless and until your listener understands the meaning and point of view of your story, you won't be able to manipulate him or her. Thus, be very clear while narrating a story starting from the first words to the last. Make sure that each word counts a lot.

Avoid Unessential Tangents

A lot of people do exist who are not so good or capable of editing their thoughts. Such kinds of people have a tendency to get lost as well as start describing their own details while narrating a story meant for manipulation. Do you possess such characteristics? Does your mind tend to wander while editing the necessary thoughts? If your answer is yes, then you need to control your mind and concentrate, or you may say focus on the points that you are trying to communicate. Instead of speaking about unnecessary facts, it is better to stick to the main points of your message or story. You might find it to be quite fascinating while getting lost in the details of your own self, but it is actually quite distracting for the ones who are listening to your story. At times, such sidebars may also irritate or frustrate your listeners. Some of them may also lose interest if you do not avoid the tangents that are unimportant while you are attempting to manipulate others through storytelling.

Rehearse the Message That You Are Trying to Convey Before Starting

In this case, rehearsing does not mean that you have to read aloud a script while telling a story. Rehearsing can also be done silently on your own by keeping the entire thing inside your mind. For successful storytelling as well as effective manipulation, you may take a pen and a small piece of paper from your notebook and write down the important and main points of your story. Read the points as many times as possible so that you don't divert from the essential facts while narrating the story in front of others. This will also assist you in assuming or predicting the ending, and anticipation is highly necessary for successful manipulation.

By rehearsing, you will be able to follow the best or a direct path from the beginning to the middle and finally to the climactic scene of the story. Thus, instead of starting off your story directly, you will definitely get better results if you do so after proper rehearsal. You will be astonished to notice that new and better ideas may come to your mind at the time of rehearsing.

Pay Attention to Who Your Audience Is

While framing a story that you are about to narrate, an important thing that you must notice and keep in mind is who is going to be your audience. For positive results, you need to create your story only after observing the mindset, mentality, and background of your audience. You must keep one thing in your mind that you have to touch the heart of your listeners with the help of your story. So, you need to understand them quite nicely. For example, some stories may have certain offensive content or theme, like the ones where you put forth or announce the resources that you possess before those people who lack such resources. It is better to edit such sorts of stories, or you may avoid telling those stories to the opposite person.

It is your duty to check that your listener does not feel bad or low after you try to persuade him through your story, which contains any kind of negative or offensive content. It is of no use telling your listener who does not come from a sound financial background the amount of money you paid for your scarf or how you are able to afford or enjoy shopping from expensive stores. Thus, the setting of your story must be done in such a manner that it does not offend your listener. Frame a story as per his or her lifestyle, choice, etc. Inspire your audience through storytelling instead of discouraging him or her.

Keep Your Story Short

An excellent thumb rule that you need to use at the time of telling stories is to prepare an elevator speech of thirty seconds. Such a rule is usually followed while meeting a stranger. But, at the time of telling stories to your known people, you may take a bit longer time, such as three to four minutes. If you take a longer time than that, your audience might get a feeling that you are trying to give more attention to yourself. Thus, you have to be smart enough to tell your story in a short time span and that too, including all the main points. Being crisp is one of the main tips for telling stories while manipulating others. Elaborate and too descriptive stories may destroy the interest of your audience, and they may also feel bored. So, your responsibility is to enhance the interest of your listeners and persuading them in a short time.

Express or Transmit a Strong Emotional Feeling

There is no need to be over-enthusiastic while conveying your message through a story. But, there is a need to express your belief or opinion as well as an exhibit that you are extremely confident about the matter. Passion or belief can easily be conveyed by selecting the right stock of words. You must choose those words that will attract your audience as well as lead him to follow or believe your opinion. Besides choosing the right words, the other thing that you need to keep in mind is the correct way of delivering such words. The perfect way of delivering your story means a lot, as it is one of the essential ways of manipulating your listeners.

Voice modulation plays a key role in this case. Thus, if your intention is to manipulate others through storytelling, then you need to learn various means of modulating your voice. For example, when the key or main point of your story arrives, it will sound better if you raise your voice at that moment. By doing so, your audience will get attracted as well as understand the important message that you are trying to convey. You may also pause for a few seconds to show the opposite person that you are putting emphasis on a certain point. The flow of the entire story needs to be well-paced, and it is necessary to follow such a speed to hold the interest of your audience from the beginning to the end.

Weave Your Tale

One of the best means of persuading people is by using examples that are related to real-life events. By doing so, individuals are able to relate themselves more quickly and efficiently. You may speak about the processes used by an employee to ensure safety. Or, you may talk about the ways that a team undertook for adopting any new process. You must also mention the improved results achieved by the team after utilizing the new process.

Positive results help in attracting people, and this will also lead to positive manipulation. You must also follow a very powerful story structure as a weak one may distract the mind or viewpoint of your audience. Your duty is to describe the entire situation in a brief manner. It is also essential to narrate what exactly happened. You must not forget that whatever story you weave or narrate, you must always be close enough to convey the benefits of your point of view.

Support Your Story With Various Facts

Many people do exist who think that facts cannot be used or included while approaching a story in a narrative manner. This thought is absolutely not true. You may feel free to input certain facts inside your story. You may either start your story with facts or end with them. The choice is entirely yours. Here is a small example that will help you in understanding this matter in a better way. Suppose one among four to five students of standard five or six are lagging behind in a certain subject such as English – if you are attempting to convince the guardians that such a problem must be looked after or taken care of on a serious note for the better future of their child. Then, the best way to put the focus on or draw attention to this problem is by narrating a story which may begin in this way- “Now, let us hear the touchy story of Samuel, a charming boy whose grade was not up to the mark.....”

After that, frame the story in the best possible way by using selective words and supportive facts. Then, after you are done narrating Samuel’s story, you may end your message with some more facts that will describe the necessity for remedial English schooling. In this way, you will be able to persuade people in a better way as a lot of individuals believe in facts and figures. But, many situations may come when you will face the need to get straight to the main point. While dealing with business cases, the best possible way of relating your viewpoint is by doing it concisely and quickly. In such situations, facts, along with figures, become stories in themselves.

Elaborate or Provide Only a Few Details

A person who has a habit of telling stories quite often possesses a tendency to add up more and more minute details to his or her stories. By doing so, the story will drift away from its main point or shift from the actual happenings. Lastly, you may end the story by describing those things that actually did not occur at all. Thus, you need to keep this matter in your mind that it is good to add details to your story, but adding too much is not at all required. The addition of excessive details may lead you to narrate some unnecessary points, and your main motive of manipulation may not become positive. You must be very much cautious at the time of framing your stories.

Be Attentive Towards the Impact on Your Audience

Listeners usually feel disturbed or become preoccupied just after hearing the stories that are related to someone's difficult experience. Such feelings tend to increase if such stories having a negative touch are repeated more than once. It is the usual nature of almost all human beings. Feeling sad after listening to the negative or sad experiences of others is extremely natural. Now, if you are willing to narrate an extremely sad story, then you must be sure enough that your audience is adequately prepared to listen to your story. Besides this, you need to keep another thing in mind, and that is to control your flow and not take too long to finish your story. You must also not describe such stories in great detail as it might be stressful for your listener.

Telling or narrating stories are quite enjoyable as well as a natural part of all sort of social interaction. But, stories tend to be more powerful when they are placed or framed by the hands of a leader. The reason behind this is that a leader is the best person who knows the various ways of utilizing the stories. He or she knows where, when, and how to place the stories in front of his or her audience for the purpose of manipulating them as much as possible. Many people hold a belief that storytelling is reserved only for occasions that are formal in nature. But, this belief is actually not true. You will be able to persuade the individual who is opposite to you and make him/her believe your point of view by following the above-mentioned suggestions or tips for effective storytelling. Practice makes a man perfect, and this fact is the same, even in the case of manipulation through storytelling.

Chapter 8: Strategies of Persuasion You Should Know About

Before we move into the different strategies that I am going to discuss, I want to let you know that most of them will be focusing on non-conscious influence. In other words, the person you are trying to influence might not even be aware of the fact that you are using some special strategies on them to persuade them to do what you want. I will explain the why and how of every strategy here, and you need to understand the 'why' very clearly; otherwise, you won't be able to execute the strategy properly.

How to Prime Someone's Mind?

If you ask someone how many realities there are, they are going to tell you that there is only one reality, but is that so? No, because reality is a very subjective concept. Your reality may not match with that of someone else's. Everyone has their own perception of things, and this perception is what dictates their thought processes and, thus, their actions. If we are to say in simpler terms, how a person interprets the things that are happening around him/her is what perception means. So, the first lesson here is that if you want to change someone's answer to your question, you have to first change their way of thought, and for that, you need to change their perception. In this first section, we are going to learn how you can prime someone's mind and mold their perception to your benefit.

Before we move on to how you can prime someone's mind, I want to explain to you what is the power of having mindsets. Just like a camera takes images through a lens, you take in the world through your mindset, and it is your personal lens. Every problem that you solve or situation that you perceive depends on your mindset. There are three concepts that you need to understand in order to understand the power of mindsets.

- **Schemas** – Let us say that you are discussing a general concept, but whenever you are talking about it, there are several other ideas on your mind related to that concept. For example, whenever you are thinking about your role model, you must be thinking of motivation. So, all these feelings and emotions that you associate with that general concept is termed as schemas. Now, the overall perception and concepts of a person's mind can be changed by activating the schemas. However, you have to keep in mind that at times, there might be negative consequences of activating the schemas, especially when it means believing in a stereotype. For example, if you believe in the stereotype that Asians are good at Maths, then activating this schema might induce negative perceptions. But the question is, how can schemas be activated? Well, the answer is through priming.

- **Priming** – The method by which a mindset or schema is activated is known as priming. Priming a schema can be done through various methods; for example, you can do it by exposing them to certain expressions or words. Even the subtlest exposure can have drastic effects.
- **Spreading Activation** – This is a very important concept that you need to learn. As you know, your brain is basically a gigantic network comprising of various nodes, and each node represents a distinct concept. This means that concepts are related to one another through some common points. So, if you prime a certain schema and activate a mindset, you are also activating another concept that is related to that schema. This process is known as spreading activation. So, if you want to activate a certain concept, think of everything else related to that concept that would intensify the activation through this network of nodes.

There are different types of priming based on what you have learned up to this point, and they are –

- **Positive & Negative Priming** – The processing speed of a person's mind is directly influenced by these two types of priming. The processing speed is considerably reduced, and things are done faster under positive priming. The direct impact is that memory retrieval doesn't take much time. On the contrary, things are slowed down when negative priming is done.
- **Semantic Priming** – This type of priming involves the usage of words in a linguistic or logical way. For example, if you have already primed someone with the word 'yellow,' their response to the word 'banana' will come faster. This is how semantic priming is used.
- **Associative Priming** – In this type of priming, two stimuli are chosen so that they are related or associated with one another in some manner. An example should make it clear – any person would link 'cat' and 'mouse' together when they hear these two words. So, the idea is that if you want the subject to respond to you at once

when one of these words appears, you have to prime them with the other word.

- **Repetition Priming** – We already saw an example of pairing in the previous type of priming. Repetition priming is when the pairing of response and stimulus is done over and over again. It has been noticed that when exposed to repetition priming, there is a tendency of subjects to become more likely to respond quickly every time the stimulus is placed in front of them.
- **Conceptual Priming** – Here, the response and stimulus have to have a conceptual relation between them. In short, they have to belong to the same conceptual category. For example, the words 'pen' and 'paper' are two such words falling under the same conceptual umbrella.
- **Perceptual Priming** – Here, the stimulus can have multiple forms. In simpler terms, there might not be any conceptual relation, but the words should sound somewhat similar. For example, if someone has already used the word 'boat' and then said the word 'coat,' they are more likely to get a faster response to the word 'coat.'
- **Masked Priming** – This type of priming is when the initial stimulus in a sentence is not stated clearly and is masked by using hash marks or anything like that. But you are still going to get a response even though your stimulus has not been stated clearly.

Now, let us move on to how you can frame your persuasion strategy by priming others' mindsets.

How to prime someone's perception?

The first thing that we are going to learn is how you can prime someone's perception. Our environment is full of different types of primes, and it is these primes that affect how we see the world. Priming effects are very popularly used in TV commercials and their time of airing. You will often see commercial breaks being aired after the last scene. The feelings or schemas that have been triggered by that last scene will depict how the

audience is going to view the commercial. The perception of commercials can completely change depending on the scene that the viewers have just watched.

Let us take an example of a very famous TV show – *Grey's Anatomy*. In this show, most of the time, the TV commercials are shown after a depressive cliffhanger; for example, someone has been diagnosed with a terminal illness, and they are going to die. So, your mood is already ruined, and certain schemas in your brain have been triggered. Now, you may be thinking that this is a very bad time for airing a commercial. I agree with you, but what if that commercial is about life insurance? Then, it will work in your favor because the audience is already feeling remorseful. But it is usually advised that you should air commercial after favorable scenes so that the viewers can perceive your brand in a positive light.

If you want your subject to stay open-minded, then you should activate open-mindedness in them by targeting specific schemas. All you have to do is simply make a statement of how someone really enjoyed trying a new experience and tell a convincing story. But that does not mean that you have to conjure up lies; you can simply tell them a genuine story that brings home your point of being open-minded. For example, you can tell them something like – 'Do you ever want to go scuba diving? My friend Rick was very scared at first, but he kept an open mind, and once he did it, he said it changed his life forever.'

How to prime someone's behavior?

Let us say you want to ask someone to do something for you, and you want that person to comply. In that case, priming their perception won't be of that help, and so, you have to prime their behavior. In the previous section, I already explained how you could start a conversation to trigger the open-minded schemas in a person that would help alter their perception. In order to elicit compliance, you have to activate the schemas associated with compliance. For example, you can talk about someone who complied with a certain request. Another strategy that you can apply is that you can initiate a conversation that revolves around helpfulness.

Lastly, I would like to remind you that it is only your imagination that will limit the applications of priming. So, let your imagination fly high, and the options in front of you are endless. Whenever you want a certain outcome from someone, all you have to do is brainstorm different ideas through which you can activate the schemas related to compliance that will stack the odds in your favor. Sometimes, in order to make someone comply, all you need is a nudge, and activating the right schemas is that nudge.

The Power of Anchoring

In this section, we are going to learn about the anchoring effect and how you can use it to persuade someone effectively. The anchoring effect falls under the category of cognitive biases. It is very common in people. It is a psychological phenomenon that is well-tested. There is an 'anchor' or reference point that people rely on while making evaluations or decisions in the future. This anchor is chosen as a starting point by the subject. It is in human nature to compare between different things and then make a final decision after they have found some more clues to add to the anchor and then adjust the ultimate decision to their preference. The anchor is ever-present, but we don't always consciously notice it.

Let us say you are purchasing a new vacuum cleaner from a store, but we always check the price tag first. The price tag then becomes the anchor. Your final spend on the vacuum cleaner will somehow be influenced by the initial price tag you saw. The moment you pick up another vacuum cleaner, you will keep comparing it to the price you saw in the beginning. We all do it, but we never notice that the first price tag is the anchor here.

Now, let us see why do people rely on anchors. There are two major reasons for this, and they are as follows –

- **To Arrive at the Right Judgment** – Whether you use the anchor non-consciously or consciously, most of the time, it is because you want to make the right decision. It is not the lack of motivation that promotes people to rely on anchors. It has been found that people who are highly motivated also depend on anchors when it comes to making decisions. And I am not only talking about trivial decisions but some very important judgments as well, like those in trials where judges have to decide the sentencing. Yes, there has been extensive research in this field to find whether the anchoring effect exists in criminal trials or not, and yes, it does. For example, in research, the recommended sentencing length of the prosecutor did act as an anchor even when the legal professionals were told that the length of sentencing chosen had no legal basis and was chosen randomly. This was done in a hypothetical case of shoplifting. The

prosecutor had demanded that the sentence should be of three months, whereas the defense demanded a one month sentence. The average sentence decided upon by the legal professionals was four months. In the same case, when the prosecutor demanded nine months in place of three, the legal professionals gave a six months sentence. To you, these extra two months might not seem that much, but even when the sentencing spans years, there is an anchoring effect. It is mind-boggling when you realize that a person's life can change forever just because of a simple cognitive bias.

But even when there was no external source for giving the anchors, the people can generate these anchors themselves. For example, a study was conducted where people were asked what the freezing point of vodka is. Most people did not know the actual answer, and so the anchor they created in their mind is the freezing point of water, which is 0 degree Celsius. So, they thought that for vodka, the freezing point must be lower, and they gave their answers accordingly.

- **To Give Less Mental Effort** – The second reason why people use anchors so much is that they are primarily lazy. Yes, we always want to be accurate with our decisions, but at the same time, we do not want to give too much effort in doing so. People think that anchors are a shortcut that will help them reach their decisions faster, but by doing that, the main goal of arriving at accurate judgments is lost.

Now, let us see how you can use the concept of anchoring while persuading someone. There are plenty of ways in which you can do it. Let us consider that you are a salesperson, and you want to increase the sale of your products, and you plan on sending emails to your previous customers, asking them whether they want to reorder any of the previously purchased products. Here, you can provide your customers with a numeric anchor and make sure this number is slightly more than the average value. Your customers would be drawn towards this higher number and, thus, end up making a bigger purchase than the average. But this was the most basic persuasion strategy that you can use for an anchor. Let us have a look at some of the more complex ones.

1. The Decoy Effect

Like I told you before, people have the habit of comparing different options present in front of them before they settle for a decision. But you also have to keep in mind that the options that you are providing to your subject can act as anchors. An experiment was done where people were provided with two options for subscription to a magazine – the first one was \$59 and provided only an online subscription, whereas the second one was \$125, which provided both print and online subscription. So, 32% of people chose the \$125 option, and 68% chose the \$59 option. The resulting revenue was \$8012.

But then, a new option was introduced, and the resulting three sets of options were as follows –

- **Option A** - \$59 (Online subscription only)
- **Option B1** - \$125 (Print subscription only)
- **Option B2** - \$125 (Online + Print Subscription)

So, as you can see here, option B1 is similar to B2, but there is one aspect that is bad. And when these three options were presented to the audience, no one chose B1 because they can get more at the same price if they chose B2. Simultaneously, the revenue skyrocketed and increased to \$8012. Do you know how? 68% of people who chose the online subscription now reduced to 16%, and 32% of people who chose online and print subscription now rose to 84%. This is because people compared product B1 and B2 and saw that B2 was a better option. There was nothing they could compare product A to, and thus, it went unnoticed. The product B1 here was simply a decoy to increase sales.

2. Door-in-the-Face Method

This is a very famous compliance method. At first, a very large request is made to which you already know that the subject is going to say no, but then, you make a smaller request afterward. The likelihood of the subject complying with the smaller request increases because you had already asked for something more and then sized down. Here, the subject would

feel that it is not right to keep saying no, and so, they are more likely to say yes to your smaller request.

A very simple example is when you want a raise in your salary, and you have to negotiate it with your boss. If you actually want a 10% increase, then you have to start the negotiation at 20% and then when your boss declines that offer, ask for 10%, which will sound more realistic, and your boss will comply.

3. Give High Expectations

When you convey high expectations to the subject, that acts as the anchor, and the subject moves towards it. Suppose you have submitted your dissertation, and your professor asks your opinion on what you think about it. What should you say? Well, if you have been paying attention to the importance of anchors, then the best answer would be to say that it deserves an A but say it playfully. Don't be boastful. When you mention 'A,' you are establishing the anchor. Your professor will definitely think about it when they are grading your paper. So, their perception is automatically shifted towards the higher end of the scale, and so, the grade you ultimately get will be influenced by this anchoring. Thus, giving high expectations to someone beforehand is really a useful and effective strategy of persuasion.

Using Expectations As a Persuasion Strategy

Just like our mindsets, our expectations are also a very important factor in how we see the world and what our perception is. Suppose a special event is coming up in your life, you certainly have expectations from it. Your brain takes into account the expectations that you have and then alters your perception to match them. In simpler terms, we see a particular incident or event the way we want or expect to see.

Our expectations have an impact on a lot of things in our day-to-day life, even when you don't realize it. Let me ask you a very simple question. Do you prefer Pepsi or Coke? I know that most of you are going to say Coke, but there have been recent researches in this respect that have concluded some very interesting things. We all know that Coke has dominated the market for years and is also the bigger brand. So, there is a common expectation among people that Coke is going to taste better, and when non-blind tests were conducted, people confirmed that Coke tastes better than Pepsi. These tests were done with the people knowing what drink they are consuming. But the outcome was surprising in the case of the blind tests. People were simply given the drinks without telling them which one was Coke and which one was Pepsi, and then they were asked which drink tastes better. Thus, there was no expectation associated or attached to their decision since they didn't know what they were consuming. Most of the people said that Pepsi tasted better than Coke.

This 'Pepsi Paradox' is also seen in people whose ventromedial prefrontal cortex has been damaged or injured. This region of the brain is responsible for our emotions. These people also love the taste of Pepsi. They know that they are consuming Pepsi, but since they have suffered from brain damage, there are no emotional expectations associated with their decision. So, their decision that Pepsi tastes better doesn't take into account how popular Coke is.

But do you know what makes expectations so powerful?

Anchoring. One explanation is rooted in the power of anchoring, and I have explained it briefly in the previous section of this chapter. It is in human

nature to shift and adjust towards all the plausible options that we have starting from an anchor point. In a similar manner, we also adjust and shift ourselves towards all the plausible expectations. For example, you have bought a new book online, and even though you have read the synopsis, you don't know whether you'll like the book or not. It is impossible for you to know that without reading it. And so, your brain is probably developing a wide range of expectations for the book.

Now, here is a change of story – your friend, whom you trust and can rely on, says that he has read this book, and he has never loved any other book the way he loved this one. Thus, your expectation has found an anchor towards the higher end of the spectrum. Now, when you sit down to read the book, your anchor will keep adjusting downward from that point. It will stop at the outermost point of the range that you originally should have, but even then, it's towards the higher end. On the contrary, if the anchor that you received was initially in a range that is lower than yours, you will start adjusting your expectation to the point where you reach the outermost point of your lower end. Thus, your perception will be molded by the anchor point of expectation you receive.

However, while conveying high expectations, you have to keep in mind that the expectations need to be something that is believable; otherwise, your entire plan may backfire.

Confirmation Bias. There is another reason why expectations are so powerful, and that is because of confirmation bias. This is a type of cognitive bias where people are in the habit of seeking out different information that will confirm their preexisting expectations or beliefs. Let us say that you believe that the ozone layer is depleting, and yet you want to find out in an unbiased manner whether it is really depleting or not. So, in order to know more about it, you go to Google and type in the term 'effects of ozone layer depletion'. Here, the confirmation bias has already started working on you. The search term that you have used already accepts the fact that the ozone layer is depleting in a subtle manner. The search result page that will come up will mostly consist of results that say how the ozone depletion is affecting the earth, and so your conclusion from the research will be biased.

We always tend to find ways to confirm what we expect because when our expectations are not confirmed, it does not feel good. If you show people a recording of their own voice, most people are going to show distaste towards it as if it is not even their own voice. But what is the reason for this distaste? Is it because the quality of the recording is poor, or is it because your expectations were too high, and now the results don't match what you had initially expected?

In other situations, people often tend to avoid and move past incongruent expectations with the help of selective avoidance. It is quite a simple process that we all indulge in either knowingly or unknowingly, whereby we choose to overlook any piece of information that does not fit into our expectations.

Self-Fulfilling Prophecies. In the previous examples and explanations that I have given, you must have noticed that the change was in the interpretation and not in the objective reality. But sometimes, the objective reality can also change. Let us say that your friend Harry has decided to introduce you to another friend Lee. But before you meet Lee, Harry has already given you a description of him where he said that he is a cold, calculative, and mean person. When you met Lee for real, all your expectations of him are met, and you did not like him at all. You thought he was unapproachable, and you don't want to meet him again in your life.

Now, let us look at an alternative situation. Suppose Harry had described Lee as someone who is friendly, gives off positive vibes, and kind. So, your expectations before meeting Lee undergoes a complete change here. And when you meet Lee, you find that he is what you were expecting him to be. When you come back, you feel like interacting with Lee again in the future.

Here, Lee was the same person in both situations. But the outcome of each conversation was different. So, were these different outcomes a result of different behaviors shown by Lee, or was your perception of him was different in each situation? The question is not as easy as it seems to be. There was a change in the behavior Lee displayed in each situation, and

there was a change in your perception as well. And both these changes happened because of your expectations.

When you interacted with Lee, your method of interaction influenced his response to you. When your expectation of Lee was that he is a mean person, you behaved in a negative way towards him. Thus, it was your unfriendly behavior that made Lee seem unapproachable to you. In your perception, you were acting completely normal, and it was Lee who was being unfriendly. On the other hand, when your perception of Lee was that he is a friendly and kind person, you behaved in a good way, and you were excited to meet him. Your friendly nature and upbeat behavior prompted Lee's good response, and you found that he is a nice person.

So, this was an example of how self-fulfilling prophecies work.

Now, let us move on to the part where I tell you how you can use expectations to persuade others. If you want to persuade people to give you the replies you want, then you need to change their perception, and for that, you can use high expectations. One such way is to have excellent first impressions because your first impressions act as anchors. They are highly critical. The perception of a person towards your message entirely depends on their initial impression of you. If your initial impression is really strong, then you will be more successful in molding their perception in your favor and persuade them by conveying high expectations.

How to Use Social Norms to Persuade Someone?

Triggering social pressure is a really good strategy when it comes to persuasion. In the previous sections of this chapter, you have got a good idea of how you can change people's perceptions, and now, you are going to learn how to maximize the pressure on your subject so that they finally give in to your request. There are various ways in which you can create pressure on your subject but creating social pressure is the best method so far because of its high effectiveness. But do you know why social pressure is so effective and powerful? Before we go into the strategical part, we are going to discuss the 'why.' There are two primary reasons, and we are going to discuss them both here – the first one is informational influence, and the second one is normative influence.

Informational Influence. If people are asked why they sometimes conform to others' behavior and beliefs, the most common answer is going to be that they think their own behaviors and beliefs are wrong. It is again in human nature to start questioning themselves when their opinion does not match with that of the others around them. This tendency is practiced with greater intensity when the answer is somewhat ambiguous. There are situations in life where you don't always get a definitive and clear answer. These situations activate informational influence even more because the subject can no longer trust his own beliefs.

Suppose the professor asks a question in class to which most people don't have a unanimous answer. They are not sure, and so they start questioning themselves. That is when students start taking sides, and when they hear other people's answers, they have found their anchor and rely on it for their own answer. They initially had their own estimates, but when they question those estimates, they slowly start adjusting them to the estimates made by others. In short, when answers are not clear and are more ambiguous, people experience informational influence. But when the answer is right in front of you, even then, social pressure takes place in the form of normative influence.

Normative Influence. This type of influence is often considered to be way more powerful than informational influence, and for a good reason. This

type of influence refers to the social pressure that is developed to avoid some specific social consequences. People think that if they say something different from the social norm, they are going to be rejected by society, and this leads to them shifting their perception to match with that of others. The power of social rejection is so huge that it can persuade people to take extreme measures.

Now, let us see how you can use social pressure to persuade others. There are a lot of useful techniques mentioned in this section that you can use in your day-to-day life.

- **Direct Norms in a Specific Way Depending On Your Current Situation** – Social norms can be changed or directed in a specific way according to your needs. If you think that the present situations require the social norm to be directed in a particular direction, then you can do that. Keep in mind that these norms are flexible and not set in stone. Robert Cialdini, along with some others, performed an observational study to examine this strategy even more closely. They were studying the tendency to litter among people. Their conclusion noted that the litter that is already present directly affects the tendency of littering in people. So, when the existing litter was increased, so was the percentage of people who littered the ground. So, when more litter was lying around the ground, people thought of it as the social norm and kept littering. But when the ground was mostly clear, people threw the litter in the dustbin.

So, how can you use this conclusion in your day-to-day persuasion strategies? Let us say you work at a restaurant or café, and the counter always has a tip jar, but most people don't leave tips. How can you change that? At the beginning of the day, leave a few dollars in the jar. This will put social pressure on your customers to leave a tip, and the tip has to be a dollar amount and not just coins. Thus, generous tipping becomes the social norm.

Now, let us summarize what we have learned in this section. Whether you want to discourage a specific behavior or you want to encourage it, your strategy should involve pushing the person

towards the behavior that works in your favor. Like in the example above, you wanted to establish the norm of generous tipping, so you had to bring a demonstration that customers who come here tip in dollars. If you want your subject to follow a certain direction, you have to point them in that direction.

- **Norm of Reciprocity** – We already studied the reciprocity principle in Chapter 4, and here, we are going to see how you can use it as a social norm to persuade people. We know that whenever we receive a favor from someone, we feel obligated to return it to them and do them a favor. It acts like a see-saw. This feeling of obligation is a social pressure that happens from within. People experience this feeling because they think that if they do not return the favor, they are deviating from what is considered to be normal, and thus, society would reject them. Thus, people reciprocate because they want to feel accepted in society, and they don't want to experience social rejection. But how can you trigger the norm of reciprocity to get something you want? There are quite a number of ways to do so, and they are as follows –
 - *Use unsolicited favors* – Many of us have experienced unsolicited favors from people, and these are the ones that create the maximum pressure within us to return the favor. Let us say that you are late in submitting your presentation at the office, but a colleague comes to you and offers to do the presentation for you even though you didn't ask him/her. Even though it might seem that you don't have to take the burden, the person doing the favor for you might ask something way bigger from you in return. So, don't be a victim of unsolicited favors, but you can definitely learn to use them to your advantage. There are endless possibilities in your day-to-day life where you can tap into the power of unsolicited favors.
 - *Use compliments* – The next way to use reciprocity in your favor is by using compliments. Everyone loves to receive compliments. When you compliment someone genuinely,

that person's perception of you will change. Think about every time someone complimented you. Didn't you feel like you have to compliment them too? Yes, that urge right there is the automatic response of humans to compliments. Whenever someone compliments you, almost automatically, you start scanning them to find something you can compliment them on. But suppose you are a waiter – complimenting customers can help you increase the number of tips you receive. I have already explained this phenomenon with the help of an experiment earlier in this book.

If you want to use social norms effectively in persuading someone, there are some points that you should keep in mind –

- The audience receptivity plays a part in whether the social norm approach that you are using is going to be effective or not. It has been noticed through researches that when the audience comprises mostly younger individuals, it is the normative approach that works the best. So, before saying anything, scan your audience and then frame your appeal. If you see that the audience is mostly comprised of people aged 45 and above, that is, people who are mature, then using social norms to persuade them might not be the best approach. The more effective way, in that case, would be to use an informational and general approach.
- When you bring to people's notice what they are doing, it is known as a descriptive norm. In the case of changing immediate behaviors, descriptive norms can be really powerful. People often perform actions that they don't put much thought into. You can use descriptive norms in such situations. But at the same time, people often forget descriptive norms very fast, and so in the future, they might repeat the same thing, and you have to remind them again. In that case, you have to use an injunctive norm. These are norms that suggest to the person what ought to be done in that situation. These norms are effective in changing people's attitudes, and the impact of this change lasts for a longer duration.

- If you are using a normative influence strategy, then you have to keep in mind to be as clear and concise as you can be. Suppose, in the littering experiment, if you put up a sign saying 'Please maintain cleanliness,' it is not that clear about the action you want to encourage in people. On the other hand, if you put up a sign saying, 'Please do not litter the grounds,' it is very clear what action you are encouraging. Also, if not following the norm has some negative consequences for the subject, don't forget to mention them because people are influenced more effectively when you do that.

What Is the Mirroring Technique?

Do you want to know more about a technique that can actually be used in your everyday conversations and then help you influence others with ease? Yes, you have heard me right. There is such a technique, and it is not that hard to learn. I know what you must be thinking – ‘My life is going to become so much easier now.’

Every successful entrepreneur has reached their topmost position only after they learned to influence others and sway them to their side. But the first thing to learn in order to do so is persuasion techniques, and even though we have learned a lot of things about persuasion up till now, this technique is truly unique.

There is no single method that will be the be-all and end-all of all types of persuasion. Every situation that you face needs to be judged appropriately, and then the method has to be chosen. So, even though I cannot give you the single method you are looking for, what I can give you is this special technique that works in most situations. It is called the mirroring technique. I personally witnessed a lot of positive results when I started venturing into this technique's application. And I am sure of the fact that you are going to love this technique as well. All you need to do is keep practicing whenever you can, and soon, you are going to become an expert at it. In this chapter, I am going to talk about how you can build a better rapport with others using the mirroring technique and then make them feel that they can share almost anything with you. The amount of influence you can create with this technique's help depends on your expertise. So, keep practicing!

So, what is this mirroring technique anyway? Now that you have asked, it's time I explain what it means. As the term suggests, the mirroring technique is mostly about copying or mimicking how other people are behaving when you are engaged in a conversation with them. I know you must be wondering what this technique's utility is and how it can help in persuasion. We are going to come to that shortly.

Observe any two people who are very much engaged in a conversation and are enjoying it. If possible, then observe two best friends. You will notice

that their posture, gestures, and speech have things in common and can almost be termed as similar to one another. I am not saying that everything they are doing is a mirror image of the other, but if you notice carefully, you cannot miss the synergy between them both. And all of this is what the mirroring technique needs you to do.

Mirroring someone is not merely an act of copying their gestures but is a very specialized persuasion technique that you can use in your everyday situations in life and convince others to do what you say. But the first step to becoming an expert at mirroring others requires you to pay close attention to the person you want to mimic. You have to watch them intently and also listen to everything that they have to say to you. You cannot just sit and talk with them. You have to truly listen to what they are trying to communicate. And you have to do all of this while giving meaningful and engaging replies to their questions or, in other words, while keeping them engaged in a conversation.

But why is this technique so effective when it comes to persuading others? What is the secret behind its mechanism? For starters, the mirroring technique will instantly make the other person feel that they are talking with someone familiar to them, and thus, they would feel comfortable with you. Its effectivity relies on the fact that it makes the subject think that the person in front of them is not too different from them and as a part of their human tendency, they feel drawn towards you very easily. If you think about it, we feel attracted to those who are like us, and that is what is happening here as well.

When you are practicing this technique on someone, you are telling them, 'I am just like you' in a very subtle manner. Thus, your subject slowly starts to lower his/her guard around you. This will not only help you apply other persuasion strategies on that person but also make the rest of the process way easier. You slowly start to build a solid influence on them.

Do you know what is the most common mistake or difficulty that people face when they use this technique? They use it partially, which means that they do not give their all and do not follow all the steps. The main reason behind this is that they get so engrossed in the conversation that they often

forget they also have to watch over the other person and his/her behaviors. You have to make this technique your second nature in order to be truly an expert, and that comes only with time and practice. There will come the point of time when you will be mirroring others before thinking about doing it.

The most important thing that you have to focus on is what these people are saying. They might be using some really popular sayings or quotes, or they might even be using inappropriate words or slangs. Whatever they say, take a mental note of it. Remember that sometimes you might not get what they are saying because it is regional or they are talking about the industry they work in, of which you have no knowledge. In that case, you have to know more and do research to understand what the person is trying to say to you. If you want to mirror someone, you need to pay attention to every aspect of them. Some people have the habit of saying some phrases over and over again, or they keep repeating a particular incident. If that is the case, then you have to take a mental note of that as well.

When you have found that your subject is using certain words or phrases, or are too fond of them, start using these in your sentences as well. Try to use them in the same or similar sense as them. Even if you have come to know of a phrase just now, make it seem like you can use it as effortlessly as them. Your subject will not be able to understand your efforts of mirroring them if you do the process right. Another key thing to keep in mind is the language you are speaking in. You have to make it consistent with that of your subject.

Now, let us talk about visual language. As the term suggests, using visual language means that you are allowing them to see what you are saying. But how are you going to do that? Well, it's quite easy because there are certain phrases that can be used to describe how things are looking. For example, you can say, 'Your idea looks good,' 'I see where you are going with this,' and so on. You get the idea, right? There are people who prefer to talk in this way where they get to experience every conversation in a visual way. And you will find that most people fall into this category.

Just like the visual language, there is auditory language, and it is specially meant for those subjects who prefer auditory terms. These people will always try to focus on how things sound. So, you can use phrases like ‘Your idea sounds great,’ ‘I hear what you are trying to say,’ and so on. The idea is to come up with innovative audio-oriented terms so that these people can be impressed.

People also have their own gestures. This will become even more evident to you if you notice anyone giving speeches on TV or if you visit a political campaign where a leader is giving a speech. And this way of having specific and unique gestures is not only limited to leaders but us as well. We are not always consciously aware of the fact that we do have gestures that are unique to us because these gestures are very deeply ingrained in our minds. That is why another step in the mirroring technique is to mimic the other person’s body language. Even though they are moving without being conscious of it, if you mimic them, it brings a sense of familiarity. So they start thinking of you as a safe space to open up.

At the same time, no matter what you do or how you mimick, never make it too obvious. You have to be subtle, but don’t be nervous. Once your subject makes a gesture or does something specific that you want to mimic, leave a time gap, and then do it so that it doesn’t appear too obvious. The lesson to be learned here is that make sure you don’t overdo what you are doing. I know it sounds weird, but trust me, it works. You will slowly become an expert with practice.

The last thing that I want to explain to you is that you also have to mimic their volume, cadence, and tone. I have already talked about the words and phrases in conversation. Now, we are going to discuss the way of talking and how you are going to mimic it. The way of speaking is different for every person. But when it comes to forming a bond or a connection with someone, you will notice that we do that easily with those who have a similar way of talking. This becomes all the more important when you are not talking to your subject face-to-face but on the phone.

Here too, you have to keep in mind that mimicking someone’s way of talking doesn’t mean you will be doing everything their way. For example,

if your subject has a British accent and you have an American accent, it would be foolish of you to try to change your accent because it would be too obvious. Faking a different accent is not what you should be doing. But there are three very important factors that can be mimicked – volume, cadence, and tone. These three things have to be monitored very closely whenever you are in a conversation with your subject.

Let us talk about volume first. You will notice that there are some people who inherently talk in a loud voice. But there are also some who prefer speaking softly. And then there are those who are neither of the extremes but somewhere in the middle. So, if your subject is someone who prefers raising his/her voice while speaking, try mimicking that. But make sure you don't sound pretentious. Make it as normal as you can. On the other hand, if your subject is someone who is soft-spoken, keep your volume to their level; otherwise, you might make them feel uncomfortable or overwhelmed. Persuading someone means putting them at ease first, and matching the volume of your voice can help with that.

Next comes cadence, and it refers to the speed of talking. When you are talking to your subject, make sure you match the pace. There are people who talk very fast as if they are some auctioneer, and if that's the case, then you have to try your best and match their pace. But if your subject speaks very slowly, then you have to do that as well. I am not asking you to match the delivery of words exactly as your subject. You simply have to try your best to match theirs and keep things normal at the same time. Get as close to their way as you can but comfortably. You will come across as someone pretentious and unauthentic if you push too hard and force yourself to be someone you are not.

Lastly, the tone of your subject's voice is of the most important things while building rapport with him/her. Some people seem like they are excited to meet you, and this is evident from their tone of talking. They will come across as someone having an upbeat personality. This is the trick – even if you are feeling low on that particular day, you have to get it together and deliver your words in an upbeat tone.

And then there are people who always have this laid back way of speaking. If you come across someone who is like this, you have to maintain a relaxing tone. But there is something you have to keep in mind while you are mimicking the tone of your subject in a conversation. Even when your subject remains the same, and you are in the middle of a conversation, the tone might not remain consistent throughout. The mood and personality of a person are the two things that change their tone. If the tone of your subject changes, you have to change yours too. So, staying vigilant during conversations is a must. Don't start slacking behind just because you are dealing with the same subject for a long time. You never know when things might change.

Mood and Persuasion

Did you know that your mood actually determines your ability to persuade someone? Yes, because it is your mood that determines whether you are paying attention to the person or the conversation.

Most persuasive tactics that are successful require you to make a strong argument that will help you win the subject to your side. Thus, in other words, when your argument is strong, your influence is bigger and stronger. But you are also going to see a lot of weak arguments around you that are being used to persuade people. A common example is that of those companies that use celebrities to endorse their products or services. Think about it – why would someone want to use a product or service just because someone else is doing it as well and especially when that someone has been paid to talk about the company? But the advertisements are a very popular means for any brand to increase its sales, so it is safe to say that they do work. However, they are not a strong form of argument.

But there are certain circumstances in life when it doesn't matter what argument you are making, whether it is weak or strong, it just seems to work. Let me tell you about an experiment in this case. In the year 1978, a study was published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, and it was by Ellen Langer, Benzion Chanowitz, and Arthur Blank. They said that almost 50% of people were able to cut in line when they told the others 'I have to make some copies. May I use the Xerox machine?' But those who simply asked whether they can use the Xerox machine or not were not able to achieve the same result. Thus, even though the reason stated is a totally weak argument, people were willing to allow them to cut in line for any reason that seemed good enough.

Now, let us see what kind of moods has what types of consequences. The first consequence of your mood is your attitude. When you are in a positive mood, you are more likely to think creatively and be more careful in your conversations as compared to the times when you are in a negative mood. In fact, when people are not in a good mood, they automatically become more critical, and they are more vigilant. In the year 2013, Rene Ziegler

published a paper on this, and it had some interesting findings that I am about to share with you.

In the research that was conducted, an argument was made regarding a shopping mall and whether it should be built in a nearby city of the participants or not. At first, the participants of this research were asked about their views regarding the issue, and they were also asked about certain topics related to this. These participants were then made to discuss any specific life event in the past that made them significantly sad or happy. Thus, their moods were manipulated.

After that, the same participants were made to go through arguments regarding the building of the mall. There were some people who read arguments supporting the building of the mall, whereas there were some who opposed it. Once all the arguments were read, the participants were then asked about their attitude and were made to rate their attitude.

So, there were certain participants in the study who were already of the belief that the mall should be built and it is a good idea. But when they came across an argument that contradicts their prior notion, and they themselves were in a good mood, they started examining it with greater care. But those who were in a negative mood didn't bother. So, the difference between a weak and strong argument was noticed by those who were in a good mood. On the contrary, when people were in a negative mood, the opposite was noticed. They did not notice the difference between strong and weak arguments.

Thus, it is safe to say that the relationship between persuasion and moods is quite complicated. When the information provided to us is not consistent with our mood, our attention is automatically drawn to it. When our current mood is positive, we examine contradicting arguments with a greater level of attention. But when we are in a negative mood, we pay attention to those beliefs that are on the same level or are similar to our current mood.

Chapter 9: Can Frequent Repetition Affect Perception?

In this chapter, we are going to talk about the power of repeated exposure to requests, and can they actually alter the perceptions and trigger positive responses? Well, yes. Your subject will be more prone to comply with your request if you habituate your message with frequent repetition. Your subject will become more and more familiar with the request as you frequently repeat it.

Here is an example that will make the concept even more clear to you – Have you ever had any liquor that tasted disgusting at first but then eventually you started liking it? Think about beer – I don't know about you, but most people hate beer the first time they taste it. But after the third or fourth try, they start appreciating the taste, and eventually, they like it. So, how does this happen? How can someone find something so pleasant when they did not even want to take another sip in the beginning? I know that you all have faced similar things in life – maybe not with beer, but with something else. For example, maybe a song that you did not like in the first go, but after you listened to it a couple of times, you actually started liking it. Another common example is when you meet a person for the first time. Sometimes we don't like them at once, but if we meet them over and over again, their personality kind of grows on us. And situations like these are quite common in everyday life, and these are not just coincidences – there is a psychological principle behind all of them.

It is the familiarity principle, also known as the mere exposure effect, and we are going to discuss it more in this chapter. But to give you a brief overview, this principle suggests that if a person is exposed to a particular stimulus repeatedly, then they are bound to develop certain positive feelings towards it. I know that popular culture has a saying – 'familiarity breeds contempt,' but it doesn't work that way. Read on to find out more about this.

What Does Psychology Say About Repeated Exposures?

Before I explain things, let me ask you a very simple question – what do you think would people prefer more – a picture of their mirrored reflection or an actual picture of them? This experiment was conducted by researchers in real life, and the conclusion of the experiment was that even when both the options were presented to the person, they were more likely to choose the picture of their mirrored reflection over their actual picture. At the same time, their friends were found to be more likely to choose their actual pictures. Keep in mind that these two pictures are virtually identical, and yet the difference in choice prevails.

In order to understand the result of this experiment, you have to understand the mere exposure effect. Robert Zajonc was the person to carry out the original demonstration of this effect. The basic idea behind this effect is that a person is more inclined towards liking something when they see it more frequently. So, Robert Zajonc selected images for the participants in a way that these participants did not have any extreme or severe reactions to these images, and then, he showed them these images. Some examples include the faces of strangers or foreign words. After that, the participants were asked to give a rating to the pictures based on their pleasantness. There were some participants who had already seen the pictures before rating them, and there were some who were seeing the pictures for the first time at the time of rating. There were some who had seen the pictures numerous times, and there were some who had seen them only a couple of times. The result of this experiment was quite straightforward and clear. People tend to like pictures more when they have seen it numerous times before rating.

A very famous experiment was also performed to study the concept of mere social exposure. This was conducted in the year 1992. Four women were chosen whose appearances were similar to each other, and then they were asked to attend classes in a college for a semester but for a certain number of times. One of the four women did not attend any classes, one of them attended only five classes, one attended ten classes, and the last one attended fifteen classes. But during these classes, neither of them interacted with any other student in the class. When the semester was over, the students of the class were asked to rate these four women after seeing their

picture. A clear presence of the mere exposure effect was noticed even though none of the students interacted with these women in person. The woman who attended fifteen classes was rated more positively by the students than the woman who did not attend any.

Now, let us go back to the initial question I had for you regarding the picture of your reflection and a picture of you. Every day when you wake up, you see yourself in the mirror; thus, you are looking at your mirrored reflection, and that is what you are repeatedly exposed to. But what about your friends? Do they see your reflection, or do they see you in person? It is the latter one. And so, when both the pictures were shown to your friends, they chose your actual picture because that is what they see every day – they see you. Thus, your friends choose your actual picture, and you choose your mirrored reflection because this is what you both are familiar with.

What Is Subliminal Exposure?

When the pictures or words are presented subliminally, the mere exposure effect has been found to be intensified to a great extent. In the previous section, we have already seen that when we are exposed to the same thing over and over again, we build a liking for it. But in the same way, we foster great liking towards a stimulus even when it is showed to us on a subconscious level. This means that the stimulus has been presented in front of you many times, but you were not conscious about it, or you were not aware of seeing something out of the ordinary.

An experiment was done to show the effect of subliminal exposure, and I am going to discuss it here. Three different versions of the same experiment were done to find what difference does it make. The experiment was conducted on people who were working on a computer. In the first version, the photo of person A was shown five times, but it was shown very quickly at a speed of 4 milliseconds. In such a short span of time, people will not even notice that they actually saw a photo. In the second version of the experiment, the situation was the same as the first, but the only difference was that the photo that was shown was of a different person B. In the third and final version of the experiment, there was no photo that was shown, and the people continued to work on their computers.

The results of this experiment demonstrated the power of subliminal exposure. Even if the photos were flashed at such a high speed that the people did not catch a face, they tended to develop a liking for that person if they had seen the picture before. What is even more astonishing is that the people had great and smooth conversations with a person if they had seen their image a few times before (even if it was so quick). So, when people who saw pictures of person A met person A, their conversations went smoother as compared to those who saw pictures of person B.

If you are wondering that how it is even possible for a person to develop a certain liking towards someone they didn't saw consciously but rather on a subconscious level, your answer is with the affective primary hypothesis. This is a special concept where it has been explained how, compared to our cognitive responses, our emotional responses are triggered before. Thus,

when the stimulus for the mere exposure effect lies in our subconscious mind rather than our conscious awareness, its effect is stronger, and it leads to an intensified emotional response, whereas it does not trigger a cognitive response. Think about it – when we are evaluating something or someone with our conscious mind, we attach meanings and emotions to that stimulus, and this, ultimately, affects our evaluation. But when the exposure is done nonconsciously then, these associations do not happen, so as compared to the conscious exposures, the effect is more powerful.

What Makes Repetitions So Powerful?

Repetitions are a very powerful tool in the world of psychology and persuasion. You probably already realize the fact that repetition helps you build different habits, but repetitions are also powerful when it comes to persuading others. In this section, we are going to talk at length about the power of repetitions. In the mere exposure effect, you saw how a greater sense of familiarity promotes you to develop a liking towards certain things, and you also start treating it with a positive attitude. The stimulus, even though it was unknown before, no longer poses a threat to you because of repeated exposure. One of the major reasons that make repetitions so powerful is processing fluency, and this is indeed one of the very interesting concepts that you are going to come across in this chapter.

Before I explain to you what processing fluency is, I would like you to create a list of twelve instances in your life where your reaction was of the assertive nature and be very specific while making this list. When you start listing these instances, the first few will be very easy to note down. But with each new instance that you write, it will become increasingly difficult to note down the next. Did you know that this difficulty that you are facing to note down assertive situations in your life has a direct relation with how you perceive the concept of being assertive?

This same experiment was conducted by researchers on two groups of people. One group was asked to note down six instances, and the other was asked to note down twelve instances. Then, afterward, these people were also asked to rate their level of assertiveness, and do you know what they did? Those who were asked to write six instances were the ones who rated their assertiveness higher than those who wrote twelve instances. And the reason why this happened is what processing fluency is all about. The term simply means the rate or the speed with which people are able to understand and process the information that is presented in front of them.

Now, let's get back to your exercise. As you kept on writing a new instance of assertiveness in your life, you probably found it more and more difficult to come up with new instances, right? This perceived difficulty that you are experiencing to list such situations is the reason why people who were

asked to note down a lesser number of situations were the ones who rated their assertiveness towards a greater value. Whenever you are trying to note down another assertive instance of your life, you are experiencing a barrier in your thoughts, and this difficulty is making you think that probably, you are not as much assertive as you think you are. Your non-conscious mind is telling you that if you were assertive, then it would have been easier for you to list such instances, right?

Thus, the way in which you perceive things is largely dependent on the speed with which you process information. You have a tendency to like a piece of information more when you are able to process it faster. That ease of processing makes you feel good, and you think just because you are feeling positive, it means you like that information, and you overlook the fact that you feel good because of the ease with which you processed the information.

Now, you may be thinking that how is all of this related to repetitions. Well, it is, and I am going to explain it to you. The power of repetitions lies in the fact that the more the exposure, the greater is your processing fluency. So, the more you see a particular stimulus, the more it becomes familiar with you, and the processing time decreases gradually, which automatically makes your brain grow fond of the stimulus.

How to Use Repetitions As a Powerful Persuasions Strategy?

Now that you know the basics about the power of repetitions and also the psychological explanation behind it, you should also know how to use it as a persuasion strategy effectively. Here are some suggestions for you –

- Your first step is to prime your context. For this, conceptual fluency is very commonly used not only by people in day-to-day lives but also by marketers of well-known brands. This is a concept that refers to how easily a piece of information crops up in your mind. If a customer has to choose a product and make a choice between two different brands, then they are more likely to choose the product whose brand name comes to their mind first. This is because of the heightened levels of conceptual fluency, which, just like processing fluency, makes us feel good, and we misinterpret the root cause of that good feeling, and we think that it is because we want the product more whereas, it is really because the conceptual fluency for that particular product is more.

Let me give you a marketing example to understand the concept better. There was research that suggested that consumers were more likely to grow fond of a ketchup ad if the ad was shown just after a mayonnaise ad. Do you know why? When the consumers saw the mayonnaise ad, they already became primed for condiments, and so when the ketchup ad is shown, it comes to their mind at once, and so, they show a very positive attitude towards it.

So, in real life, if you want to persuade someone to say yes to your request, you need to casually mention your request at prior instances and make your subject primed to the concept so that it comes to the subject's mind easily when you ask the actual question.

- The next step is to increase the repetitions to enhance the power of persuasion. Use repetitions in any form you can but make sure you don't force it upon your subject. They should be subtle and yet clear. No matter what the form of repeated exposure is, multiple exposures will lead to the generation of positive feelings towards the stimuli in

the long run, and this will serve you well when you try to persuade the person into doing something you want them to do.

Chapter 10: The Ultimate Tool of Persuasion – Empathy



Empathy is the ability to put yourself in other's shoes and then judge a situation. In other words, if a person can feel and understand what the other person is feeling or experiencing by thinking from the other person's perspective, then the person is said to be empathetic. When you are about to persuade someone, you should understand their situation first. People often say, do, or ask people to do things based on their feelings, points of view, and preferences. The other person may not always think or feel the same way as you. You must consider and respect their thoughts and feelings too.

When you have unfulfilled needs, you tend to persuade people to do things for you because you want them to. This is utterly selfish and is termed as manipulation. The thought of manipulating people to meet your own unmet needs can be tempting, but you should never do that. You need to consider what the other person wants or needs and then look for a way to meet both the needs of that person and yourself. It is very difficult to think of other people's needs where your own needs are unmet. You should start empathizing with your own unmet needs. You should listen to them deeply

and meet them from within. Sort yourself out, and only then will you be able to practice the skill of empathy. Once you start to practice empathy with yourself, you will be able to empathize with others as well.

In most cases, people hesitate to open up to empathy because it goes both ways. When you start understanding the other person's perspective, it might seem valid to you. You might even understand that your narratives and assumptions about them are not true. You may be unsuccessful at changing their perspective, but yours will change. When you have pride, i.e., when you believe that you are superior to others, you can't be an effective persuader. You will only be responding to your thoughts and assumptions about that person and not to how they are.

If you are empathetic, all your persuasion techniques will start to work. The facts can't speak for themselves when people don't even want to listen to them. If you want people to listen to you, you need to take action to make them listen to you willfully. Your facts need rhetoric. The foundation of good rhetoric is not facts but empathy.

If you want to persuade people in some business-related matters, you should be very efficient. This is because the people you are dealing with here are already preoccupied and busy with their strategies and troubles. Their attention and time are valuable, so you need to make the most of it. They are skeptical and suspicious because money matters are bound to make them such.

You should always be aware of the other person's mood and feelings. In some cases, if you can change the feelings of the other person or the mood of the entire situation, then it becomes easier to persuade that person. Your feelings regarding a particular thing may be indifferent to other people's feelings about the same thing. As soon as you become well aware of your audience's feelings, you are ready to take action to persuade them. The next thing that you should do is to make sure what you want to do and how to do it.

Before persuading someone, you need to form a fundamental trust between you and that person. It is important to make that person feel heard and not

just listened to. When they feel heard, they will also feel understood. This will make them feel safe around you, and they will start taking you seriously.

There are various persuasion techniques. Here, we will focus solely on empathy. It is the most effective tool when it comes to persuading people. Once you are empathetic, you will be able to persuade people easily. Here are a few ways in which you can do so.

Admit That You Are Biased

We all are biased, but it is not okay if you don't accept the fact yourself. You should always be honest with yourself and should accept the fact that you are biased. The next step is to take the necessary actions to overcome your bias. Biases are unconscious many times. You may not always realize that you are biased. It is advised that you take some time to acknowledge it. Check your privileges and see how you are benefitted from them. Only then will you understand other people's feelings which are not in the same situations as yours. Talk to people, understand their situation, and try to figure out the root cause of the mentality they have formed. Learning about other people's daily life, the standard of living, you may get to the root of their emotions and feelings.

Start Taking Stand for Others

Start acting with compassion toward other people. When you are well aware of your privileges and motive, you should also consider how the other person will be benefitted from it. Don't go for manipulation.

Manipulation is unhealthy, and it involves making other people do things only for your benefit. Both sides should be benefitted, and only then is it a healthy persuasion. You should not understand each and everything about others to be empathetic. If you listen to them carefully while paying attention and considering their opinions, it is enough to make them feel comfortable and respected. Start doing things for other people's sake, even if they don't benefit you directly. Stop making assumptions about people based solely on your way of life.

Stop Making Assumptions

The biggest enemy of empathy is assumptions. When you assume your assumptions are based on preconceived notions. They are less likely to be based on true experience and understanding. We tend to assume things to use them as shortcut methods for solving a particular problem. But when we do so, we don't see the bigger picture. So, we don't solve the problem.

When you assume things, it is solely based on your thoughts and experiences and not on the other person's thoughts and experiences. In a situation like this, the connection you attempt to form is more likely to feel like a forced one to the other person. This just pushes the person far from you. Don't rush yourself to empathize because if you do so, you will not understand the situation. Get rid of your assumptions and take some time to hear people out.

Stop Talking, Start Listening

When you are having a conversation with a person, try to give your undivided attention to that conversation. Keep your computer, tablet, and phone aside. Invest all your focus and energy on the conversation with that person and make sure to maintain steady and continuous eye contact. Let the person speak. Don't interrupt them while they speak. Give them all the time they need to vent their emotions and thoughts. When they finally complete speaking, summarize what you understood and ask them if you got it correct. This will show your genuine interest in their feelings and emotions. Ask relevant and non-judgmental questions to them. This will make them realize your efforts to understand their feelings. Allow them to rant. When someone is having a hard time, it is likely for them to be flustered. Give them all the space they need and allow them to speak their heart out to you. They can even find their solutions while talking to you. This will make them comfortable around you, which is very necessary for persuading someone.

Understand People's Pains

Understanding people is not just about sensing other people's emotions and feelings. It is more about taking a genuine interest in their concerns and beliefs. You should be good at picking up quick emotional cues by observing the other person's voice tone, body language, or other non-verbal communication elements. Carefully listen to what the other person is saying to you and meanwhile check their understanding actively. Don't just listen for the sake of listening. Show a little sensitivity to them and try to understand their perspective as well. Make sure that you don't end up offending them while trying to impose your beliefs upon them. Try to help them based on their understanding of their emotions and needs. It is not only beneficial for your interpersonal relationships but can also have a much greater impact.

If you are a doctor, you should listen to your patients with sincerity. Only you can persuade your patients to follow your instructions and take medications, as you suggested. Many people try to fake their empathy, i.e., they pretend to understand other people's concerns, emotions, and feelings, rather than genuinely understanding them. Many salespeople follow this technique. However, this technique is not as good as being genuinely empathetic. People can detect pretentious behaviors and fakeness. If you fake your empathy with a cold heart, you are likely to get caught. The responses that you will get when you are truly empathetic towards someone vary hugely from the ones you will get when you fake it. You don't necessarily need to agree to whatever they are saying. Understanding others is more about recognizing and considering other people's feelings alongside your feelings.

Start Imagining

You can't have faced all the similar situations as the other person. So, you can't relate to each and everything they say. But for empathizing, you need to form an understanding and connection. This is where imagination kicks in. Try imagining the situation even if you never faced it in reality. Imagine what your reaction will be or how you will feel if placed in a situation like that. After that, you will be able to understand that person's true feelings. This will help you to be empathetic towards that person.

Express Yourself

After listening to what others had to say, now it is time for you to speak about your views and thoughts. If your motive or the thing you want to persuade that person to do is completely different from their view, don't oppose them directly. If you do this, you will just end up offending that person, thereby reducing the chance to persuade him or her. Consider their feelings wholeheartedly at first and then express your thoughts politely, even if they are different. Put yourself in their shoes and think about the things you will like to hear in such a situation. Let your conscience guide you, and then do accordingly. Once you do this, the other person will feel comfortable, welcomed, heard, and understood. It becomes way easier to persuade a person who has already been comforted by your kind words.

Don't Be Afraid to Be Vulnerable

We often feel that vulnerability is a sign of weakness, but it is quite beneficial in the case of building interpersonal relationships. When you project your vulnerable side to others, they become more affectionate and kind towards you. It communicates to them that even you are a human, just like them. They find it easier to connect with you and hence are likely to listen to you. Fears, heartaches, and weaknesses are parts of a human being, which makes them precious. You should never be afraid of showing them. It will not have any adverse effect; rather, it will help you with your persuasion techniques as well. A study says that a person, who has been kind to you once, is more likely to be persuaded by you than a person to whom you have been kind. Don't hesitate to ask for help.

When you ask for help, it shows your vulnerability and makes you much more reliable and trustworthy. For example, when a person shares an experience with you, try to remember some similar situations that you have faced in your life. Try to remember your thoughts and feelings that you felt at that time and then share them with the person. When you share your own mistakes and insecurities, you can connect better with other people.

Chapter 11: How to Change People ' s Evaluation of Your Message?



If you want to effectively persuade others, optimizing your message or request is a very important part of your strategy, and one of the most important steps is to change how people are evaluating your message. People don't always evaluate information in the same way, and sometimes, it all depends on the circumstances. But in this chapter, I am going to introduce you to the basic ways in which people prefer to evaluate the messages that come their way, and then, you can understand which type of evaluation you should trigger based on the circumstance you are in.

Ways in Which People Evaluate Your Message

There are two ways in which most people evaluate the message or any piece of information that comes their way, and they are – systematic processing and heuristic processing. We are going to discuss both of them in detail.

Systematic Processing

This type of processing is when a person is going through the information with greater detail and in a thorough manner, and they are trying to figure out the meaning of every piece of information that comes their way. They practice intensive reasoning, deep thinking, and careful attention to do so. They critically analyze every detail. This type of processing is also known as the central route to persuasion. During this process, the person evaluating the message is more concentrated on the content of the formation and all the underlying arguments in it. For example, ask yourself whether you will ever buy a house spontaneously, or would you ever choose your heart surgeons based on how good-looking he/she is. The answer would definitely be no. You are going to perform thorough research and then evaluate everything critically. After you have performed your analysis, you will form a decision. This type of processing is way more time-consuming. But in the next type of processing that I am going to explain, you will see that this does not always happen.

Heuristic Processing

Let us say that you have prepared a report that your boss asked for, and when you present the report to him, he only flips through the pages and does not go into the details. This is known as heuristic processing, where the person uses a set of simple rules for making decisions. This form of processing is rather automatic and is also termed as the peripheral route to persuasion. People are affected by cues that are peripheral and simple like who is presenting the message to you (whether that person has the perceived expertise, is likable or not, and so on), the aesthetics of the information or message, and the amount of information that is being presented and not the quality of it. Remember that you cannot judge the strength of the message from these cues, and yet people use them to form a decision.

Now that I have explained both types of processing and you know the key differences between them, it is time we move on to the topic of how people decide which form of evaluation they are going to use.

How Do People Choose Their Process of Evaluation?

There was a special model designed by John Cacioppo and Richard Petty, and this model actually helps in determining all the factors that kind of determine how a person is going to evaluate your message. This model is known as the elaboration likelihood model. In the research that they conducted, two major aspects were discovered that we are going to discuss here –

Motivation

When someone is evaluating what you said, the first factor that works here is motivation – whether that person is really motivated to figure out what you said or not. If the person or the subject in this scenario is highly motivated, then they will use systematic processing to evaluate your message. On the other hand, if the subject is not so much motivated, then they are going to use heuristic processing for evaluation of the message. Now, you might think that this was so easy and obvious, but it is important that you understand how this is happening.

The crucial thing behind all of this is what the perceived importance of your message is. If the subject thinks that your message is very important to him/her, then they are going to evaluate it more critically because they think that the information presented to them needs to be understood well.

Let us take this book as an example. Before anyone buys this book, they are first going to read the description, but what do you think will be their method of evaluation? Will they use heuristic processing or systematic processing? I would definitely love for people to critically analyze the description, but the process that most people use is the simple evaluation. If you are wondering why then the answer is quite simple – they don't view any book as something that can change their whole life. So, they perform heuristic processing and, thus, base their purchasing decision on things like how many 5-star reviews are there for this book. But on the other hand, if someone is highly motivated from before about purchasing something, whether it is this book or anything else, they are going to critically evaluate any information that is presented in front of them.

Ability

Whether the subject has the ability to perform a perfect evaluation of the message presented in front of them is the second factor. But there are two aspects that need to be discussed here, and they are as follows –

- **Intellectual Capacity** – The first aspect that we are going to discuss is the intellectual capacity of people, which differs from one person to another, and this is a very different concept than general intelligence. If I attend a seminar where people are talking about the latest improvements in the world of biotechnology, I'd have zero knowledge of what is going on, but does that make a completely stupid person? Absolutely not because this means that I do not have sufficient knowledge about the topic of discussion. So, if I were to indeed be present in such a place, I'd be using peripheral cues to judge the content, for example, the presentation style or the confidence of the speaker. If I do not understand the actual message being presented in the speech, I would have no other way to understand what is being spoken here. Thus, systematic processing is something I wouldn't opt for because my intellectual capacity, in this case, is low. So, in order to evaluate the message, I will have no other option but to rely on the peripheral cues.
- **Opportunity** – Now comes the external constraints that determine whether your subject will have the ability to evaluate the information presented in front of them. For example, if your subject is facing a lot of distractions or if he/she is short on time, then they will have to finish the evaluation in a lesser span of time. This means that they will have to rely more on the peripheral cues than to actually perform a systematic evaluation. They will then start looking at the attractiveness and general likability of the information presented in front of them. If you submit your monthly report to your senior and at that time, he/she was already getting late for a meeting. So, they evaluate it simply on the basis of how confidently you present it. It's because if they took the time to actually digest and understand all the information that you are putting in front of your senior, they would be late. Since they couldn't afford to do that, they simply judged your report based on a very irrelevant piece of

information like your overall confidence. But if you think that your senior is going to do the same with your second monthly report, then you are highly mistaken because it will depend on whether they have time or not. If they do have time, they might use systematic processing to evaluate the information.

How to Alter Someone's Evaluation Process?

In this chapter, I have already explained to you the two factors that determine which type of processing people are going to use when it comes to evaluating a message. In short, if the ability and motivation of the subject are towards the lower side, they are going to use only peripheral cues to evaluate the message. But, on the other hand, if both of these aspects are high, then your subject will critically evaluate the message. So, now, I am going to walk you through certain strategies that will help you alter someone's process of evaluation to your benefit.

Strategies to Evoke Systematic Processing

If you want to make your subject choose systematic processing as the process of evaluation, there are two major strategies that you can use, and they are as follows –

- **Catch Their Attention** – When telemarketers call you, do you listen to what they are selling, or do you hang up without listening to their request? The latter, right? It's because we humans are made to function on autopilot on several occasions. So, you will naturally feel this reflex to reject things or say no whenever someone requests something. On the flip side, consider yourself in the position of the telemarketer, making a request to someone, trying to persuade them to say yes. How will you do that? Is that even possible? Yes, it is, and the answer lies in the fact that you have to grab their attention. Only then will they use the method of systematic processing to evaluate your message; otherwise, they will mindlessly reject your proposal in the first place.

Now you must be thinking how on earth you are going to grab their attention. I am going to help you out here and give you some tips.

The first thing to do is to ***provide them some caffeine***. Yes, you have heard me loud and clear – give them coffee. And it is not me who is saying this, but research has already proven the fact that caffeine can actually enhance the chances of someone choosing systematic processing over heuristic processing. So, let us say you

want to discuss a proposal with your prospective client. The best thing to do is to invite them to a meeting at a coffee shop and discuss your proposal there.

Once that is done and dusted, the next thing is to ***work on the aesthetics of your message***. If your aesthetics are good, people will get more attracted to it, and then, that will lead to them concentrating on what the actual underlying argument is. Think about those times when you are watching a video on YouTube, and some advertisement crops up. If the advertisement is catchy, you don't skip it and watch the entire thing because you want to see what the underlying message is. The same thing works in all aspects of life.

The last technique that I am about to mention is the ***pique technique***. As the term suggests, here, you are going to present your message in such a manner that is out of the ordinary and will immediately bring your subject out of their usual autopilot mode. There was even research conducted to prove the effectiveness of this technique. Research assistants who were dressed as beggars roamed the streets and asked random people for either 37 cents, a quarter, 17 cents, or any change at all. When they did this, they collected more money than any other usual beggar since their request was quite odd, and anyone on the street was made to come out of their autopilot mode and actually evaluate this bizarre request.

- **Expand Personal Relevance** – In the first part, I explained how grabbing someone's attention is essential and different ways in which you can do so. Here, I am going to explain to you the other strategy that you can follow in order to evoke systematic processing in your subject, and that is by increasing the relevance of the matter to your subject. If the person thinks that the message is somehow going to be affecting him (whether positively or negatively), then they will surely have more motivation to critically analyze it. One of the most basic ways to do so is to explicitly mention all the consequences of your message to your subject. A very popularly used example in this strategy is the advertisements on driver safety, which are much more effective when the commercials show you

bloody victims. But apart from this, there are some other things that you can do as well and read on to find more about them.

Use pronouns in the second person. There have been researches in the world of advertisement that proved that if you want to enhance the persuasiveness of your message, it is better that you use words like ‘you’ or second-person pronouns.

Another common strategy that you can use is you can ***narrate a story***. Have you noticed that the most famous advertisements on TV usually narrate the benefits of their product or service through a story? They don’t simply blurt out the facts but give it to you in the form of a narrative commercial. You have to do the same on your subject and persuade them.

By now, you must have understood that if you want your message to be effortfully evaluated, you need to increase the ability and motivation of the person.

Strategies to Evoke Heuristic Processing

If you are trying to persuade someone and making arguments that you know are comparatively weak, then you don’t want the person performing systematic processing; otherwise, they might reject your proposal. You have to make the subject rely on heuristic processing in such a case, but how will you do it? I know what you are thinking. It will be quite hard, but it’s not so. Heuristic processing is the default setting in a person in most cases. All you have to do is enhance it by following some simple steps, or if someone is more likely to follow systematic processing, the same steps will help you shift their method of evaluation to heuristic processing.

- **Enhance the Complexity of the Message** – I know that I have told you time and again that if you truly want to persuade someone, your message needs to be as simple and clear as possible. But that might not be the way to go about it in certain cases. Persuading someone can actually become a way lot easier if you make the message complex in some situations. The answer lies in processing fluency.

You have already learned the concept in the previous chapter. For example, a piece of research found that gourmet cheese that is advertised in a difficult font sells more than the one with a simpler font. Why? It's because when people find it difficult to read the name of a particular product, they misattribute the difficulty in reading to the quality of cheese. They automatically start feeling that the cheese, which is difficult to read, is the one that is more appealing. On the other hand, when the everyday cheese was being advertised, the effect was not there because people preferred the cheese with a simpler font. They thought that because of the familiarity they had with the everyday cheese and thus, ease of processing enhanced that effect of familiarity and made them choose the cheese with the simpler font.

Thus, if you want the subject to see your message as something unique and difficult, you need to present it in such a way that it seems complex. Your subject's ability and motivation to evaluate the message in such a scenario will considerably reduce, which would actually work to your advantage. The effect can be enhanced even more if you decrease the processing fluency and yet maintain very high aesthetics in your message. The subject will use heuristics processing and deem your message to have a higher value.

- **Improve Their Mood** – A person's current mood plays a very big role in whether they are going to use systematic processing or heuristic processing to evaluate your message. It is usually seen that when people are happy, they don't tend to evaluate critically, and you can use this piece of information to your benefit. Have you ever noticed how naively optimistic you become every time you are happy? Yes, it happens to everyone. Here is an example to prove the point. In the late 90s, as the internet started growing, it was the phase of the 'dot-com bubble.' During that time, the price of the stock of most of the major internet companies started rising over a period of many years, and the prices became overinflated, and there was no parity between the price of the stock and the underlying financials. But because the prices kept increasing, people were happy, and they developed this sense of naïve optimism. This

immense happiness and excitement made them give in to the false assumption that the price of the stock would keep increasing over the years. Their bubble did not last long, and they faced huge losses. On the other hand, when someone is in a negative mood, they automatically become immensely skeptical. They start to assume that everything they see around them is somehow wrong, and they fall into a pit of uncertainty. That is why they check everything with a fine-toothed comb.

So, if the request that you are going to make is somewhat risky and you want it to be evaluated simple-mindedly, then you need to first make the person happy and lighten their mood. This will increase their chances of complying with what you say.

Chapter 12: How to Tweak Your Message to Make it More Effective in Persuading Someone?

There are times when we know that our message or request might not be perceived in a positive light by the subject, and in fact, it can even be passed off to be unfavorable. In that case, you to produce your message in such a way that it does not steer your subject away. The solution is to present it in an incremental manner in small steps. In the end, the subject will not be aware that the message has been passed to them, and yet what you wanted to do has already been done. In this chapter, I am going to teach you how you can tweak your message to make it even more effective when it comes to persuasion and how such small changes go unnoticed by the subjects. In fact, if you place your message correctly, your subject might completely overlook the negative aspects of it, but why does that happen? If you want to know more, then read on.

Some aspects of this chapter are also borderline from the ethics point of view, and I would really want you to practice better judgment while using them because I sincerely do not want anyone using any strategies that won't be in the best interest of someone else. But if you think about it, hiding negative things from your requests or sentences can really be used from a good perspective well. A perfect example is when you are persuading your kids to do their homework or eat more greens.

Why Do People Not Notice Some Changes?

So, before I tell you how you can tweak your message, you need to understand the concept of change blindness to have a better grasp on things. This change blindness acts even more when the changes are unexpected and small, and there are a total of three things that you need to understand in this aspect, and they are as follows –

- **Gradual Changes** – One of the most commonly unnoticed changes are the ones that happen gradually in small increments over a period of time. Have you ever heard of the term just noticeable difference? If not, let me explain it to you. It came in 1967, and it refers to a difference threshold. If you want someone to detect the change, then it needs to have a minimum value more than this threshold. You can even perform experiments of your own to find out what this threshold is in your situation. Then you will know what is the amount of change that is required for your subject to actually realize that something has been changed? Or, on the contrary, knowing the threshold will help you remain within it so that your changed message goes unnoticed.

Let us say that you are selling a product, and you want to make more profit, but you are in a dilemma since increasing the price would come to the notice of your customers, and they might turn away. So, your price increase has to be in a range that does not attract any attention from the customers. Thus, you can conduct experiments accordingly to find out the price point from which people start noticing any changes in the price. So, after that, you can remain below the limit and, thus, reduce the number of people in your customer list who actually notice the price difference.

If you think you cannot conduct such experiments, then also there is a solution. Think intuitively about the difference threshold and then start making small changes to your message. The increments should be gradual and small so that you can habituate the message. This will be a better technique than making large and abrupt changes.

- **Side-by-Side Comparisons** – If you give people the ability or chance to compare two situations side-by-side, then the change is going to become even more evident, and they will readily notice even the smallest change. If the smallest price difference in a product is placed side-by-side, the customer will notice it immediately. On the other hand, if the previous price is not displayed and only the new price is visible, then the chances are that the old price of the product will get camouflaged.

Here is an example which I am sure is going to surprise you – In the year 1998, Simons and Levin did an experiment to show how people are unable to detect any changes when there is no side-by-side comparison. A researcher selects a random person on the street to ask for directions to a certain place. At the same time, a painting is being carried by two workers, and they pass between the random person and the researcher. At that moment, the researcher exchanged places with one of the workers. The aim of this experiment was to find out how many of them did not notice after the painting completely passed that they were now talking to a completely different person.

What do you think is the percentage? It was a whopping 50% of people who failed to notice the difference. Thus, now you see that humans are not able to detect any change in the stimulus, especially when they cannot perform any side-by-side comparison. However, there is another thing that is working behind the scenes because of which people fail to notice the changes, and we are going to talk about it next.

- **Expectations** – Lastly, in the previous experiment that I explained, people did not notice that the researcher changed places with the worker because they were not expecting such a change to happen. The person expected to see the same man when the painting passed, and so his perception molded his mind in such a way that even though the person was no longer the same, he thought it was the same person.

Now, I am going to combine all the three concepts that I have mentioned above and give you an example to help you understand it more clearly.

Don't we all say how the potato chips used to come in much larger packets before? And yet, no one noticed the change when it was actually happening. But why?

- First of all, the size of these potato chips bags was reduced gradually over a period of time and not abruptly, and thus, people did not notice those small gradual changes.
- Secondly, people don't collect potato chips bags, and so there was no side-by-side comparison to be done. Hence they weren't able to notice that the newer bags were actually smaller in size compared to the older ones.
- And lastly, the marketing team was clever enough to keep the prices the same because that's the first thing people notice. They changed the size instead, which people did not expect. So, they took the best advantage of this diverted attention and made extra profits.

Now, we are going to see how you can tweak the message in different types of evaluation methods.

How to Adjust Your Message for Systematic Processing?

There are different ways in which a message can be tweaked if your subject is going to follow heuristic processing, but in the case of systematic processing, your options are very limited. You only have to focus on enhancing the strength of the message or argument that you are presenting in front of the subject.

In systematic processing, we learned that people use a fine-toothed comb to go through everything and analyze every word you say so, the supporting arguments you present need to be really strong. If you think you cannot do that, then there are two things you can do. In the previous chapter, I taught you how the ability and motivation of a person affect systematic processing, and you have to decrease these two aspects by using different strategies. But increasing the strength of your argument will really help you when you are dealing with someone who prefers systematic processing as their method of evaluation. And here are some ways in which you can do so –

- **Prepare Two-Sided Arguments** – When we make our argument in front of someone, we tend to think that if we say anything remotely negative, then it is going to hurt our argument, but on the contrary, research suggests that it is quite the opposite. Two-sided arguments can be really beneficial and produce remarkable changes in both behavior and attitude. These arguments are made in a way that both the negative and positive sides of things are mentioned. The reason behind this is that whenever you present someone with only positive information, they might think that you are not telling them something vital purposefully. And this feeling makes them become skeptical, and they evaluate your message using systematic processing. While if you see the opposite scenario, if you provide both negative and positive information through your message, the subject is more likely to be satisfied with the argument because they think you are being honest and telling them everything. Assess the situation and include a little bit of negative information in the argument that you are making, but at the same time, make sure you are giving enough positive arguments too in order to counter the

negative information. In this way, persuading your subject will no longer be that hard.

- **Arrange Your Arguments in a Proper Sequence** – There will be certain situations where you are not only stating one but numerous arguments, and in that case, proper sequencing is highly essential. When there is more than one piece of information in a single conversation, the information that comes first has a lot of influence on the subject's mind and also determines how the subject is going to perceive the rest of the information that is about to come. So, proper sequencing is important. There is another effect that plays a role in such situations, which is known as the recency effect. When there are multiple points being stated, the most recent points (stated at last) make a greater impact on the subject's mind, and thus, they remember it more easily than the rest of the points.

So, what did you learn from the recency effect? We learn that all our strong arguments should be positioned in the end and also in the beginning. This applies to every situation in your life where you are making arguments, for example, a business proposal, a college essay, a conversation with your family, or anything else.

Similarly, all the weak arguments that you have should be placed in the middle of the conversation. And these weak arguments refer to the negative information that I previously asked you to enter in a conversation. This will ensure that you make your message comprehensive, and yet your subject will not focus too deeply on the negative information while forming a decision.

There is an effect described in psychology, which explains why any negative or weak argument should not be stated in the beginning or in the end, and this effect is known as the inoculation effect. You probably have heard of the term inoculation with respect to doctors who give you a shot to prevent the flu. This shot actually contains the virus in small quantities so that your body can become immune to it. Persuasion strategies follow a similar principle. When weak arguments are presented in front of subjects, they take it, understand

it, and typically build resistance towards it, and so, any argument you state after that does not seem stronger. The subject keeps dodging your persuasion strategies one after the other because they have become immune to it now. And once this immunity has been built on the person, it is very difficult to break or overcome it.

How to Adjust Your Message for Heuristic Processing?

The list of heuristics that people implement to evaluate your message is endless, but if you draw a relation between all of them, you will see that most of them are somehow related to your message or you. Here, I am about to explain how some of those heuristics can be used to your advantage and then how you can enhance them to make the effect stronger.

- **Their Perception of You** – Let's say you are out for a morning walk and a random beggar approaches you and tells you that the world is going to end in a few days. Would you believe him? No. But if the same thing were to be repeated by a scientist on the television, then you'd definitely take him seriously, right? This is what people's perception can do to message evaluation. The communicator's perception of a person is a very strong heuristic because people often immediately accept or reject requests based on that. But this property can be explained in two parts, and here, you will learn about them.

The first one is **authority**. Humans inherently have this nature of obeying people of authority. They are psychologically wired in that manner. In fact, this habit of obeying people of authority can even be carried on to a quite frightening extent. But you must be wondering how all this is related to making someone comply with your request. Just like the fact that people blindly follow orders from people of authority, they also similarly trust people blindly when they are proven experts in that field. If an expert comes to a person and tells him something, that person would not use systematic processing to evaluate the message. Instead, just because the message was delivered by the expert, they will trust the accuracy of it blindly. An experiment was done to prove this. Students were more convinced by a speech on acid rain when they were told that it is being delivered by an expert in the field who did a major in environmental studies than when they were told that the person delivering the speech has a major in mathematics.

The second part that you need to know is ***attractiveness***. You'd often hear people talking about how attractiveness shouldn't matter, but this is not a perfect world, and attractiveness matters a lot here. It has been found through research that infants who are more attractive receive more caretaking and attention. Similarly, men who are more attractive often receive a better salary package than others. The significant advantage of being attractive and making someone comply with your request is that people tend to knowingly or unknowingly favor you. Even if you think that you are not attractive – there is a solution to that. You only have to increase your perceived attractiveness in front of your subject, and that can be done in two ways – one is by similarity and the other by familiarity. Thus, you will have to share all the common traits or likes that you share with the person, and you will have to meet or be in the general vicinity of your subject from time to time.

- **Their Perception of What You Say** – The communicator is not the only heuristics that you should keep in mind because the message itself is also important here. In this section, I will walk you through the different cues in the message itself that you should keep an eye on, especially when you are targeting people who follow heuristics processing.

The first thing is the ***amount of information*** that you are providing. As you must have understood by now, heuristics processing in itself is a lazy process, and so persuading someone will be easy when you produce a lot of information in front of them. They will think that since the message contains a lot of information, then it automatically is of high quality. Let us say that you are out shopping for a new gadget, and while you are checking different types of the same gadget, your attention will be piqued by the one that has a lengthier description than others. Even if the description is full of fluff, it won't matter much because you will be more focused on quantity rather than quality.

So, if you know that someone is going to follow the heuristics processing method for evaluating your message, then what you can do is give them a set of options. The option that you want them to

select should be described with greater details so that your subject is prompted to select that option after being bombarded with a lot of information. Even if the information that you are providing does not directly support all the benefits that the option provides, just keep adding the information because it will help in swaying your subject's decision towards that option.

The next thing to focus on is ***aesthetics***. People who are likely to follow the heuristics processing method have been found to base their decisions on the aesthetics of the message. This is because whenever we present some information to our brain that is aesthetically pleasing, our brain derives a rewarding feeling from it. The brain often misattributes this feeling to the fact that the message is strong. A very common example of this is used by marketers who spend a considerable amount of time making their websites aesthetically pleasing because when people visit such websites, they automatically assume that the website and its content is above average.

Lastly, you cannot forget ***justification***. Whenever you are trying to persuade someone to agree to your request, you need to provide them with some sort of strong justification because that has been found to yield better results. For people who use heuristic processing, justified messages feel important and valid almost all at once.

Chapter 13: Power of Limitations and How to Use it in the Real World?

Imagine that you are having dinner with your family and your eyes suddenly drift to the very last slice of pizza. It suddenly appears to be so beautiful, majestic, and magnificent to your eyes. A part of you starts to wonder how the last slice of pizza turned to be so important to you within such a short amount of time; however, the part of you that just wants to devour that last slice quickly pushes aside the other thought. You begin to feel like you don't have any time to question your motives behind wanting to eat that slice as you have more important things to worry about, for example, your family members sitting around the table.

However, you cannot appear extremely hasty to them. You have to carefully plan your moves. You look towards your brother discreetly while casually increasing your pace of eating your current slice. You watch your brother eying the last slice through your peripheral vision and realize that you have to act fast. So, you begin scarfing down your remaining food, however, it gets too late, and your brother goes for the last slice, picks it up, and keeps it down on his own plate. You failed at your task, so you calm yourself down and resolve your dissonance by telling yourself that you are already full anyway as you ate four slices previously.

So, why did that last slice of pizza suddenly become so valuable? And it's not just about pizza. Any kind of food item, irrespective of whether it's a box of cookies or chocolates, suddenly becomes much more valuable when only one piece of it remains. Why does this happen? There are mainly three principles behind this occurrence: commodity theory, loss aversion, and psychological reactance.

Commodity Theory

The commodity theory proposed by Brock in 1986 describes how scarcity affects people psychologically. The term “commodities” refers to any things – objects, experiences, or messages – that fulfill the three criteria. The first criterion is that they should have the potential to be possessed by someone. Something cannot be termed as a commodity if it is way beyond the reach of a person. Secondly, someone should be able to transfer it to another person. As per the theory, things that can’t be taken from or given to others do not classify as commodities. And lastly, commodities need to be useful. This definition of commodity gives a broad domain to the theory – one that includes several items of interest to people. By this definition, all services and goods are commodities. Commodities might, therefore, also include promotional activities like price reductions and sales events as they are of some use to the customers and are transferred from sellers to customers.

According to the theory, the desirability or value of any commodity is significantly increased by scarcity. In other words, people tend to give more importance to something when they begin to think that it’s unavailable or limited as compared to when they know that it’s abundant and plentiful. Scarcity is a fundamental precondition of economic behavior and a prevalent aspect of human life. This factor compelled you to desperately want that last slice of pizza even though you were already stuffed. Researchers also applied this concept to peanut butter cookies. They gave a jar containing two cookies to one group of people, and another they gave a jar containing ten of the same cookies. The first group of people who received only two cookies rated its taste higher than the group who got ten cookies. This principle suggests that you were not only compelled to want that last slice of pizza, but you might even have enjoyed it more.

The theory is applicable to other contexts besides food as well. It helps explain why people in bars often find the opposite gender to be more attractive as the night goes on. For them, the chance to get a date is promising at the beginning of the night; however, the opportunity gradually decreases as the night starts to wear on. The chance gets even more limited as they progress towards the end of the night. As a result of this, they tend to find the remaining people more attractive. In addition to that, marketing

practitioners have been reaping the benefits of commodity theory for a long time. As scarcity increases the perceived value of any opportunity or product, they frequently use phrases like “limit of one per customer,” “limited time only,” “only while supply lasts,” and “limited release,” etc. Moreover, salesmen also use phrases like “this is the last one” or “supplies are dwindling fast” to convince customers to buy a product.

Loss Aversion

We don't like to lose things that belong to us. It's a part of human nature. People tend to get extremely attached to things that are in their possession and then feel scared when they have to let go of them. It is ironic to think that the more objects people possess, the more vulnerable they become. We have more to lose than to gain when we have accumulated wealth.

Loss aversion can be described as an aversion to fear. It is a powerful emotion that reflects the importance of negative emotions, like fear and anxiety, in response to losses. This is probably why we often concentrate more on our setbacks instead of focusing on our progress. Negative emotions like the ones we feel when we receive criticism often have a more powerful effect on us than the good ones, like getting praised. People tend to feel blame more acutely as compared to praise. According to Khaneman (2011), losing something hurts almost twice as much as gaining something that makes us feel good. We often feel sadder about losing ten dollars as compared to how happy we feel when we find the same amount of money. This is also probably the reason why it takes at least five good comments to counterbalance a critical one.

Several types of research were also conducted to show the idea of loss of aversion in the behavior of consumers. It was revealed that consumers tend to respond more to an increase in price as compared to a price decrease. For example, Putler (1992) showed that during the time period of July 1981 and July 1983, a 3.3 percent increase in demand was seen in response to a price decrease of ten percent, whereas there was a 7.8 percent decrease in demand in response to a ten percent increase in the price of eggs. In another study conducted by Levin et al. (2002), a group of volunteers was asked to either scale down a fully loaded pizza by eliminating ingredients or to add ingredients like pepperoni or sausage to a basic pizza. The majority of consumers were consistent with loss aversion, and so the consumers in the additive condition ended up having significantly fewer ingredients on their pizzas as compared to those who choose the subtractive condition.

The principle of loss aversion is also applicable to the emotional distress that we experience while scaling back. Sometimes when we buy things, like

a new car or a larger house, we always think that if we cannot afford those purchases, we can always downsize. However, the reality is a bit different. It gets psychologically painful to downgrade to a smaller house. It also doesn't help to be wealthy as the emotional gain of adding on to their wealth is significantly less than the pain of losing their fortunes. As a result of this, rich people often get anxious and vulnerable. Apart from material things, ownership is also applicable to ideas. We often give more value to an ideology when we take ownership of it, whether it's about sports or politics. In addition to that, we hate losing arguments and are also at risk of dismissing the ideas of other people that might just be better than ours. People tend to have a positive attitude towards themselves, and they devalue the road that they didn't take and add more value to their choices as they are invested in their opinions.

All of us experience an inherent urge to avoid any kind of loss, including the loss of a chance. Therefore, in the pizza scenario given at the beginning, you felt an increased pressure to grab that last slice of pizza before you lost that chance. Loss aversion makes you view that scenario as a possible loss of opportunity rather than through a lens of freedom.

Psychological Reactance

Brehm was the first to propose the theory of psychological reactance in the year 1966, and since then, it has gained a lot of attention. Psychological reactance is defined as the motivation to regain or recapture freedom that has been threatened or lost. People tend to think that they have the freedom to participate in so-called free behaviors. There are still instances where they feel like they are not free to do so, or they are not able to do that. Examples of threats to freedom or to behave as desired include being instructed to do work for others, being forbidden from using cell phones in schools, being forced to pay tuition fees, being talked into purchasing a particular product at the supermarket. This is where reactance comes into play. This is what happened when your freedom to eat the pizza got limited.

When people undergo a loss of or a threat to their freedom or free behavior, they experience unpleasant motivational arousal, which is known as reactance. It acts as a motivator that reinstates one's freedom. The perceived magnitude of the threat and the importance of the threatened freedom both affect the amount of reactance one experiences. Choosing specific alternatives and rejecting others give rise to self-imposed threats that are known as internal threats, whereas external threats arise from either social influences targeting a specific person or from impersonal situational factors that tend to form a barrier to someone's freedom. Efforts to re-establish an individual's freedom, along with their experience of emotion, takes place as a result of the unpleasant state of reactance.

Individuals who are threatened tend to feel angry, aggressive, hostile, and uncomfortable. They might also see other people performing a related behavior or exhibit restricted behavior. They might behave in an aggressive and hostile manner to let off some steam or even use aggressive behavior towards the person who is threatening them and force them to remove the threat. On the cognitive side, people might downgrade the imposed restriction, upgrade the restricted freedom, or derogate the source of the threat.

Psychological reactance is so powerful that it can exercise its powers on an unconscious level as well. To understand this better, try to participate in a

clever experiment that was conducted by Fitzsimons, Dalton, and Chartrand in 2007. Make a list in your mind of all the people in your life that you think are very controlling. Now choose a person from that list who generally wants you to have fun and one who wants you to work hard. The researchers who conducted the experiment drew out that information from the participants in a subtle manner and then inspected how they performed on an intellectual task after they were subconsciously exposed to those names. They revealed that although the participants were not able to notice the names of the controlling people in a conscious manner, they still showed psychological reactance. When they were set up with the name that they associated with fun, they performed significantly better, whereas when they were set up with the name that they connected with working hard, they performed significantly worse. Psychological reactance is so powerful that it takes place outside your conscious awareness and in an automatic manner.

Thus, it can be summarized that there are three methods by which the powers of limitations affect an individual's behavior and perception. They are:

1. When we sense something to be unavailable, scarce, or limited, we tend to value that particular item much more (for example, since only the last slice of the pizza was left, it appeared more valuable to you).
2. It is in human nature to avoid loss. In order to avoid losing an opportunity when it gets limited, we feel pressured to snatch that opportunity (for example, we feel compelled to eat that last slice of the pizza when our chance to eat that pizza was decreased).
3. We tend to experience an urge to reclaim our freedom when we find that freedom is getting limited. This is known as psychological reactance (for example, we feel a stronger urge to eat the last slice of pizza and reclaim our freedom when our freedom to eat the pizza gets diminished).

Even though it appears similar, commodity theory, loss aversion, and psychological reactance can explain why limitations appear so strong. When you understand these principles, you can use them in the real world to get more momentum from your target.

Harnessing the Power of Limitations in the Real World

Often when we are presented with too many options, it can become detrimental and can lead to two negative outcomes – we are not satisfied enough with our choice, or we avoid taking a decision altogether. This is mainly because increasing the number of options can increase people's expectations for the final option's quality. Their heightened expectations might become an extreme anchor point when the number of options exceeds a specific point. This triggers a cognitive dissonance and makes the final option appear below average. The bigger outcome that stems from this is decision paralysis, which is basically an extension of loss aversion. People postpone their decisions to avoid any potential loss. Decision paralysis can, however, be prevented by limiting the number of perceived options. Studies have shown that a list of options can be made more appealing by grouping them and adding category labels to them, even if they are mostly random. Another method of avoiding decision paralysis is by limiting the amount of time available to follow your request. This can be accomplished easily by setting a deadline.

Let's take an example. Suppose you are selling T-shirts on an e-commerce website, and you have a wide selection of T-shirts of various designs, colors, and kinds. So, how can you use the powers of limitation to selling your products online? You can start by guiding your website visitors via a 3-step process that will divide the T-shirt combinations into categories instead of simply posting a picture of all the T-shirt combinations on the e-commerce website. In the first step, the customers would have to pick the type(s) of T-shirts that they would like to purchase (for example, long-sleeved, short-sleeved, etc.). Then, in the next step, they would be required to choose the color(s) of the T-shirt that they like, and lastly, they would have to choose the design(s) of the T-shirt that they would like to buy (for example, solid tee, athletic graphic, etc.) They will be shown the different T-shirt options that fulfill their criteria after they make their choices, and their choices could further be systematically arranged into groups of their price ranges.

There are several benefits to this step-by-step process:

1. Each consecutive option acts as an action that helps the visitors develop a congruent feeling that they are interested in buying the product. They are going to be motivated to act in a way that is consistent with their attitude once they develop that attitude. The customers might not feel as committed to buying a T-shirt if you just give them a list of options. This is because then they wouldn't have performed a certain behavior or action that will tell them that they are interested in buying a T-shirt.
2. This process would help promote the autonomy of the customers as they will be taking numerous choices. It will also provide them with a personal feeling of control.
3. Instead of making a single choice among all the possible combinations of T-shirts, this process lets the customers make a few choices among a manageable number of options (for example, picking long sleeves or short sleeves).
4. This process lets visitors choose among several categories of options (for example, price range, design, color, and type). Studies have proved that customer satisfaction is increased by the mere presence of categories because it acts as a cue for more variety).
5. Lastly, it greatly decreases the number of final choices. This helps decrease the perceived loss of other choices of T-shirts.

The powers of limitations can also be explained through the Principles of Scarcity, as stated by Robert Cialdini. Cialdini states that limitations operate on the worth people attach to objects. Objects tend to become more valuable when they are available in lesser quantities. The principle discusses two important techniques or factors – the “deadline technique” or the “limited-number technique.” The “limited number technique” works by decreasing the availability of the product and thereby adds an extra value to the product. The “deadline technique” puts an official time limit on the availability of the product.

A great example of a company that uses these techniques is Nike. When they first introduced their brand new Jordan sneakers to the market, they

made several claims like “this is the limited edition Jordan sneakers,” “you have to get them now,” etc. Because of their strategy, people camped outside their doors or waited in lines in order to get their hands on that limited edition shoes. These techniques created a psychological reactance or got in the way of cognition and ultimately affected human emotions. Limitation created an unstable situation in people’s brains that caused them not to think straight.

When something is available in lesser quantities, people are more likely to spring into action mainly because of two reasons – they think that if the product is scarce, it means it must be more popular and that they will lose the opportunity if they don’t act fast. Therefore, it can be said the Nike advertisement stimulated the people to purchase the product even though they might not actually need it.

Chapter 14: The Art of Sustaining Compliance



Now that you have learned so many tactics in which you can sway people to your side, how did your subject react when you made the request? Did they comply with what you were demanding? In this chapter, we are going to learn about certain other strategies that will help you in two ways. Firstly, if they do comply with your request, then these strategies will help in sustaining their compliance, and secondly, if they haven't complied with your demands, then you can keep using these strategies as an ongoing process (especially when there is no deadline to your request) and eventually, your subject will comply. Keep in mind that the process of persuasion and making others do what you want doesn't end anywhere.

So, read on, and you will find some very important strategies that will help you learn the art of sustaining compliance.

Make Associations That Are Favorable

Before I tell you how you can make favorable associations, I think you are wondering how associations can be favorable or unfavorable. Well, there is a thing like that, and research was conducted in 2007 by Morales and Fitzsimons to prove this. They chose random people and presented them with a shopping cart that had a lot of items, including a box of cookies and a pack of sanitary pads that were completely sealed but were slightly resting on this pack of cookies. Because of this little contact between the products, many people did not want to try the cookies. But the researchers also tried the opposite where they presented another group of people with a cart that contained both these items, but there was a six inches gap between both. In that case, the feeling of not trying the cookies disappeared. This same experiment was done with a variety of products, and the conclusion was that the effect was intensified when the perceived disgusting product had a clear and transparent packaging.

What did this research teach you? It shows us that stimulus can be transferred. And here, we are not only talking about the products in supermarkets but far greater than that. So, here, in this section, we are going to learn more about associations, their power, and how you can use this strategy to your advantage.

Understand the Power of Associations

If associations are so powerful, did you ever imagine how people initially came to know about it? Did you hear about the experiment of Pavlov's dogs? It is quite a famous experiment, and even if you didn't hear about it before, I am going to explain it here and how it is related to the power of associations.

Ivan Pavlov was doing research on the digestion mechanism in his dogs in the year 1927. At that time, he came across something astonishing that formed the base of a lot of things in psychology. In his experiment, he took note of the fact that whenever an assistant entered the lab and he had meat powder with him, the dogs simultaneously started to salivate (keep in mind that the dogs haven't seen the meat yet). So, Pavlov thought that the dogs could do this probably because they have some kind of telepathic power working here.

All of this led to the belief that the dogs were doing this probably because they were expecting that meat will arrive at this time. So, based on this belief, the researchers started doing a couple of more experiments. They started with a neutral stimulus to see whether the dogs respond to that, and the stimulus was the ringing of a bell. But this did not work. Now, they started pairing the two things, that is, the bell and the meat, and rang the bell only before they were going to present the dogs with the meat. They did this repeatedly, and in some days, the dogs formed an association between these two things. The dogs started salivating the moment they heard the bell because it indicated that they are going to get meat now.

So, what is the psychological explanation behind all this, and how does this help you? Here, you are basically priming the dogs that food is going to come when they hear the bell ring. It can be applied to humans too. Let us say that you have the habit of calling your friend whenever you see the weather is sunny and beautiful. In that case, your friend will start associating you with a positive feeling. This phenomenon is known as affective priming, but there are some other reasons for this positive association as well.

The first reason is that of ***misattribution***. By now, you must have understood that human beings have the habit of making plenty of misattributions in their day-to-day life. So, if there are two different stimuli that are somehow associated with one another, people can misattribute their feelings between them. If they feel a certain way because of one stimulus, they can misattribute that feeling to the other stimulus as well. For example, if a product has a good advertisement that makes you laugh or feel happy, then you often have the tendency to misattribute your happiness and positive feelings to the product quality. You start thinking that the product is really good even though you haven't tried the product yourself. So, the main takeaway from the entire explanation is that the tendency to misattribute feelings that is present in humans is one of the main reasons that makes associations such a powerful tool in psychology.

The next reason that makes associations power is the ***semantic network*** in humans. By semantic network, here, we refer to our brain and the vast network of knowledge that is present there, and everything is interconnected. So, when there are multiple concepts that are associated or similar to each other, our brain connects them or associates them. It happens to us in our daily lives as well. Whenever we hear of something in a conversation, on television, or anywhere else, we cannot think of it in a free-floating manner. We always associate it with something from the vast network of pre-existing knowledge in our brain that we have gathered over time. It is this human need to connect anything new with pre-existing knowledge, and we do it through some form of association or similarity.

How to Use the Power of Association to Sustain Compliance?

Now, we come to the part that you all are waiting for – how is all this related to sustaining compliance? Can associations help you do that? They absolutely can, and in this section, we are going to learn how. The strategies that you are going to learn in this section can not only be used to sustain compliance, but you can also use them to generate more pressure on your subject if that person hasn't complied with your request yet.

The power of associations is very frequently used by advertisers when they use the right stimuli together with their product. For example, you will find brands unrelated to sports promoting their products at sports tournaments. Do you know why? It is because they want people to feel excited about their products. But this was a very obvious strategy to follow. There are some other strategies that might not be so obvious, but they are equally effective.

Make the Best Use of Metaphors

Metaphors are present around us everywhere, even though we do not realize it at all times. In fact, there have been some famous personalities and researchers around the world who have stressed the fact time and again that if you truly want to understand the workings of the world, you need to understand metaphors. It will all start making sense if you think about it carefully.

Like I told you before that people start associating a new piece of information to the already existing information in their semantic network, but it all started somewhere, right? There has to be a starting point. So, everything you learn in your day-to-day life becomes embedded in your semantic network, but the initial ones where everything began were probably things that are primary to the aspect of living, for example, eating food. And if you want to notice these metaphors, you only have to look a bit more closely.

Researchers have, time and again, seen how amazing the origin and concept of language is. When people come across a concept or even a phrase in a sentence that seems familiar to them, they start comparing it with

something they had heard earlier. And this innate habit of relying on metaphors can be used to persuade and make others do what you want. There are mainly two techniques in this aspect that you need to learn, and they are as follows –

- The first technique is that you have to ***use the good-up metaphors to your advantage***. The word ‘good’ is often associated with the word ‘up.’ If you keep this in mind, you can frame your sentences accordingly. Let us say that you want to advertise your product in a magazine, and when you approach the editor, they say that they have two slots – one is on the top and the other one at the bottom. Here, you should choose the top slot for your advertisement because of the same good=up theory that I just mentioned. When people see that your advertisement is on top, they would automatically associate it with being something that is better.
- The next thing that you should do is ***rely on metaphors while communicating***. Yes, not every metaphor can be used for effective communication, but when it comes to building trust, you should try to associate what you are going to say with something that is familiar with the recipient so that they can develop positive feelings towards it. In such a situation, the recipient will start developing a ‘gut feeling’ that what you are saying can be trusted. Thus, in short, if you plan to put forth something that is completely new to the recipient, try comparing it with something that is familiar to him/her, and they consider that familiar thing in a positive light.

Use Naturally Occurring Primes

There was a study conducted in the year 2008 by Berger and Fitzsimons, and if I explain what the study entailed, you’ll be able to understand this concept better. In the study, the researchers asked the people to list brands of chocolate and soda that came to their minds. People mostly included Sunkist’s orange soda and Reese’s chocolate in that list when the question was posed to them just the day before Halloween. But the occurrence of orange soda and Reese’s in that list considerably reduced when the question was asked a week later. Do you see the link? Everything – Halloween, Sunkist, and Reese’s – has the color orange commo in them. Thus, the color

orange was present in everyone's minds. And because of this prevalence in the semantic network, a heightened activation took place. You will see the same strategy being used by the stores and supermarkets before Halloween, where they blind everyone with the color orange.

Thus, you can take advantage of the subtle cues present in your environment to prime your subject towards what you want. Do you think that this is more a marketing strategy and not a personal one? Well, you can say so, but if used cleverly, you can use it in your day-to-day life. The principle is, nonetheless, very powerful. If you want to direct a conversation or the thinking process of someone in a particular direction, then you can associate it with something that your subject encounters frequently. Every time the naturally occurring prime comes in front of your subject, he/she will think of what you were saying.

Work On Your Attractiveness

Now, let us elaborate on the last strategy of this section – your message's attractiveness. We already know that attractiveness can spark interest, but how can you use this in real life? Studies have found that when people are in a heightened state of arousal, they are more likely to show interest in what you are saying. That is why it has also been found that when you meet someone in a gym, you have a better chance of making them your romantic partner because they are already in a state of arousal at that point. And these people will misattribute their feeling or arousal from all that physical activity and think that it is because they like you. Similarly, if you want to impress someone on a date, take them somewhere that will help you make the best out of naturally occurring arousal. The best example is that of an amusement park or going to watch a scary movie. The options are endless – you simply have to work your brain and find some innovative ideas.

In this book, I have given several examples throughout, but you do not necessarily have to stick to these examples only. You can be creative and find other ways following the same principle.

Chapter 15: How Does Specificity and Authenticity Help in Day-to-Day Life?

In this chapter, we will study how specificity and authenticity can be used effectively and how they affect a person psychologically. Understanding these things will give you a full grasp of their usage and advantages.

Specificity

The first thing that we are going to discuss is specificity. I am giving you three examples of blog titles, and you need to think which one of them attracts you the most –

- How to get 5400 followers on your Instagram in one week?
- How to get over 5000 followers on your Instagram in one week?
- How to get a lot of followers on your Instagram in one week?

I know that most of you are thinking about the first option but have you wondered why? This example is one of the best ones to show you how specificity works. When you see the first sentence, your interest is piqued because you want to know exactly what you can do to get exactly those many numbers of followers. The headline itself serves as a ‘result’ to you. Moreover, whenever someone provides us with precise details, we tend to think that they are telling us the truth. The same thing happens here.

At the same time, when someone provides you with a vague statement, you don’t have the same effect because your mind is filled with nagging doubts. This is the case in the third sentence where you don’t know what is meant by a ‘lot of followers,’ and thus, you are not certain. The absence of any concrete facts is a bummer here because people will think that you are either exaggerating or you are simply making things up.

The effect of specificity is even more intensified when you provide them with exact details and performance statistics, such as testimonials. This will create authenticity and catch your subject’s eye. It will spark curiosity in them, and they will want to know more. In most people, the more specific you are with them, the more you are providing with cold facts than simple guesswork because whenever you are vague, you are only ruining your own credibility.

So, if you want to keep someone engaged in a conversation or maybe your blog, then there are some points related to the specificity that you should keep in mind, and they are as follows –

Get to the Point

There's no point beating around the bush if you know what you are going to say. In fact, if you think that filling your conversation with fluff is going to show that you know a lot, then you are wrong – it's going to show you as an imposter who doesn't really know anything. If you want to make a real impression on the person in front of you, then you need to make your point right now. Every single second you spend with your subject counts because you can lose their attention any second. You will be good enough only when you can get people to actually listen to you because they want to and not because they have to. Don't fill your sentences with jargon.

You Don't Have Anything Without Attention

If you cannot grab the attention of your subject, then you practically do not have anything in your hands. I am not saying that you need to come up with a very good opening line or start with a bizarre sentence every time, but you do have to grab the person's attention in order to achieve something. Otherwise, no matter how knowledgeable you are or how great your pitch is, it will all go to waste. If you want your prospect to take some action in the direction you want them to, you need to grab their attention first.

Be Ultra-Specific

Whether you want to grab someone's attention through your blog or through your conversation, sometimes you need to be ultra-specific. Whatever you put forward needs to be unique, useful, and also create a sense of urgency. All of this will together provide the specificity to your pitch that it needs to get the work done. Also, make an immediate promise of something that the prospect is going to gain at the end of it. This will ensure that they stay motivated to listen to you until the very end and also be willing to spend their precious time with you listening to what you have to say.

Build Credibility With Specificity

In the example that I gave at the beginning of this chapter, I already showed you how specificity could help you build credibility. When you are very

specific, your prospect will automatically assume that you are speaking the truth. But if what you are saying is not specific and useful, it is only going to get bogged down, and your prospect will not be interested in it.

Apart from everything that I mentioned above, keep in mind that every word you say is important, and one word can really change the game. It can either sway the person to your side or to the other side. There is a huge difference between the right thing and the almost right thing, and sometimes, this difference can cost you a lot. But while you are specific about everything, keep in mind that you have to remain positive and not negative. While imparting all the specifics, don't give away information that is negative. Lastly, I would like to say that specificity and authenticity go hand in hand, but we are going to analyze authenticity in greater detail in the next section.

Authenticity

In the previous section, we learned that when you use precise details, it helps to convey to others that you are authentic. And here, we are going to expand the idea and see how you cannot make bold claims if you do not have sufficient backing because that will not help you set yourself up as someone authentic. If you want people to truly listen to you, you also need to be authentic. People will know that you are not telling the truth. Remember that honesty is always the key if you want to build bonds. You cannot fluff up your sentences to make them seem lofty – there has to be truth in it too.

Being authentic doesn't only mean being true to yourself. It also means that you provide some value to others while you are true to yourself. Always understand that it is way bigger than you think it is.

But if you want to learn how you can be authentic, there are some tips that you can follow –

- **Show Vulnerability** – One of the first steps of being authentic is to show that you are vulnerable. And by this, I mean that you have to own up to your shortcomings and mistakes. Everyone makes them, but not everyone can make up for them. However, you have to learn to be that person. This will encourage better communication with others, build the foundation for trust, and also enable strong teamwork. Do you know who leaders are? They are not the ones who get to lead others but those who earn their right to lead others. People will want to follow these leaders irresistibly.
- **Be a Model** – If you want others to strive for something, you yourself also need to show it. If you want others to be punctual and you come to the office after lunch, you cannot bring out good habits. You have to be the role model for others when you want them to follow what you say. People will want to be with you or follow you because they like you.
- **Share Anecdotes** – If you want to be seen as someone authentic, you also need to share stories and anecdotes. You have to show

others your own struggles and draw examples from there. This will inspire others, and they will want to follow what you say.

- **Be Courageous** – You need to be brave if you want to be authentic. If you are to present others with ideas that you know might not get approval, then you also need to be bold and courageous about it. It's not easy to confront others in such a situation. When circumstances are not in your favor, it takes a bold heart to act in that way.
- **Listen** – When you truly listen, you will understand from other people's words whether they truly see you as someone authentic. If they see you as an authentic person, they will be open with you too.

Being genuine is not the only facet of being authentic. There are several others too. But the genuineness is the main facet, and everything comes down to it. When you are genuine with your prospect, he/she knows what to expect from you, and there you get the opportunity to build rapport and trust. It requires consistent and daily action to build trust. It does not happen overnight. But if you want to know what contributes to an authentic character, then here are some important points to keep in mind –

- **Know Yourself** – The first step to being authentic is knowing yourself. It might sound easy to you now but knowing yourself is not so straightforward. You need to understand your personality traits without letting any bias come in the way, and you also need to identify all those experiences from your past that have sculpted the person you are today. Knowing yourself and your skills don't mean that these skills have to be extensive ones. But you simply have to understand your own competencies, and this will help you communicate better with others. If you want to become successful, then learning to use your skills in the best way possible is very important. In a leadership situation, it is your skills that will act as a mode of self-expression.
- **Follow Your Heart** – It is important to think with your brain, but in order to be authentic, you also need to listen to your heart. When you listen to your heart, you get empathy, and you also get courage, both of which are very important tools for your skillset. In fact,

these are two of the most important soft skills that you need to have. Understanding other people and showing compassion is vital. Being authentic also means that you know how it feels to be in the other person's shoes. Moreover, when you follow your heart, you are more open to showing vulnerability and this, on the other hand, helps to form trust. You need to trust the other person first for them to trust you. Mutual trust is important in every aspect of life.

- **Model Transparency** – Fully transparent and open communication is essential for fostering authenticity. This means that even if you make a mistake, own it and be transparent about it. It is okay to make mistakes, but it is not okay to cover it up. Transparency is when you self-disclose when you don't know about something.
- **Learn From Your Own Experience** – Lastly, you cannot overlook the experience you have from all this. You need to learn from your experiences so that you don't repeat the same mistakes. Moreover, the more you analyze your experiences, the more you will start seeing everything from a different point of view. You will find greater meaning.

Chapter 16: Importance of Instant Rapport and How to Build It?



Rapport is an important feature of our subconscious mode of communication. Securing a rapport means being on the same ‘wavelength’ with someone, and ensuring you have an instant rapport with a person means you are hitting it off with them at the very first go. Establishing a rapport with someone is an essential part of communication, whether you are engaging with them in a personal or professional capacity. If you are able to build a rapport with someone instantly, from your very first interaction, the chances are that communication between the both of you will not be a lot smoother and more convenient, and it will even go on to help both of you get along well with each other in the longer run. After all, first impressions do make a huge difference in how we judge someone, right?

What tends to happen a lot of times is that even if we are conscious about our actions, we might not end up making a great first impression or building good instant rapport with someone. This is the case because how instant

rapport is formed is not just determined by what we say and how we carry ourselves, but it is also heavily influenced by our body language and a lot of non-verbal cues, which are not things we are always consciously controlling, or thinking about. But thinking about how to efficiently come up with some strategies involving these non-verbal cues and modes of communication would actually be very helpful and would certainly go a long way in improving your chances of building and maintaining instant rapport with the people you end up interacting with.

Why Should You Build Instant Rapport?

Here are some reasons why building an instant rapport is actually very important, even if you do not actively realize it at all times:

- **People actually like people who (tend to be) like them:** It has been proven in numerous social psychological studies that people actually like people initially who share a similar mindset and have similar likes and dislikes as they do. This is one of the reasons building an instant rapport is important. If you can provide someone with the assurance that the both of you share some common ground to begin with, it will increase your chances of them liking you and being open to having a lengthier engagement with you. You obviously do not have to be carbon copies of each other, no, but just sharing facts about how the both of you like the same band or have the same taste in books can be beneficial. Small details are very important in having a rapport with someone.
- **First impressions can be very crucial for interviews:** Imagine yourself appearing for an important interview. Even if you have ensured that you have studied all you could, and know all the information, and are equipped with all the skills that are required for the position you are applying for, you must keep in mind that in all probability, you are one among many, many people with the same knowledge and skill set, appearing for the same position. It might sound upsetting to see things from this perspective, but this realization will also help you understand what you can do to set yourself apart from the others and make sure that you have a better shot at securing the job. First impressions are absolutely crucial when it comes to things like interviews because these are situations where you need to make a quick good impression. In this case, building an instant rapport will actually help you greatly in the longer run. If you succeed in doing that, it is obvious that the people who are interviewing you would take notice of you more and would likely remember the interaction they had with you more vividly, so, naturally, you will be one of the first choices that will pop into their

mind when deciding from within multiple candidates with a similar profile.

- **Instant rapport building is also important for leadership positions:** This almost goes without saying, but when you are assuming a leadership position (especially if you are working with a slightly larger group of people), it is important that the people who are working in the team along with you actually like you. It is impractical and nearly utopian to expect everyone you work with to like you at all times, but forming a general likeability is important, as it will really keep you going through the many other, minor disagreements any team is bound to eventually stumble upon. While assuming any leadership position or even during you are pitching for yourself to take up a position of authority (say, if you are campaigning for a round of student elections in your college), it must never leave your notice that despite being a great fit for your role, you are also absolutely required to be likable for the others to actually believe that you are right for the role. This type of likeability is easy to achieve if you have mastered the art of how to build an instant rapport with someone. Plus, rapport building can also help you with getting your words through to people in a more amicable way so that the future chances of conflicts are also low. In this way, you can actually kill two birds with one stone.

Tips for Building Instant Rapport

Now that it is clear why building an instant rapport is of huge significance, the next questions we are confronted with is how does one actually go about that. It can become very overwhelming to be aware of the importance of instant rapport without being able to come up with a proper strategy regarding how to actually turn our thoughts and intentions into actions. But do not worry, it is not rocket science! Here are some tips on how to build an instant rapport, which is simple and can help you build a foolproof step by step process of how to actually build an instant rapport with someone, even (and especially) if it is the very first time you are interacting with them:

Check if You Have An ‘Open’ Body Language

Yes, there is such a thing as open and closed body language! Having open body language is one of the first tips anyone would ever give you about how to effectively communicate non-verbally. An open body language shows that you are welcoming and are open to interact and listen to new people and ideas. It also shows that you are interested in engaging with others. Some tips for maintaining an open body language are to have uncrossed arms and legs, greater hand movements while speaking, and attentive facial gestures while listening to the other person speak. You can remember and use the ‘SOFTEN’ technique to easily ensure that you have an open and positive body language. This technique tells us to S- smile, O- open posture, F- forward lean, T- [stay out of their] territory, E- eye contact, and N- a nod to show understanding. Some of these points are described in more detail below.

Eye Contact Is Important

Eye contact is always important because it communicates that you are paying someone enough attention. Keeping any sort of initial awkwardness aside, it is a great practice to actively try and maintain eye contact with anybody you are speaking to. If you are meeting them for the first time and you are trying to establish an instant rapport with them, eye contact would go a long way as it would not just tell them you are interested in them, but they would also feel reassured because having such non-verbal modes of interaction actually takes the burden away from the person to speak each

and everything out loud at all times. This way, it would also help them ease into the conversation they are having with you. But while maintaining eye contact, always keep in mind that there is a boundary between being interested and making someone uncomfortable with excessive and forced attention. Maintain eye contact, but remember to NOT be creepy!

Let Them Know You Are Listening

A lot of times, it is not enough to only listen to someone else, but you should also actively let them know that you are listening. Otherwise, if they are not aware that you are listening to them, they might feel that you are not interested in what they have to say and would cut down the conversation short. If you are meeting someone for the first time, this step is even more important because, between friends and close acquaintances, it is easier to communicate because you both would already know the ways in which you attentive without actually showing it, but it is unfair for anyone to expect an almost stranger to ace this level of understanding in initial exchanges.

A few ways in which you show that you are a good listener is to maintain eye contact, nod while listening (and yes, there are different nodding gestures to convey different things, so keep that in mind as well!), and of course, stay away from your electronic gadgets while you are listening to someone else. Actively keeping that distraction away goes a very long way in assuring the other person that you are really interested in hearing them out. You might be interested in what they are saying and actually want to google more details about the topic at that exact moment, but they would not know that and might feel like you are just checking your social media instead of paying attention to them. In such a case, just make a quick mental note to yourself to look it up later, and focus more on face-to-face communication.

Keep in Mind the Setting of Your Interaction

Not every strategy works in all situations. Keep in mind where you are meeting. Is it outdoors or indoors? Is it a restaurant or a meeting room? Is it during the day or the evening? How many people are around? How loud is the place? All these factors (and more) about the physical setting of your interaction should constantly inform your decisions of the strategy you are

going to use to build an instant rapport with anyone else. Eye contact might be more important in a louder, more public setting, and open body language might be more important in an outdoor setting during the daytime, and so on. The one size fits all approach does not work very well in human interactions, so let that always guide you in figuring out how you can establish a connection with someone you are interested in.

Utilize Gestures Such as Smiles and Handshakes

Physical gestures are also very helpful. Make good use of gestures such as smiles, nods, handshakes, a pat on the back, or a side hug (only if the situation and the nature of your interaction permit that). This is another reminder of how actions speak louder than words in a lot of settings. Verbally asserting something might not help put it across as effectively as shaking hands in approval with someone's argument. Sometimes, physical gestures can, therefore, be a lot more assuring and can be very helpful in securing a rapport. But having said that, do only how much is appropriate for the situation. Be very sure not to cross a boundary and make someone feel uncomfortable with any untoward gesture which they might not welcome or be ready for at that moment. If the conversation does not permit any physical gesture at all, respect that as well, and just help yourself with the other techniques that help in rapport building.

A Sense of Humour Goes a Long Way

Everyone likes a good laugh, so showcasing your sense of humor does help in forming a rapport with another person. It acts as a great ice breaker in any conversation and are easy points of reference to return to later because it sort of builds this form of communication exclusive to the two of you, and sharing that sort of a bond already indicates that you have started to build a rapport. It is actually very handy to have a go-to list of jokes or anecdotes you can safely refer to break the ice during any conversation, so that is something I would strongly suggest having a repository of. But jokes can also be of many sorts, and humor is a very subjective thing, so make sure you are not senselessly throwing around offensive 'humor', because not just that it would hamper your chances of having a good rapport with someone, it would also allow you to view sensitive matters in a trivial light-which is not recommended in any situation, icebreaker or not.

Give the Other Person Compliments, but Do Not Overdo It

Of course, give the other person gentle, subtle compliments. It helps them feel easy around you and also boosts their self-esteem, which helps them open up during the course of your interaction. However, make sure you are not overdoing it in the department of compliments because that can be very tiring for the other person, and they can also feel that most/all of your compliments actually lack any sincerity. Do not start every sentence with a compliment, and do not compliment on each and everything they say or do; all of that is a huge NO. Space out your compliments and keep them appropriately worded, and it will come to your help.

Also, watch out for how they are reacting to compliments. If you see something which is making them uneasy, drop it, and try having a different point of conversation. It is also important to be able to receive compliments well in order to keep the conversation going. Acknowledge when someone compliments you, accompany it with a smile and a “thank you,” and also let them know if you are not comfortable with the compliment. Setting boundaries is a great way of ensuring you are having a healthy channel of communication, which is an inevitable part of having a good rapport.

Make Sure to Be Not Just Interesting, but Also Interested

Show the other person that you are interested- in listening to what they bring to the table and also in listening to how they are responding to what you bring to the table. There are different ways to communicate the fact that you are interested in them. Use the other person’s first name in the conversation, probe them to talk more about what they are interested in, present follow up questions, go back to something they had mentioned earlier if a related topic comes up in future conversations.

Also, remember to be respectful during any difference of opinion and to verbalize it (you can try saying something like “I understand and acknowledge where you are coming from, but that is not how I look at things, I hope you understand that, too!”). This would help communicate that you are interested in holding a conversation even if both of you have different opinions about it. Being interesting alone is not adequate; it is

equally (if not more) important to be and show how interested you are in building an instant rapport with the other person.

Try and Be Your True Self

It sounds like one of the oldest and most overused cliches, and it is also one of the most difficult things to do at times, but if you are trying to project an image which is not completely representative of yourself, the chances are that the person on the other end will see through it one way or the other, and would easily lose interest in you or doubt your intentions. While a lot is spoken about agreeability and having common grounds with the other person, do not force yourself to pretend as if you agree with or like every single thing the other person does. It really harms your credibility regardless of the nature of your engagement. Of course, express how both of you are similar, but also voice when there is a difference in opinions. No, it is not being suggested that you fight over these differences, but it is important that you make the differences known. That genuinely enhances your authenticity a lot, which, of course, helps in building an instant rapport.

Building Rapport Is a Two-Way Street

In his book *Instant Rapport* (1989), Michael Brooks writes that “being a rapport is the ability to enter someone else’s model of the world and let them know that we truly understand their model...and it’s letting someone else come into our frame of the world and having an experience of them truly understanding us” (p. 21). The fact that this book has remained a bestseller across several decades only goes on to say that Brooks was quite right in his theorization. What this idea basically tells us is that building a rapport does not begin and end with you. It involves (at least) two people, so naturally, it is a two-way street.

While you are consciously trying to compliment the other person, listen to them, give them importance, and so on, you also have to make sure that you are not going out of the way to do it because then it might come across as almost suffocating for the other person if they are not getting a fair chance to reciprocate in the interaction. If you overdo it after one point, it might also come across as you being a little self-absorbed since you are only interested in making sure your side of the interaction is going well, instead

of actually giving the other person enough chances to do their bit as well. In that case, you will be very far away from creating a good rapport, so all your strategies might, in the end, backfire if you are not being cognizant about the other person (or persons) with whom you are trying to establish a connection- and that holds true for all your interactions, be it with your friends, family, a date, or even business deals.

Chapter 17: Understanding Deception



We have all heard of the word deception. But do we truly understand what it is? If we are to put it simply, then deception refers to the act of trying to make people believe in something that is not true. Now you might be thinking, isn't it the same as lying? Well, lying is only a form of deception because, in reality, there are more ways of being deceptive than just lying. Lying is when someone is deliberately stating some false information because their intent is to deceive that person.

We think that people are mostly honest, but even those who have been flagbearers of honesty for a major part of their life have committed acts of deception sometime or the other. In fact, there have been studies that have proven that an average person not only lies once but multiple times in a day. These lies are not always big ones, but sometimes they are. For example, when a person is cheating on his/her partner, they might say 'I've never cheated on you,' and this is a big lie. But often in our lives, we are in a situation where people ask about our opinion on different things, and we are not always honest. For example, your friend might come and ask you, "Do

you like these stilettos?” and even if you don’t, you tell her, “Yes, they look stunning,” and that is a white lie right there. A white lie is a lie that you say to avoid an uncomfortable situation or not hurt someone else’s feelings.

But when it comes to the quality of your social life, trust is what forms the foundation. Whether we are talking about formal authorities like government bodies, or parenting, or a romantic relationship, trust is important everywhere. And when you give in to deception, it undermines the trust. Truth is a very important factor in human relationships, and it heavily depends on a shared view of reality. So the basic thought on everyone’s mind while they are communicating with others is that the other person is telling the truth. In fact, if you study the cultures in-depth, you will find that most of them consider lying a heinous offense.

From a very young age, we are always told that we shouldn’t be lying, and this lesson is almost spoon-fed to everyone. But a child often wonders that if we are to tell the truth at all times, then why is Daddy calling his boss to tell him that he is sick and he can’t come when he is actually going to watch a baseball match?

But does lying show a lack of morals, or is it a sign of cognitive advancement? Well, it’s both depending on the situation you are in. Not everyone can lie. It takes a very active and sharp mind and a high-functioning brain to actually twist the truth in such a way that no one else can detect that it is a lie. But why do people do that? Well, mostly because the truth doesn’t always take us places. It won’t serve every purpose that we have in mind. It won’t solve our problems or keep us out of them, and neither will it help us to further our careers.

Different Forms of Deception

Deception is not only of one type but many. And in this section, we are going to study these types one by one –

Concealing

The first type of deception is when you are concealing or withholding information. In simpler terms, concealment is when you are deliberately and intentionally holding back or not telling correct information. You can also call it a passive form of deception because you are not making something up – you are simply choosing not to say certain things to your benefit. That is why it also takes a lesser toll on your emotional and cognitive resources. It has been seen that when people take part in concealment, they feel that it is easier to rationalize their deeds, and thus, they feel lesser guilt.

Another fact about concealment is that there is no elaborate story required, and you can easily cover it up. When you make up something, you have to remember what you said; otherwise, you will be caught. But in the case of concealment, nothing of that sort happens, and so, you do not have to remember what you said in the beginning, middle, or the end. Concealment is also the most tricky one when it comes to deception detection because there is no cognitive engagement. Keep in mind that concealment is not always considered to be a form of lying by everyone.

For example, if your loved one asks you how your day was at work when you return home, you choose not to say anything and shrug it off. Let us assume that you were demoted, and yet you decided not to say anything, then that is concealment.

Falsifying

Then, we come to the next most popular form of deception, that is, falsification, where people deliberately present false information in front of others as if it were the truth. Thus, it is like a false encounter, and it is completely opposite to that of concealment because here, you are making

up stuff. It can be with respect to something that happened in the past, or it can also be in relation to future activity.

If we compare falsification with that of concealment, it is seen that the former is much harder to pull off and not everyone's cup of tea because the brainpower required in it is way too much. There are so many things involved in it – the person has to come up with a story that is convincing for them, and then they also have to remember each and every detail because they might be asked about it later on, and they have to narrate it in the same manner again.

For example, in the previous case, you saw how the person concealed the information about his demotion. Now, if, in the same scenario, he says that he was promoted, then that is the falsification of information because, in reality, he was demoted.

When people do have a choice regarding how they are going to lie, they often choose concealment over falsification, and the reason is quite obvious – concealing information is far better and easier than making up a detailed, convincing, and elaborate story. So, falsifying is an active form of deception.

Misdirecting

I guess you have heard of the term misdirection in relation to magicians. They always pull off amazing stunts because they direct your attention towards something that is attractive so that you become fixated on it while they make the move that is actually important for the trick to be successful.

But what about misdirection on a psychological level? It is way more subtle than the physical misdirection that you see with magicians. Psychological misdirection is when the magician wants you to believe that they have shown you how they did the trick, but when they suggest this, most people would miss out on the details that show how they actually did the trick. People keep searching for confirmation that what the magician is saying is correct. And then suddenly, the magician will tell them that there is no such thing as a solution leaving the audience baffled because, by that time, the magician has already done the trick.

You can also name it misdirection when you are accepting an emotion and its existence, but at the same time, you are misidentifying the root cause of that emotion. For example, when you are lying and someone questions you whether you are lying or not, you panic, and you admit that you are panicking, but when asked for a reason, you say that you are worried that they are questioning your innocence. But in reality, you are panicked because you worry that they might catch you in a lie.

Telling the Truth in a False Manner

Sometimes, we don't always tell the truth the way we are supposed to. We do tell the truth, but we either fill it with too much humor, or we narrate the details in an exaggerated manner. All of this misleads the target in a different direction, and they are left uninformed and unaware of the real truth. This is also a form of deception.

Here is an example – the parents of a teenager ask him to take his vitamins on time, but he doesn't obey and decides to flush them down the toilet. But when the parent comes to the boy in the morning and asks him whether he took the vitamins, he laughingly says, 'No, I flushed them down the toilet!' The way in which the boy says this sentence makes the parent think that he is only joking, and he actually took the vitamins.

Half-Concealment of Information

I have already explained to you what concealing of information means, but there is also another type of concealment, and that is – half-concealment of information. Here, the person will admit only a portion of the truth and then withhold certain parts of the information, which will allow them to keep up the lie. At the same time, they do not have to actively lie about anything here.

For example, during the audit, the CEO of the company is asked about how the company is performing. He says that this year has been great for them and they have made double the profits that they usually make. Even though this information is true, the CEO did not tell the auditors that the company

also lost four times the money in the previous span and had to lay off 50% of its staff. This is a classic example of half-concealment.

Incorrect-Inference Dodge

Now, we come to the final form of deception where the truth is said, but then it is said in a certain way where it feels that whatever the person is saying, the opposite has happened. An example should make this easier to understand.

You have been invited by your neighbor for a weekend dinner, and they made a special casserole for you. You did not like the casserole at all, but when the neighbor asks you how it was, you reply, 'I have never tasted anything like this casserole ever in my life.' You told the truth because you never tasted a casserole that is worse than this one, but the deception lies in the fact that you implied to your neighbor that you actually loved the dish, whereas you didn't.

Studying the Basics of Lies

Like I mentioned earlier, it is a cognitive accomplishment to lie effectively and make others believe you. Humans have the habit of looking at lies from an ethical and moral point of view, and thus, they look down upon it. But not every lie has the same underlying reason. There are different reasons why a person might be lying about something, and they are as follows –

To Keep Trouble at Bay

The first and foremost reason and the most common one too is that people don't want to fall into any kind of trouble, and that is why they sometimes give in to lies. They want to hide any misdeed that they have done. It is true that if you have already done something bad, you cannot undo it. And most of the time, owning up to your mistake or misdeed isn't going to get you anywhere. At least in the short term, it won't bring you a positive result. So, people want to dodge the repercussions and responsibilities and lie to others to cover up their deeds.

To Avoid Hurting Someone

I am sure that all of you have lied at some point in your life or the other where your motive was to protect someone else's feelings. In fact, we do it all the time, sometimes knowingly and at other times, unknowingly. From a young age, we teach our children to be polite, but a part of being polite also means that they shouldn't point out the flaws in someone (which is also a form of lying). So, even if someone gave them something or did something for them that they didn't like, they are taught to say 'thank you.' This is how it starts, and these types of lies are known as white lies. However, when someone engages in a white lie, it is usually not considered malicious because the intent is good, and there is no ill will.

To Maintain Reputation

Sometimes people lie because they don't want to reveal certain details about their life that they are ashamed of. They think that it is only going to ruin their reputation if they tell the truth. For example, a drug addict who was in the treatment facility for a long time might return home and not tell

his neighbors about his stay at the treatment facility. When asked about where he was, he might say something else, especially when the question is asked by a romantic prospect or an employer. These lies are told with the aim of avoiding embarrassment or shame.

To Increase Reputation

Now we come to another type of lie where contrary to the previous one, people lie because they want to increase their reputation in front of others. These types of lies usually don't have any specific stimulus; for example, there is no specific question or demand for giving an answer. These lies are often told by people with a narcissistic attitude because through these lies, they brag about certain stuff to make themselves seem more gifted, skilled, or accomplished. But what do they gain from this? They want to seem favorable to others, and that is the main aim of behaving in such a manner.

To Have Control on Information

Lying is direct falsehood, but that's not the only type of lying, as we saw in the previous section. There is concealment too. And people who have the habit of concealing information do so because they want to have full control over the information in their hands. They withhold important facts deliberately because they want to control what information they impart and what they don't. And in our society, people often consider this form of lie justified because they are not actively saying anything that is not true. They are simply not letting go of the truth and holding it back. But you have to keep in mind that when some important piece of information is not revealed, it can completely alter the meaning of something, and then your understanding of the event is changed totally.

To Manipulate

People who lie to manipulate are not defensive or evasive, but they do it in a rather aggressive fashion. Their lies have cruel intent, and they always have a hidden motive behind. They either want to reveal harmful rumors about others to damage their reputation and boost their own social standing. They also do this because they want to gain love or wealth or something else they desire.

Now that you know why people lie, you also need to know who are the people who have a greater tendency to lie. Well, if we see it generally, then everybody lies, but even then, there are some types of personalities who simply have a knack for lying, and they are as follows –

- **Pathological Liars** – These people are usually sociopaths. The simple definition of pathological lying is when the person has a habit of lying, and it becomes a chronic compulsive disorder for them. It is also known as mythomania. These people lie even when there is no reason for them to. So, if you have a pathological liar in your life, then it can get really tricky because you don't know when they are themselves and when they are lying – it can be very much frustrating. There has been no concrete research to show why people give in to such behavior. But it is said that some people lie pathologically because they want to paint a good picture of themselves in front of others or they want to gain sympathy.

In previous sections, we saw that people might lie to not fall in a situation of embarrassment or any uncomfortable position, but when someone has the habit of lying pathologically, they usually don't have any objective behind what they are doing.

There is, however, one similarity between the lies told by pathological liars – they are usually complicated and dramatic. They are excellent storytellers, and so, their lies are also very detailed. But even then, the way they will narrate the lie, it isn't so easy to catch them in it, and it is very convincing.

A pathological liar also has this tendency of believing the lies they are telling, which is also what makes the entire charade so believable by others. So, they walk the thin line between delusion and conscious lying and sometimes give in to the urge to believe whatever they are saying.

When pathological liars are lying, they usually don't feel bad about what they are doing, and this is mostly because they do not have any

clear sense of what is wrong and what is right. Thus, the lies they tell are mostly weighed towards manipulation.

- **Compulsive Liars** – These are people who consider that in any situation, lying is their first option. They do it even when they are not getting any advantage out of it, or there is no reason for them to. Compulsive liars are usually born through their childhood experiences. They might have grown up in situations where they had to lie to survive. The environment might have been abusive, and in such cases, to ensure their emotional well-being and survival, they had to lie. All of this later on results in compulsive lying.
- **Narcissists** – Then there are narcissists. They lie because they want to be considered high in the eyes of others, and they want to gain glory and anything that would help them show off.
- **Borderline Personalities** – Another type of person who has the habit of lying are borderline personalities whose behaviors are mostly out of control most of the time, and they have extreme mood swings. They are the type of people who are into promiscuous sex, gambling, and abuse. And because of these reckless behaviors, they have to pay the consequences. In order to prevent the fallout, they lie so that they can deal with it.
- **Histrionic Personalities** – These are people who crave attention and love all the time, and they can do anything to get it. They do not tell the truth, but whatever they say also portrays what they are currently feeling from the inside. For example, ‘I’m so sad that I’ll probably drown myself.’ They expressed themselves through over-exaggeration, as you saw in the example.

How to Spot Deceptive Behavior?

Humans are born liars, but if you want to get around your day successfully, an important skill to learn is to detect these liars. Think about it – you can be your own personal lie detector, and you will never be manipulated by someone else's lies. So, in this section, I am going to talk about certain things that you should focus on if you want to spot deceptive behavior.

Absence of Self-Reference

People who are speaking the truth often use the word 'I' in their sentences. Read through this paragraph –

I returned home from work at 7 pm, and as I was keeping my coat on the rack, the phone started ringing. I went to pick it up and talked to my mother for fifteen minutes on the phone. And just as I was about to hang up, I noticed that the TV was not there in the living room.

Do you notice how many times the word 'I' has been used in the above paragraph? When someone is lying or being deceptive, they avoid referring to themselves when they are speaking. So, in order to do that, they start speaking in the passive voice. So, instead of saying '*I didn't lock the safe before leaving for work,*' they would say something like '*The safe was left unlocked.*'

So, whether someone is speaking to you or writing something, their deception can be spotted from their intentional omitting of pronouns that refer to their selves.

Notice the Verb Tense

If you want to spot a deceptive person, it is important that you keep an eye on the verb tense being used. When something has happened back in time, truthful people use the past tense to describe it. But when deceptive people narrate the same incident, they have a tendency to narrate it as if it were happening right now. Using the present tense to describe something that happened in the past is done because people are trying to rehearse and memorize the events. That is why if you are talking to someone and you notice any inappropriate shift to the present tense, be very careful from then

onwards. It might happen that the person started out in the past tense and then suddenly moved to the present tense or vice-versa.

They Focus More on Words

Liars have a tendency to focus more on their words. Remember a time when you were late to reach a meeting or any important place – did you not rehearse in your mind the excuse that you are going to give on reaching? I think most of you did because that's in human nature. You start thinking of things on which you can blame it, for example, the traffic, your car, or any other form of excuse.

But what I need you to understand here is that liars have the tendency to keep practicing everything they are going to say in their mind. They focus on each and every word and keep rehearsing it until it comes naturally to them. But they spend so much energy thinking about their word usage that they often forget about their gestures that might betray them at that time. These small gestures would give away the fact that they were indeed lying. That is why if you are trying to detect deceptive behavior in someone, it is advised that you look at their body language or anything else other than their words that might be of help.

Replying to Questions With More Questions

This is another characteristic behavior of deceptive people. No matter what type of liar a person is, most of the time, they will prefer not to lie (except for pathological and compulsive liars, of course) because lying would also pose them the great risk of being caught. That is why the strategy they follow is they try avoiding answering the question at all. There are several ways in which you can dodge a question thrown at you but the most commonly used one by deceptive people is asking a question in reply to a question. That is why if you are trying to spot a deceptive person, any such responses should be taken into consideration. For example, they might say things like, “Do you think I am the kind of person to steal things from people I love?” You can also call it a form of manipulation. It could also be something like this – “Don't you think that it would be very stupid to steal something from my own house?”

Equivocation

Suppose a person asks some questions to the deceptive person, then instead of answering them directly, they will fill their answers with vague expressions, weak modifiers, and various types of expressions that all point to uncertainty. Thus, you should look out for the usage of words like perhaps, might, maybe, sort of, could, approximately, and so on. But do you know why these use such vague expressions? Well, the major reason is that when they are vague with their original statement, they are open to the option of modifying it later any time they want without directly contradicting their previous statement.

Oaths

People who are being deceptive have this one thing in common, and that is – whenever they are asked something, they try to give as little information as possible. They always keep trying to make others feel that whatever they are saying is 100% true because deep down, they know that it is not. So, in order to sound even more realistic and convincing, deceptive people depend on the usage of oaths in their mildest forms. This means that anything and everything they say usually has phrases and word usage like ‘cross my heart,’ ‘I swear,’ and so on. On the other hand, when people are being really truthful about what they are saying and not being pretentious, they know what they are saying is true, and thus, they don’t worry about proving the truthfulness of the facts. However, deceptive people think that if they don’t use oaths to back their statements, they won’t be taken seriously.

Euphemisms

Think of any situation or action in your life, and there is an alternate term for that, and this applies to almost all languages on earth. So, when someone knows that they are guilty of doing something, their sentences often include such alternative words that are milder and not their explicit and harsher synonyms, which would have otherwise been fitting in such a situation. Deceptive people rely on vague words while framing their sentences. Those are known as euphemisms, and the idea behind using these is that they try to portray their guilty acts in a favorable light that is acceptable by all. They think that using such words will somehow help in

reducing the damage that their actions have already caused. Thus, if you are looking forward to identifying a deceptive person, then what you should look for are terms like ‘bumped’ when the actual word should have been ‘hit,’ ‘missing’ when the more appropriate term would have been ‘stolen’ and the list keeps going on and on.

Lack of Detail

When someone is truthful, they will usually narrate all the details of an incident. In fact, sometimes, they might reveal such minute details about things that are not even required or relevant to the question that was initially asked. But do you know why this happens? It is because these subjects (who are being truthful) are retrieving the events from their long-term memory, and every experience that we have in our day-to-day lives is stored with a lot of details in our memory. There are a dozen facts. So, every small detail comes up when a truthful person starts narrating an incident.

On the other hand, someone who is being deceptive is fabricating a story, and in that case, they try to keep their explanations short and concise. They don’t go into too many details about things because the more the details, the more they have to remember the same for later. They prefer keeping things brief and simple. However, there are some experienced deceptive people who have the brainpower to cook up the most detailed stories from their imagination and narrate the fictitious events as if they were truly happening. Moreover, another thing to keep in mind is that the deceptive person always wants to watch his/her back. If they give too many details, and if the other person comes up with proof that contradicts those details, then it will be a problem for them.

Alluding to Actions

There are people who have the habit of alluding to their actions even when they haven’t performed it in real life. I am going to give you an example of this scenario, and you will understand what I am trying to say – An employee lost all data on his computer just before the day of an important presentation. When his boss asked what happened, he said that every day before going home, he backs up everything to the cloud, and he tried doing the same last Wednesday. But did you notice that he did not actually say

whether he made the backup or not? He alluded to the action, but he did not confirm whether he really did it or not. There was nothing definitive about what he said. So, if you notice someone speaking in this manner, you should never assume that they have done everything that they are alluding to.

MLU or Mean Length of Utterance

Have you heard of MLU before? If not, then you need to know that it basically refers to the average no. of words that a person uses in one sentence. According to research, most people have the habit of saying about 10-15 words in a single sentence. This is the norm. But when someone is lying or being deceptive, they get anxious even though they do not show it externally. In such a situation, the number of words in a sentence either becomes way more than the normal count or is considerably lesser than what is normal. Thus, when you are talking to someone and analyzing whether they are being deceptive or not, I suggest that you pay careful attention to the number of words they use in a sentence.

Narrative Balance

There are three distinct parts of any narrative – the first one is the prologue; after that comes the critical event, and then the aftermath.

The prologue is where everything that happened prior to the critical event is explained, and it gives you overall background information about the setting. Then, the most important portion of any narrative is the critical event that comes after the prologue. Lastly comes the aftermath, where everything that happened after the critical event is described in greater detail.

If someone's narrative is honest and truthful, then the percentage of each of these parts of a narrative is somewhat like – 20-25% prologue, 40-60% critical event, and 25-35% aftermath. But if any of these portions of the narrative is considerably shorter than the others, then you have to understand that something has been deliberately hidden. Similarly, if any of the parts of the narrative is considerably longer than the others, then you

can assume that it is because the person has filled that part with false information.

Physical Cues That Help in Lie Detection

In the previous section, I introduced you to some psychological cues that help in lie and deception detection, but there are some physical cues as well, and we are going to see what they are.

Eye Contact

A former CIA officer named Susan Carnicero wrote a book by the name of *Spy the Lie*, and in her book, she wrote how it is quite the opposite of what people think – people assume that liars are going to look away. But in reality, it is quite the opposite that happens. Liars think that they are not looking into the eyes enough, and so, they end up overcompensating for it and gaze into the interviewer's eyes for way too long. But there are also cases where liars break off eye contact suddenly, or they prefer not looking into your eyes at all. This is because when people look directly into your eyes and still speak lies, they feel guilty, but it becomes way easier to make up stories when you are not looking into someone's eyes.

Rate of Blinking

Another factor to keep in mind while spotting a liar is the rate of their blinking. When liars gaze at you for a longer than normal amount of time, their blink rate also drastically reduces. But afterward, their rate of blinking speeds up significantly. On the other hand, if you look into the eyes of someone who is telling the truth, you will notice that their rate of blinking is quite ordinary and normal.

Unfitting Head Gestures

Head gestures that do not fit other actions are often indicators that the person is lying. For example, the person might be saying yes but nodding their head in a way as if they are saying no. They are doing this unconsciously, but it also shows what lies within. So, if you ask someone a question and their head gestures contradict what they are saying, then it might be a sign of deception.

Unfitting Facial Response

Just like head gestures, people also give facial responses that are unfitting. For example, if someone's family member is missing, and instead of being worried, they smile throughout, then that is not a fitting facial response. In fact, that is not only suspicious but also inappropriate. It also signifies that the person might be deceptive.

Excessive Movements at the Anchor Points

There are some other gestures that you should look for in liars, and for that, there are special points in the human body known as anchor points. The main aim of these points is to form a connection between your body and the outer world. But which parts of the body are referred to as these points? They are mainly your hands, feet, and butt. When a person is lying, they will try their best to keep their body language in check, but one thing that deceives them even then is their anchor points. It is not easy to keep one's anchor points in control. Someone might tap their fingers while they are lying to you, or they might tap a foot uncontrollably, or they might fidget and keep repositioning themselves in their seat.

Frequent Grooming

Another very common feature seen in liars is that they try to groom themselves from time to time and even in between a conversation. These gestures include fixing their hair, messing with their hair, or fixing their tie. There are several more cues like this related to grooming that will help you identify a deceptive person.

Excessive Scratching

Then comes the sign of excessive scratching. Even though you might think that it is odd for people to do this in public, people really give in to the urge. All you have to do is keep your eyes open. When someone is not telling the truth, they feel that they have been trapped somewhere, and so, almost instantly, their fight or flight response is triggered. So, physiologically the reason behind such excessive scratching is that the blood from the skin tissue is drawn away, and an itching sensation starts setting in. The first body parts to feel these sensations are the hands and the face of the person.

So, if someone is falsifying information or downright lying, then you will see them scratching their eyes, nose, ears, and so on.

How to Lie?

Now we come to the part where I give you some tips about effective lying where you can make up your own stories without getting caught. But I would urge you to use these tips wisely and not cause harm to anyone else.

There are instances in life where we all have to lie – it can be a situation where your friend asks you how she looks, and even though the dress doesn't suit her, you say that she looks gorgeous because you don't want to upset her. Thus, all of us have lied or will have to lie at some point in our lives. These lies can be for a variety of purposes. It can be because you want to lubricate your conversations in a social situation, it can be a white lie, or it can be something that you don't want your romantic partner to know. Whatever the reason may be, here are some tips on how you can effectively lie to others –

Remain Calm

The first step to effective lying is not to panic. Whenever you are talking to someone, always remember that the person in front of you is also monitoring your every move and every word and looking for any discrepancies whatsoever. They will be monitoring your behavior and your speech very closely. And, when you are lying, it will instantly boost your blood pressure levels and speed up your heartbeat, which is not a good sign and can be caught by an expert deception detector.

So, the catch here is that you have to behave in such a way as if there is nothing in the world for you to hide. You also need to keep in mind that if the person decides to ask you questions that put you on the spot, you cannot become angry. Sometimes, even though you do not show any extreme outbursts, there might be microexpressions on your face showing your rage or contempt. You have to be aware of them too.

Don't Make It Too Complicated

The art of successful lying requires you to keep things simple. Some people don't realize how much amount of effort and imagination is required in lying. You are constantly coming up with alternative realities and scenarios

that are not happening in real life, and while you are doing that, your mind takes upon the responsibility to fill in the rest of the details so that everything fits coherently. But while doing so, your mind might also insert some totally irrelevant details in the narration, and this makes things complicated. However, your mind thinks that inserting too many details makes it look realistic, and that is the reason why they do this. But without you even realizing, these extra details are what gives you out as a liar. They often don't mix and stand out because the current scenario doesn't merge with those extra details, or they have nothing to do with the initial question that was asked.

If you want your lie to be believable and also reasonable, then you should try to keep things simple. It will be easier for you that way to keep the facts straight. Suppose you add these extra details, and then the person starts asking questions based on those details – then it is only going to trip you up and make you fall in greater trouble. The lie no longer remains plausible, and you are caught.

Be Steady

Before you speak the lie and after you have spoken it, your attitude matters a lot, and thus, you have to maintain a good mood and proper mannerisms and also ensure an evenness to everything. You need to stay nervous if you are already feeling nervous before telling a lie. Similarly, if you are in a relaxed state and someone places a totally random question in front of you out-of-the-blue, then also you have to remain relaxed. Do you know why? It is because when you try to shift from one mood to another, that is when the problem arises. That shift in body language and tone gives you away, and the person in front of you will understand that you are fabricating things.

After you have answered someone's question or already told a lie, don't appear too relaxed or relieved. If during the time of lying, you were angry and agitated, you need to maintain that even after the lie. If someone is trying to detect a lie in you, then they are watching each and every move very closely, so you cannot provide them much to work with. Be steady at all times.

Chapter 18: Persuasion and Manipulation in Relationships



What is the first thing that comes to mind when we think of power? Physical strength, money, or social status – these are probably the first words to pop up in our minds. However, there is another greater form of power which does not include any of the above. Persuasion and manipulation are probably one of the most underrated ways of exercising personal power. Persuading and manipulating your partner through various methods can only add up more happy years to your relationship.

If we compare and judge, we will conclude that when it comes to a long term relationship, persuasion and manipulation is probably a regular phenomenon that people often exercise on their partners, be it knowingly or unknowingly.

However, the key point to be kept in mind here is persuasion and manipulation is a perceptual occurrence. Its effectiveness has a great deal to do with how the person in front perceives it.

The readers are expected to consider the situation and judge the appropriateness of the actions before carrying out the following tips and tricks.

Can Touch Help in Influencing and Persuading Your Partner?

Ask any people in a relationship, and they will tell you how important it is to touch your partner. Be it casual flirting, or building mutual liking, or to rekindle the spark in the relationship – touching plays a very important role. Hence, it is safe to say that touch does help in influencing and persuading one's partner.

We often consider words to be powerful, but what if the person in front refuses to even hear them? Touching someone while trying to persuade your partner or someone you know to do something has greater impacts. Do not believe it? Here are some pointers to help you understand the great impact that touch can leave on a person.

- When asking our friends or partners or fellow work/ study mates to help us with some boring task, the chances of them helping us increases when we touch them casually while requesting or before we plea. This is an everyday phenomenon that we have all done at some point.

You all must be able to recall at least one such incident where a person had denied to help, but you pleaded to them by taking their hands in yours, and they nodded yes! Or it could be the reverse as well, where you refused to do something, but when requested by them holding your hands, you went on and helped.

- Now, this is another very common activity in everyday life that demonstrates the strong persuasive and influencing power of touch that you might not have considered. It is a proven fact that a waiter or waitress is likely to receive a bigger tip if they touch or caress the shoulder of their customers than those who do not touch their customer's shoulder while bringing the bill or change.
- A new player is likely to perform better when they are wished luck by their coach or captain by touching them lightly.
- You will notice that evaluating your coaching instructor becomes easier if you have happened to have been touched by them someday.

This is similar to how you gain faith in your coach or instructor easily if they give you affirmation by tapping your shoulders gently (or even strongly, depending on the business).

- The chances of a customer staying in a shop for a longer period of time or buying more products increases if any seller of the shop touches the customer just as they enter the store.
- On 1st January 1988, a research paper was released relating to this subject. The topic of the paper is “Strategies to secure compliance for a mall intercept interview.” The research was conducted by scholars Shmuel Ellis and Jacob Hornik.

The experiment was conducted to check how people percept a friendly touch on the upper arm. It was conducted in a mall where both the genders and different age groups of people were requested to participate in a survey. Now it is a pretty clear fact that surveys in the middle of shopping or casual hanging out with friends can prove to be cumbersome and annoying.

The people, before they were asked to participate in the experiment, were touched casually by some researchers casually on their upper arm, without the prior knowing anything. Then these people were asked to participate in the survey. And the rest of the 50% of the people asked to participate in the survey were not touched. Interviewers from a distance watched and noted the behavior of both the group of people.

It was noticed that answers given by the customers did not vary dramatically, nor was there any sort of bias while answering but what varied dramatically is the will and approach of the respondents. The respondents who were touched prior to the survey were more willing and eager to participate in the survey whilst the rest seemed to be participating in the just for the sake, and some were even annoyed.

All these above examples show how impactful a single, strategic touch can be. The above examples, if applied to your partner, work similarly. But if

you are in a more intimate relationship with your partner or want to lead your date or partner into something more intimate, then here are a few quick tips for you to try on your partner to influence them.

- Touching your partner's back or shoulder - This could help you in persuading them to do a little something for you. Like if you want them to buy you flowers or a gift, tell them that while touching your partner's back or touch their shoulder while you request them to get you a drink or buy you breakfast.
- Caressing your partner's face or lips – When you want to make the first move of kissing your partner, but he/she seems distant, you can touch their face gently and then slowly move your fingers to their lips. Gently caress their lips, and you are going to get that kiss from your partner without even having to say a word to them.
- A soft tap on the upper arm or soft grip of the hands of the person you love – While telling them about an event or place or vacation that you want them to come along with you, you can touch their hand or upper arm. This plays a being role in them, giving you the nod.
- Rubbing your partner's back – now, this is the universal language that is known by most couples! You can rub your partner's back before you finally make a move to get intimate with your partner.
- Touching or rubbing your partner's ears, or giving them a quick peck on their cheeks or head, or snuggling them before asking them to do something for you are also effective methods of influencing or persuading your partner.

If you are on a date, find excuses to touch your date so as to demonstrate to them that you deserve their time and love and bag a second date. But please do not start groping them; make sure you touch them appropriately.

If you are in a relationship, then do not fret away from touching them and find spots to touch them that will influence them greatly.

Here's How You Can Make Someone Agree to Go on a Date With You

Asking someone out on a date whom you like or have been crushing over for as long as you remember can be both endearing and scary at the same time. If you have been friends for too long and not sure of the person in front's feeling, in that case, things seem even more scary and confusing.

Though many people will pop the question, "Will you go on a date with me?" directly to their crush, not everyone can do that. Those who are rather shy or are over thinkers fret away from directly asking their love interest out. They prefer indirect techniques.

Whatever you do, ask your crush out directly or indirectly; here are a few techniques that will increase your chances of getting your crush to say yes to your date proposal.

The Technique of Foot in the Door

The principle of this technique of compliance is consistency. The foot in the door technique (FID) involves making small casual requests before putting across the real question. A survey conducted on this technique of compliance without pressure by JL Freedman and SC Fraser was published in the journal of personality and social in the year 1966.

The experiment proved that getting a nod for smaller requests first increases the chance of approval of a bigger request later. This is due to the human's tendency to maintain consistency. This technique will prove correct and true as long as you are ensuring that the first and second questions are not related to each other. The FID compliance technique can be used while you are asking your crush or long- time friend out on a date.

Here is a quick example of how you can effectively implement FID:

1st step, the small request – here, you ask the person for favors or help or make small requests to them that they think is agreeable. Make sure to ask for favors that are within his or her limits so that they agree to it. Because if

they agree to the request, then the chances of him/ her saying yes to your date request get doubled than if they deny your request.

Example of things that you can say for this first step:

- Hey, I missed my biology class yesterday, could you give me the notes, please?
- I am meeting my cousin in this restaurant tomorrow, do you know where this place is?
- I love your phone case; where did you get this from?

2nd step, the final and major request – If the person in front has answered the above questions positively, then it is likely that they will say yes to your second question as well. This is due to the property of consistency; it is quite similar to Newton's first law of motion. Do not worry if they replied negatively to your first question; you can still try and ask them the final question; if they say no to that too, then just pretend like it was a joke!

Example of kinds of stuff that you can say for the second step:

- Thanks! What are you doing afterward? If you are free, will you like to go on a date with me?
- Wow, thanks! So, if you are free, would you like to go on a date with me?
- Great, I might get a case from there too! Hey, by the way, I meant to ask you, would you like to go on a date with me?

Or you can simply ask the question the way you want to. That's not a problem at all. Be creative!

The Technique of Door in the Face

The door in the face technique is another technique of inducing a positive response from the person in front. This technique of compliance was researched and was published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology in the year 1975. The scholars who researched this technique were Cialdini, Lewis, R. B. Vincent, J.E., and three others.

This technique is quite the contradiction of the first technique. This technique is based on initial refusal, followed by agreement. Here, the first step involves making a big request, which is impossible for the person to whom the request is being made. The second step involves making the actual request, which seems smaller and easier to fulfill by the person in front. What happens here is that when the person refuses the first request or is unable to fulfill the first request, it is likely that they are willing to fulfill the second request to compensate for dismissing the initial request of help.

This trick shall prove effective not only for your dating life but also in any other aspect of life. Here is one small example of how you can apply this technique to get your date say yes to you!

1st step, the big request – In the first step of this technique of inducing compliance, you need to make a big request to your subject of love interest. This big request can either be related or unrelated to the actual request of you asking them out on a date but has to be something that will surely be denied by the person. The psychology here is that if the person initially denies your request, then in their head, they will perceive that they owe you something. So, when the second request is on a minor scale, they readily agree to it.

Example of things to say in the first step:

- I do not have any notes for tomorrow's early morning exam. Could you give me all your notes for tonight? (the notes should be in hardcopy!)
- After completing your work, will you also complete my work?

2nd step, the feasible actual request - having said no to your prior question, they are already feeling guilty. So, now the chances of them saying yes to your second question get increased. So, take the plunge and ask them out!

Example of things to say in the second step:

- No problem. All the best for your exams! I might feel low after tomorrow's exam. Will you come out with me tomorrow after the exam? It is a date!
- No worries. But will you like to go out with me on a date after we are finished with our work?

Applying these techniques will double the chances of you getting the date. If you still get denied, then it is due to the timing, place, their mental state, and also whether or not they are committed.

Also, these questions are just examples to give you a brief idea of how these techniques work. You need not have to use these questions only. The effects would be better if you asked your own personalized questions.

Signs of Coercive Control

Coercive control in an intimate relationship can prove to be the hardest kind of problem to detect. This is dangerous for the person who is getting controlled and an absolute power gain for the partner who is applying it. This form of control is the ultimate strategy in persuading and influencing one's partner in a relationship.

The partner gets controlled without even knowing. In some cases, the person being controlled actually enjoys this emotional power move until the situation gets ugly. Here are a few signs of coercive control:

- Your partner keeps advising you on things that you should do. They claim that they care for you and have your best interest in their hearts, which is why they are asking you to do what they say. Now you might think that it is cute but try refusing their tips and see them fire up. When the controller is being refused, they get violent or aggressive. They may even start abusing you unnecessarily.
- Coercive control is associated with emotional abuse; thus, it is obvious that you will get mentally tired of your partner. They will seem to be nagging and over loving to you. You will constantly feel the pressure of putting up a show for them and do things for them. They will present themselves to you like they are delicate, and you need to always treat them with care. You will constantly be doing things for them, so much so that your own physical and emotional wellbeing will be neglected. All these will take a toll on your mental health. That is when you should realize that they are not delicate but controlling, and the best thing to do in such situations is to walk out of the relationship.
- In the presence of your love, instead of feeling loved, you feel scared and depressed. You feel like running away from a room where you both are together because they are pulling your self-confidence down and constantly telling you that you are not good enough and need to work harder, even though you are already working hard. This one can be tricky, so if you feel confused, ask yourself, "Does he/she make me feel good? Will I prefer spending

more time in the office than with her at home? Do they make you anxious?" if all these questions are answered in positive then you are being controlled, and it is time for you to move on.

- You will constantly feel like they are superior to you and that you are not worthy of them. They will make you feel puny, not through any direct actions or words, though. You will feel like your relationship is delicate and that you are responsible if it breaks off.

Can You Use Loving Thoughts to Persuade Someone?

The answer to this question is obviously yes! Any person can easily be controlled through loving thoughts. It is not an assumption but a proven fact. One of the popular experiments by Jacob, Lamy, and Gueguen proved that the simple technique of playing romantic music before making a move yields positive results.

Take, for example, if you want to woo a lady, try playing romantic music for priming (priming is a technique where a subject is prepared for the actual result), and then ask them for their phone number, the chances of you getting the number gets higher! Or you can just move up to them and talk to them very lovingly, using the word “love” in your sentences again and again and then ask them out. They are more likely to say yes.

For men, you might ask them to think of the times when they felt extremely loved or ask them to share some of such memories with you. Or you can also tell them about your experiences or loving memories. This is the priming state. After this, if you make any request to them, it is unlikely that any men will say no to that.

The most common form of persuading your partner or date, or friend is to begin your plea with, “If you love me,” followed by the actual request. This form of persuasion is exercised by most of us at some point of time in life. Thus, it is very much possible to persuade someone with loving thoughts and words.

Chapter 19: Nudge Techniques That You Should Know

Nudge Theory became popular in 2008 because of the book ‘Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness.’ This book was written by the American Academics Cass R Sunstein and Richard H Thaler. This book is based on the work of Israeli-American psychologists Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman.

What Is Nudge Theory?

Nudge theory is a modern and flexible concept. It helps to identify and modify all the unhelpful influences existing around people. It also helps to manage the change of all kinds. It helps people to improve their thinking and decision-making skills. It is for the understanding of how a person makes decisions, think, and behave.

Understanding the Nudge Theory Through Examples

Fly in the Urinal

In the early 1990s, the Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam used a simple trick for improving their bathroom cleanliness. They printed an image of the urinals with a housefly sitting inside it. The cleanliness of the airport bathrooms significantly improved. The spillage of urine on the bathroom floor was drastically reduced by almost 80 percent.

Speed Camera Lottery

This best nudge of all time. Kevin Richardson invented the 'speed camera lottery.' In this concept, speed cameras are installed at the intersections. The people who stay within the speed limit gets rewarded by the fees that are paid from the people who exceeded the speed limit. This technique is simple yet brilliant. This idea became very effective not because they didn't have a choice but because the safer option was made very attractive that people wanted to be on that side. The experiment was done in Stockholm, and the speed limit notably dropped from 32kmph to 25kmph (Stockholm's main roads' exact speed limit).

Reducing Cigarette Litters on London Streets

People who are fans of Football tend to have very strong opinions about who is the no. 1 player in this world. This nudging technique simply uses that technology in a brilliant and effective way. The ashtrays were made to look like ballot bins. They had questions related to football and two chambers for giving the votes. The votes were given by dumping the cigarette litters into the respective boxes. This was an innovative nudging technique which was proved to be very effective since it was implemented. Southend Council measured the effectiveness of this technique in 2017 and found out that the cigarette litters on the streets have been reduced by 46 percent. Keep America Beautiful is an environmental charity in America. They, too, tested the effectiveness of this nudging technique and found out that the cigarette litters on the busy street reduced by 74 percent.

Use of Small Plates for Food Waste Reduction

This experiment was done by reducing the sizes of the plates in the restaurants by two inches. This technique proved to be very effective in lowering the amount of food waste. The food waste amount significantly dropped by 22 percent. The plus point is there was no change in customer satisfaction, and the size differences of the plates were not even noticed.

Honk Reduction System

This technique was implemented for reducing the indiscriminate honking that takes place on the Indian roads. In this technique, whenever a driver honks, one button with a red smiley starts flashing and beeping. To stop it, the driver has to press that button. This is an effective way to reduce indiscriminate honking. Honking became a subconscious habit of a driver, which is made conscious again by providing immediate feedback. The results were amazing. Since the red buzzer was annoying, the drivers reduced their honking by a significant 61 percent, and this happened over a period of six months. This proved that 61 percent of honking was just habitual and was not at all related to safety.

3D Child Image on the Road

In this technique, a 3D image of a child chasing a ball appears on the road when a car approaches. This is actually a 2D drawing that causes an optical illusion from about 50 feet away and appears to be 3D. This technique is a little controversial since many people say that this can be very dangerous and create panic among the drivers. This image was placed at a busy intersection for a week and was a matter of high controversy because it can even increase the chances of accidents because of the sudden raised panic among the drivers.

Piano Stairs

The piano stairs were built for encouraging subway commuters to go for the stairs, a healthier option, instead of the escalator. It proved to be really effective and fun. People had fun while climbing the stairs and most people changed their habit of taking the escalator for the better. These stairs were

first installed in Sweden, and this idea was loved by people all around the globe. A video of people on this staircase became viral on YouTube. The idea became so popular that later they were even introduced in places like Auckland, Istanbul, Melbourne, and Milan.

Eat Veggies

One American grocery tried this technique. They placed green arrows on their floors. The arrows led to the aisles of veggies and fruits. It was observed that 9 out of 10 times, the shoppers followed those arrows. This is why their sale of fresh veggies increased drastically.

The Decoy Effect

When we go to a restaurant, most of us are not likely to order the costliest item on the menu. We are more likely to order the 2nd most expensive dish on the menu. This is why the restaurants came up with this technique. The price difference between the most expensive dish and the 2nd most expensive dish is not too much. It is more like a bargain. This is very effective for the restaurant owners from the viewpoint of making a profit.

Little Bin, Big Bin

This scheme was implemented in the UK. Each home was provided with two separate bins. The people were to dispose of their regular waste in one bin and the recyclable materials in the other bin. The bin allotted for regular waste was a small bin, whereas the bin allotted for the recycling wastes was a big one. This ensured that people were more encouraged to recycle than simply wasting things. Since the bin for the regular waste is small, people will try to waste fewer things and will try to put the recyclable garbage in the recycling bin. This turned out to be very effective and increased the no. of recyclable items coming from each home.

Organ Donation

In some countries, people have to opt-in for donating organs, and in certain countries, people are automatically enrolled for donating organs, and if they don't want to, then they need to opt-out of it. In countries where people

have to opt-in, show a maximum of 30 percent of the population opts-in, whereas countries where people have to opt-out, shows that only 10 – 15 percent of the population opts out of it. This increased the number of organ donors by a huge percentage.

Paid to Quit Cigarette

This nudging technique was implemented in the Philippines. In this experiment, smokers were each provided with a savings account for six months. After six months, a urine test was done on them for checking nicotine. If they passed the test, they were given all the money, and if they failed, their money would go to charity. This was indeed an effective way to turn smokers into non-smokers. The conversion rates were really high after the implementation of this innovative nudging technique.

See Food

It was an experiment implemented in some schools by displaying healthy food items in the cafeteria lines. Surprisingly students, in the healthy lines started making better food choices. The sales of healthy foods increased by 18 percent.

Downsize Meals

Some restaurants may offer their customers to supersize their meals. That may be an effective way to boost their sales. However, from a healthier perspective, the opposite tactic seems to be helpful. In this technique, waiters asked the customers whether or not they want to downsize their meals. This nudging technique proved to be effective since 33 percent of people took that offer and downsized their meals. In this way, they saved themselves from an extra 200 calories, thus making them healthier.

Sex Sells

This nudging technique was implemented in South Africa related to the advertising of bank loans. They observed that sending materials to male customers was more effective if there was an attractive image of a woman present. So, they used it as an alternative plan and started advertising in 25

percent lower interest rates. Even with the low-interest rates, this technique was found to be able to draw in male customers.

Social Norms

In this nudging technique, people were sent some phrases like “Zero percent of people around you have done their tax payments,” etc. This proved to be effective since the number of people making their tax payments on time increased drastically since the implementation of this nudging technique.

Simple Strategies Following the Nudge Technique

There are many frameworks available, but BCT Taxonomy is mainly focused on change in behavior and is evidence-based. It is coded and developed by an international team of 400 behavior change experts.

1. **Goal Setting (behavior)** – Agree on or set a goal, which is defined in terms of behavior that needs to be achieved.
2. **Problem Solving** – Analyze for yourself or prompt someone to analyze all the factors that are responsible for influencing the behavior. Then select or generate strategies including increasing facilitator and overcoming barriers.
3. **Goal Setting (outcome)** – Agree on or set a goal that is defined in terms of a positive outcome of some wanted behavior.
4. **Action Planning** – Prompt the detailed planning of the performance of that behavior.
5. **Review Behavior Goals** – Sit with the other person and jointly review the behavior goals and make necessary changes in the goals and strategies.
6. **The discrepancy between Goal and the Current Behavior** – Bring attention to the discrepancy present between the goals set and their current behaviors.
7. **Review Outcome Goals** – Sit with the person and review the outcome goals and consider making necessary changes in the light of achievement.
8. **Behavioral Contract** – Create a contract where all the specifications related to the behavior to be performed will be written. It should be agreed by the second person as well and must be witnessed by some other person.
9. **Information about Others' Approval** – Make sure to provide information about other people's views and opinions on this behavior.
10. **Prompts/cues** – Make sure to introduce the various social and environmental stimuli and define them for prompting the behavior.
11. **Cue Signalling Reward** – Find an environmental stimulus that will predict the arrival of the reward after the behavior change.

12. **Reduce Prompts/cues** – Gradually withdraw the cues or prompts or cues to perform the behavior.
13. **Remove Access to the Reward** – Make sure that the person, who performed some unwanted behavior, doesn't get access to the reward.
14. **Remove Aversive Stimulus** – Arrange for the removal of the aversive stimulus for facilitating the behavior change.
15. **Satiation** – Arrange the exposure to a stimulus frequently and repetitively so that it extinguishes the drive for performing an unwanted behavior.
16. **Exposure** – Provide exposure to a feared stimulus to minimize the response in a later encounter.
17. **Associative Learning** – This says that along with the stimulus that directly elicits a behavior, present a neutral one too.
18. **Behavioral Rehearsal or Practice** – This involves prompt to rehearse and practice of a wanted behavior to increase skill and habit.
19. **Behavior Substitution** – Substitute the unwanted behavior with a neutral one.
20. **Habit Formation** – Prompt to rehearse the behavior in the same context repeatedly.
21. **Habit Reversal** – Prompt to rehearse a habit in alternate to an unwanted habit.
22. **Overcorrection** – After an unwanted behavior, ask to repeat the wanted behavior in an exaggerated way.
23. **Generalization of a Target Behavior** – Suggest performing a particular behavior in a situation that has already been performed in another situation.
24. **Graded Tasks** – Set tasks that are easy to perform and then make them achievable but difficult gradually till the goal is reached.
25. **Credible Source** – Here, it means presenting visual or verbal communication from a reliable source either for or against the behavior.
26. **Pros and Cons** – Give advice to the person to list down the pros and cons of both the changed and unchanged behavior.
27. **Comparative Imagining of Future Outcomes** – Suggest the imagining and comparing of the future outcomes of both

unchanged and changed behavior.

28. **Material Incentive (behavior)** – Inform that there will be valued items, vouchers, and money as a reward if there is any progress or effort in the behavior change.
29. **Material Reward (behavior)** – Arrange some materialistic rewards such as valued items, vouchers, and money that will be delivered in case of progress in the behavior change.
30. **Non-specific Reward** – Make sure to arrange the delivery of a non-specific reward if and only if there is progress or effort in the change of behavior.
31. **Social Reward** – Make sure to arrange some non-verbal and verbal rewards if there is progress in the performance of the behavior.
32. **Social Incentive** – Make sure to inform that a non-verbal or a verbal reward will be given in case of any progress in the behavior change.
33. **Non-specific Incentive** – Make sure to inform that a non-specific reward will be delivered if there is progress in the behavior change.
34. **Self-incentive** – Plan to reward yourself with an incentive only if there is progress in the behavior change.
35. **Incentive (outcome)** – Make sure to inform that there is going to be a reward only if there is progress; otherwise, not.
36. **Self-reward** – Praise yourself and reward yourself if there is progress in the performance of the wanted behavior.
37. **Reward (outcome)** – Arrange some reward that has to be given only when some progress has been seen towards making efforts to bring the behavior change.
38. **Future Punishment** – Make sure to inform about the consequence and the removal of reward on performing an unwanted behavior.
39. **Pharmacological Support** – Encourage the usage of drugs for facilitating behavior change.
40. **Reduce Negative Emotions** – Suggest different ways to minimize negative emotions for facilitating behavior change.
41. **Conserving Mental Resources** – Suggest minimizing the demand for mental resources and save them for facilitating

behavioral change.

42. **Paradoxical Instructions** – Suggest engaging in some unwanted behavior with the motive of reducing the interest in engaging in that type of behavior in the future.
43. **Restructuring the Physical Environment** – Change the physical environment to encourage the performance of the wanted behavior and also build some barriers to prevent the performance of unwanted behaviors.
44. **Restructuring the Social Environment** – Change the social environment for facilitating the performance of the wanted behavior. Also, make sure to create some barriers for preventing the performance of unwanted behaviors.
45. **Reducing Exposure to Cues for the Behavior** – Suggest avoiding the exposure to certain physical and social cues for the behavior. It includes the changing of weekly and daily routines.
46. **Distraction** – Have some distractions to focus your attention on avoiding the triggers for unwanted behaviors.
47. **Adding Objects to the Environment** – For facilitating the performance of the behavior, add certain objects to the environment.
48. **Body Changes** – Alter the body's support and structure to facilitate behavior change.
49. **Identification of Self as a Role Model** – A person's behavior can set an example for all the others. Make sure to inform others about this.
50. **Reframing or Framing** – Suggest adopting a new perspective about behavior for changing emotions or cognitions about performing the behavior.
51. **Incompatible beliefs** – For creating discomfort, pull attention towards the discrepancies present between the past or current behavior and self-image.
52. **Valued Self-identity** – Make the person write a cherished personal strength or value for affirming his identity as part of the behavioral change strategy.
53. **Identity Associated with Changed Behavior** – Instruct the person to create a new self-identity who used to engage in unwanted behavioral acts but not anymore.

54. **Behavior Cost** – Make sure to withdraw something valuable on performing some unwanted behavior.
55. **Punishment** – Make sure to arrange some punishment to be given on performing some unwanted behavior.
56. **Remove Reward** – Make sure to remove certain rewards on performing an unwanted behavior.
57. **Reward Approximation** – Make arrangements of reward following a target approximation. Reward performances close to the target behavior.
58. **Rewarding completion** – Arrange the rewards following the final behavioral component. Add the behavioral components that are occurring earlier in the behavioral sequence.
59. **Situation-specific Reward** – Arrange some reward for a particular behavior in a particular situation that won't be given in some other situation.
60. **Reward Incompatible Behavior** – Arrange some reward for an incompatible response to a situation.
61. **Reward Alternative Behavior** – Arrange some reward in case of performing an alternative behavior instead of unwanted behavior.
62. **Reduce Reward Frequency** – Reduce the frequency of the rewards made on the performing of the wanted behavior.
63. **Remove Punishment** – Try to remove an unpleasant punishment on the failure of performing the desired behavior.
64. **Verbal Persuasion about Capability** – Talk with the person and assure him or her that he will be able to perform the wanted behaviors and help him to fight his self-doubts.
65. **Mental Rehearsal of Successful Performance** – Suggest the practice of imagining situations and performing those behaviors.
66. **Focus on Past Success** – Suggest to think about or make a list of all the previously achieved success in performing the desired behavior.
67. **Self-talk** – Practice positive self-talk aloud or silently both before and while performing the behavior.
68. **Imaginary Punishment** – Suggest imagining of an imaginary punishment for performing an unwanted behavior in a real-time situation.

69. **Imaginary Reward** – Suggest to perform the desired behavior in real-time and imagine an imaginary reward for performing it.
70. **Vicarious Consequences** – When others perform the behavior, prompt the observation of the consequences to them.

Chapter 20: How Brainwashing Works?

Brainwashing is nothing new. It has been there for centuries, and it has also been studied for a very long time. Back in the day when the Korean war was going on, the prison camps were filled with American POWs, and they were brainwashed by the Chinese and Korean captors. After the intensive brainwashing that was done to them, they finally gave in and confessed that they were the ones who started the germ warfare even though that was entirely made up. And by the time their captivity was over, they were also made to pledge their alliance to communism. After they were released, about twenty-one of them no longer wanted to come back to their own country.

If we see in terms of psychology, then the process of brainwashing is known by a different term altogether – which is – thought reform. And it is basically a part of influence, and to be more precise, social influence. Even though you might think that influence is a very specific phenomenon and you will know when someone is trying to do that to you, you are socially influenced every day.

Techniques of Brainwashing

There are different ways in which brainwashing can be done, and in this section, we are going to study them one by one. There are some techniques that all of us encounter in our day-to-day lives. And there are also some which are rather extreme and not used in common scenarios.

Robert Jay Lifton was a very famous psychologist in the 1950s, and he selected some people who were previously prisoners in the Chinese and Korean war camps. Through his studies, he found out that these prisoners were made to go through not one but multiple stages of torture and attack on their self-esteem and mind, the end result of which was their entire belief system was changed.

So, from his experiment, Robert Jay Lifton outlined some common methods that were presumably used in brainwashing the soldiers, and they are as follows –

- Guilt
- Assault on their identity
- Breaking Point
- Self-Betrayal
- Guilt Channeling
- Guilt Releasing
- Leniency
- Feeling compulsive to confess
- Progress and harmony
- Rebirth through final confession

Remember that these stages were not happening along with others.

Everyone was made to go through each and every one of these stages while they were in isolation. Thus, when they were in their toughest times, all points of social reference were blocked, and some other things that were a part of this process were malnutrition and deprivation of sleep. All of this together would cloud their mind, and they can no longer think sharply.

Another thing to take note of is that in such situations, they were constantly exposed to threats to either harm them physically or do something else,

which would ultimately make it even more difficult for the person to think of anything independently and critically.

According to the experiment performed by Robert Jay Lifton, the entire process can be divided into three portions, and they are as follows –

Breaking Down Their Self

The first part of the process consisted of several strategies that were used to break down their self –

- **Assault On Their Identity** – Everything started with this first step, where the assault was made on their identity. The main idea was to make them feel that they are not someone who they think they are. The sense of self of that person is completely shattered, and it is done through a systematic attack. You can also say that this process directly affected the ego of the person. If the person is a soldier, then the person doing the brainwashing would keep telling them, “You are not a soldier,” to the point that the person actually starts believing it. This attack keeps going on for days or even months if the person doesn’t cave. After such a consistent period of attack, the target finally becomes confused, exhausted, and disoriented. He no longer trusts his belief system as he used to, and nothing seems solid anymore. They cannot even form ideas of their own.
- **Guilt-Tripping** – The next strategy that is used is to trigger their guilt. They start to make you feel that you are the bad person here. Because of the first step, an identity crisis starts creeping in, and the brainwashing agents take full advantage of that moment to create an extreme sense of guilt in the target. The feelings become too overwhelming to handle. Brainwashing is done mercilessly and repeatedly and makes the target feel that whatever they have done is not only wrongdoing but also a ‘sin.’ All of this will make the target feel that his previous belief system was pure evil, and everything that the target does seem to be a fault for which they are criticized every now and then. And for everything, a general sense of shame

starts setting in, and he starts feeling he cannot do a single thing right.

- **Self-Betrayal** – Then comes the part of self-betrayal where the target is forcefully made to agree that is a bad person. The guilt that was inflicted on the person in the previous step already has him drowning and disoriented, and now this step breaks him down further. This is also the step where the person brainwashing the target will force him to denounce everything he holds dear starting from his family to even his friends and peers. Anyone who has the same system of beliefs as the target will have to be denounced by him, and in order to make this step successful, repeated mental attack or physical harm is inflicted. When the target is made to denounce all these people in his life whom he respected, loved, and was loyal to, he feels like he is betraying himself. And this brings him shame. There is an enhancement in the already increasing loss of identity that the person is feeling.
- **Breaking Point** – By now, the person is filled with shame and is facing an extreme state of an identity crisis. He had always believed in something, and now that has broken. He is told that none of it matters. He starts thinking, “Who am I” “What am I doing?” “What is this place?” and so on. In simpler terms, you can even say that he goes through an extensive period of a nervous breakdown. In medical terms, there are a wide number of psychological disturbances that fall under the umbrella term of a nervous breakdown. It can refer to a person being generally disoriented, or someone who has fallen into a deep depression, or it can also mean that you are sobbing uncontrollably. But whatever happens, one thing is for sure, and that is – the target, at this point, does not have any grasp on reality or what is happening around them. They no longer remember who they are, what is happening to them, or why it is happening. This is the point where the person doing the brainwashing sets up the target for converting into a completely different system of beliefs and make them do whatever they want.

The Chance of Salvation

Then we come to the next part according to Lifton's research, which is the chance or possibility of salvation, which can then be further divided into separate portions like these –

- **Leniency** – The person will now start telling the subject that they can help him. The target is clearly in a state where they need help, and the people who are doing the brainwashing are going to appear as if they are going to help them out. They do it by providing the tiniest bit of reprieve from the abuse they were inflicting on the target. Some other acts of kindness also include providing them a glass of water to drink. Some people also follow the tactic where they ask the target what the things that they miss the most about their home are. You have to remember that the target was in a constant state of trauma and psychological attack, and so, these small acts of kindness seem huge to them. They have completely broken down, and because of this, no matter what the proportion of the offering is, the target feels relieved and experience a feeling of gratitude towards the people who are inflicting the pain. They feel like the brainwasher has actually saved their life just because they asked about their home or provided them water to drink.
- **Compulsive Feeling to Confess** – Every step has its own importance in the process of brainwashing. When someone is giving you leniency after days and months of guilt-tripping and shame, it feels so good, and now, this leniency also gives you the idea in your head that you can help yourself here. Rather, you have to help yourself. Moreover, when kindness is offered after so many days, the target develops this innate nature that it is their duty to reciprocate the kindness. So, the brainwasher takes full advantage of this point and asks you that if you want to get rid of all the pain and guilt, then you can come up and confess to the things they'll say.
- **Channeling of Inner Guilt** – You know that you are in extreme pain, but you cannot figure out why or how you can deal with it. But your guilt has forgotten its source now that you have been tortured for weeks and months, and this has led to complete breakdown. So, the target's mind becomes somewhat like a blank slate, and anything

can be taught to them. The brainwasher takes your sense of guilt and shows you that it can be attached to things. They will manipulate you into attaching your guilt to anything and everything they want. If the brainwasher is trying to change your existing belief system, then they will associate your existing brain system to that of this new process. Now, slowly, the brainwasher will show you how your old belief system was bringing you all the shame, and you start seeing the stark contrast between the new system and the old one. You psychologically agonized with the belief that you previously had, but now that you have shifted to a new system, you start seeing hope that there is a way in which you can avoid all that agony.

- **Releasing the Guilt Out of Your System** – The guilt is released out of the system by making the target believe that it is not them, but it is their beliefs that were wrong, and they are completely okay. When the wrongness is associated with some external cause, the target is relieved to hear it. He finally feels that he is not a bad person and thus, if he wants to be seen in a good light, all he has to do is embrace this new system of beliefs that the brainwasher is putting in front of them. Denouncing would mean that all his pain will end right away, and that is a tempting offer at that moment. The target is presented with confessions that he can make, which are mostly associated with their previous system of beliefs, and he is told that he can free himself from everything only if he confesses to all of that. The former identity of the target is completely washed away with this confession, and he psychologically rejects anything and everything associated with the old belief system. Now, the brainwasher can subtly produce the new belief system in front of the target.

Rebuilding

Now starts the final stage, which proceeds somewhat like this –

- **Harmony and Progress** – The target comes face to face with the fact that if he wants, he has the option to choose good over evil (where evil is his old beliefs). So, the brainwasher places the new path in front of the target and makes him understand that this is the

path to good. The pain, torture, and abuse have stopped once the brainwashing has reached this phase. In fact, quite the opposite happens, and the target is made to feel comfortable with the new setting. The aim is that the target can misattribute this feeling of being safe and being comfortable with the new belief system and adopts it. However, amidst all the brainwashing, the target is always made to think that no one is forcing him to adopt new things, but it is he who himself chose the new path. This creates the feeling in the target that whatever is about to come with the new path and his entire fate lies in his hands alone and not anyone else's. In response to the torment followed by leniency, the target has already surrendered and caved into the denouncing of his old system of beliefs. And he consciously chooses the new system because it helps him lay off the burden of guilt that he is carrying around. He is made to think that it is not betrayal when he truly believes in this new system of things. Everything is presented in such a manner that it feels that the choice is not difficult. In fact, it is quite easy. The new belief is presented in such a rosy and desirable way that it feels safer, and they start to feel that at least this belief system would not lead to the torment and breakdown that they had faced the past couple of months.

- **Rebirth Through Final Confession** – Here is the part where the target finally chooses good through the new belief system. The old system brought them nothing but pain, suffering, and agony, and on the contrary, the new one brings them nothing but peace. This makes the choice of going towards the new belief system much easier. The new system of beliefs poses as a lifesaver to the target. The old one is soon rejected by the target, and in order to make his life better than before, he chooses the new one. In fact, to make the converted target feel welcomed, several ceremonies or rituals are conducted by other members of the same community. And all of this together feels like the target has been reborn.

The entire process that I just mentioned here has not been tried and tested in any formal setting for obvious reasons – it is detrimental to the target to a great extent. And thus, it is unethical. Then, how did these descriptions

come into existence? Well, Lifton made all the steps through first-hand accounts from the prison camp survivors. But upon such observations, it also came forward that there are some personalities who can be brainwashed quite easily while there are others who cannot. Why does this difference occur? The answer lies in the personality traits of these individual people.

The effectiveness of the process of brainwashing depends to a huge extent on the characteristics of the person being brainwashed. Targets whose sense of identity is weak from before and are victims of self-doubt are the ones who are easy to brainwash. This is because they have a greater tendency to give into black-and-white thinking or absolutism and guilt. On the other hand, people whose sense of identity is really strong and has elevated levels of self-confidence cannot be brainwashed so easily. Another notable observation here is that sometimes when the target has faith in a higher power, then it is easier for them to remain mentally detached from everything that is happening. In fact, this is also the reason why the soldiers today are taught mental detachment skills so that even if they fall under such circumstances, they can stay psychologically detached. Moreover, the soldiers are taught what processes are followed while brainwashing so that they can have prior knowledge of everything, and this really gives them an upper hand.

Signs That You Have Been Brainwashed

We are being fed with information each and every day of our existence, and this is in every sphere of life. Even if you don't realize it, these pieces of information affect the way you operate, live, and think. This gets even more real when you are already in a position of vulnerability, and someone is trying to spoon-feed you with information. In that moment of weakness, it is easy for you to fall prey to the manipulator. In fact, the brainwashing strategies will force you to fall into the group thinking tendency, and then without even realizing, you will start living by it. You somehow become blinded. But if you truly want to live your life and reach a point of success, then you need to avoid being in a situation where someone is trying to brainwash you. So, what can you do? In this section, I am going to explain some tips that will help you prevent yourself from being brainwashed.

Know Yourself

We spend so much time of our day doing other things and advancing our careers that we forget about our own selves and we don't know ourselves well. So, the first step is to provide yourself sufficient time and understand what value system you follow. You need to understand what things are important to you and what things are not so important, and all of this will help you conjure an idea of who you truly are. If you don't do this, then it will be relatively easy for you to get swayed by others into their ways and in a direction that they want you to go but won't be right for you. Let me give you a very common example. Suppose your father wanted you to study medicine and become a doctor, and he created that impression upon you. But you, on the other hand, don't know what it takes to study medicine, what strengths you have, or what weaknesses might hold you back. You simply pursue it because your father told you so, but later on, you find out that it's not the kind of job you wanted for yourself.

Your tendency to adopt a message depends largely on how strong the delivery is. So, if we consider the above example, you need to check up on a lot of factors like the kind of school you want to go to, the environment of that place, the kind of job you'll get, and so on. If you find the answers to all of this, you will realize whether you truly want it or not.

Always Have a Vision

It is so important for you to have a vision in your life. No one would be able to sway you that easily if your vision is strong. On the other hand, if you do not have a vision at all, anyone can simply come along and impress their ideas on you. In fact, if you meet charismatic people or leaders, they will very easily impress you to do things that you might not have wanted to do in the first place. That is why you need to spend some time crafting your vision. There is no hurry. If you think you need time, give yourself time. And from time to time, you need to revisit your vision so that you can remind yourself of the true path of life that you have chosen.

Learn to be Curious

It is important to stay curious throughout your life and always want to know more. But in general, people don't think much – they just go with the flow. People start thinking only when something has gone wrong to a severe extent or when they start realizing that they have to change now; otherwise, they would lose everything. But why put things like that off for later when you can do them right now? You need to think about things in your life from time to time. If you don't think about your own welfare, then who will? Always try to think of things that are unique and out-of-the-box. Whether you are trying to carve a path that is different than that of others or you are trying to find the solution to a grave problem that is in front of you, being curious and wanting to know things will take you places.

Stay Grounded

Staying grounded is very important in life, but at the same time, you also need to learn how to stay open. This means that you are always welcoming new things and open to learning stuff because you don't know them. No one knows everything, but accepting the fact that you don't know everything is something very few people do. But you have to strive to be that person and always be on the lookout for new information on things. Also, the manner in which you take in this new information is going to show you whether you are grounded or not. Watch movies, read books, do research, and try to find information about stuff in every way possible. Do something that makes you feel excited, and only then will the process seem interesting to

you. But don't just scratch the surface. If you are looking for true information, then you have to dig deeper, and then, you will have a comprehensive idea about that thing.

The bottom line of saying all this is that you always need to remain true to yourself because there will be times when you'd want to be lazy because others have brainwashed you. But you need to shake that off. It is okay to feel the need to be included because, at the end of the day, we are all humans. But the most important part here is that even though you want to be part of a group, you need to understand when you are being brainwashed and when you are openly welcomed. And you can do that only when you start connecting to your true self. In that way, no one can make you believe you are someone that you are not.

Chapter 21: Defending Yourself Against Persuasion and Manipulation

It takes a major toll on your mental health when you are living with someone who is abusive and also tries to control you every step of the way. No matter how much you try to keep things right, they will keep blaming you for things that you didn't even do or mean. If something happens, then they will always make it seem like it is your fault, and slowly, you will find yourself becoming distant from your close ones. You will become isolated just because you want the abuser to remain satisfied and happy with you. In extreme cases, when people are in a manipulative relationship, their ways of seeing the world also change because the abuser doesn't want you to know what is happening out there because it might be dangerous for him/her.

In fact, the abuser might tell you a new definition of love – something that is completely different from yours. When it comes to watching over you, they define the terms of the relationship – they define what is right and what is wrong – you have zero control over the things that are happening in your life. And when this continues for a long duration of time, the victim (that I what I prefer to call it) slowly loses the sense of everything – their thoughts, their goals, their aspirations – and they start taking everything from their abuser and adopting it as their own.

And this not only applies to romantic relationships but all other relationships in general – you are bound to come across people in your life who will not want the best for you and will try to deceive you whenever they can. But do you know why they do this? They do it mostly from a position of insecurity – they do not want to be the one thrown under the bus and seen as second fiddle, so they make you one. And then there are those people who are absolute narcissists and think that winning everything is the only aim in life, which is why they manipulate their way to the top.

But in this chapter, I am going to provide you with some tips that will protect you from being manipulated by others. Read on to find out.

Prevent Yourself From Falling Into Their Trap

When you have a manipulator in your life, they will want to play with your feelings at every point. They will use all sorts of covert tactics to toy with you. These can include interrogation, blame, and confusion, and with repeated exposure to all this, they will slowly get under your skin. So, if you have exposure to these kinds of people in your life, be it at home or in your workplace, you need to avoid them at all costs. You cannot afford to step into their trap. So, what should you do? You should try to ignore them, and even if they keep pestering you for something, don't display a combative attitude because that is what they expect. You need to surprise them, and so, you should say something nice.

Do you know what emotional manipulators live on? They want to get a rise out of you, and so the catch to dealing with them is to not give them what you want. They might keep trying for the first few times, but after some failed attempts, they will finally give up on you and leave you alone. All you have to make sure is that you don't fall into their trap during that timeframe.

Surround Yourself With People Who Are Supportive

The next step is to be with those people who make you feel good about yourself and support you in every sphere of life. The manipulator will always try to isolate you from the others, and you cannot let that happen. Once you are isolated, all your decision-making abilities will be hampered, so the solution is to always surround yourself with positive-minded people. In fact, these people might even help you spot the manipulator when you cannot. We, as human beings, are often obsessed with what other people think about us, and in that feeling, we become blinded by other things – for example, someone trying to manipulate their way into our lives.

Moreover, when you surround yourself with positive-minded people, it improves a lot of fundamentals of your life. You can think faster and work harder than ever before. On the contrary, if you are always surrounded by negative nellys, they are going to push you further towards the manipulators or far worse, they are the manipulators, and they will pull you down.

There will be times in your life when things get tough, and you feel like there is nothing you can do about it. It is these moments that the manipulators look for because, in these moments, you are at your most vulnerable. But if you have someone to support you, nothing feels better than that. They will help you stay focused on your path and keep telling you that you can do it.

Know What Your Fundamental Rights Are As a Human

Knowing your rights as a person is very important because once in a while, there will come a manipulator in your life who will try to violate these rights. If you don't know them in the first place, then you wouldn't even know that they have been violated. So, defending your rights is something you should do but make sure you don't hurt anyone in the process. Some of these rights include the right to have different opinions, the right to be treated correctly and with respect, the right to give protection to yourself when confronting someone who is threatening you either emotionally, mentally, or physically, the right to get the pay you deserve, the right to have your own set of priorities, the right to form your own happy life, and most importantly, the right to say no to things you don't want to do and say it without any guilt whatsoever.

All of these rights that I mentioned in the previous paragraph also signify the boundaries that you should have. Yes, you will still meet people who do not know the existence of these boundaries, and they will constantly try to deprive you of your rights. But something that you should remind yourself from time to time is that it is you who is in charge of everything that is happening in your life and not the manipulator.

Have Clarity

It is very important to have clarity in life; otherwise, anyone can come in and manipulate you into doing things that you don't really want to do. In fact, manipulators will go to extreme lengths to discredit everything you say, and if you are not clear on your own ideas and beliefs, then it becomes much easier for them to sway you. This can be in the form of mild suggestions like 'Don't take this project, it is too hard for you' or it can also be some overtly sinister suggestion like 'You don't have it in you to achieve anything, you are good for nothing.' They will make you question your own abilities to the point that you yourself no longer believe in them and decide to choose a different path as suggested by the manipulator.

So, remind yourself every day what your goals are and what purpose you have in life. Every little thing that you do in your day has a meaning, and you have to remind yourself of that meaning. Being this much focused will help you in the long run and will prevent you from becoming negatively invested.

Avoid Self-Blame

Remember that the cycle of self-blame is your biggest enemy. Do you know what the main aim of a manipulator is? They try their best to play on your weaknesses and make the best use of them. There are times in our lives when we feel that we are not enough, and it is okay to feel like that, but do you know what is not okay? Blaming yourself just because you weren't able to make someone happy. You are not supposed to do that anyway – you are supposed to make yourself happy. Moreover, if someone is deliberately telling you that it is your fault, then they are trying to manipulate you and push you into the toxic cycle of self-blame. Their aim is that you will give in and then slowly lose control over yourself and surrender your rights and your boundaries.

Thus, it is essential that you ask yourself – “Am I being treated the way I should?” Whenever you meet someone new, and you think something is wrong, you should ask yourself this. You should also give some thought to whether the expectations of that person are reasonable or not. A relationship is a two-way street, and it is about give and take. But if you are the one who is giving at all times, then it is toxic and manipulative. Learn to identify such situations and walk away. You should also constantly check upon yourself and ask yourself whether you feel safe and happy in that relationship.

Learn to Push Back

No matter what you do to keep a manipulative person happy, it will never be enough. They will always crave more. Do you know why? It is because they cannot forego their need to control everything. So, if you are in a situation where you are feeling uncomfortable, and you don't want to do something, you should learn to say no. At times, the manipulator will make it all the more difficult for you to say no, but you still have to for your sake. And if you think that giving in to their wants will end the problem, then you are wrong because it won't. They will take it as a cue and keep asking for more and more things from you. Their persuasion strategies and demands will keep progressing, and their demands will rise in the form of a steep curve. So, the only way out is that you have to say 'no' the moment they ask you something the first time.

Remember that you should expect some cold answers from the person when you say no to them. This is expected. In fact, in order to turn on you, they might also use tactics of emotional blackmail. But you need to state your position and do it calmly. Don't say it in the form of an excuse, and don't get too caught up in the details. Manipulative people are too cunning, and no amount of excuses are going to work with them. They will try to push their point further even it means that they have to argue with you. They are not looking for a chance to communicate or have a discussion with you. They are only looking for a chance to turn on you, and if you give in today, tomorrow, they are going to want something bigger, and it will keep going on and on until you decide to push back.

Set Boundaries

Some people might think, why would others not have boundaries?

Boundaries are something very basic, and everyone should have them. But it's not that in real life. So many people don't know what boundaries are or why they need them to exist. On the other hand, a manipulative person will always try to penetrate those boundaries with dark methods, and if those boundaries don't exist at all, then their work becomes easier.

So, if you don't want to be dominated by others or be controlled by them, it is important that you protect yourself. And people will not know about your boundaries if you don't tell them. So, you have to state it clearly. Keep in mind that not respecting others is a manipulative person's second nature. Even if the manipulative person prefers you or likes you, they will still disrespect you because that's who they are. For them, rejection and healthy boundaries don't have any difference at all. When you set boundaries, expect some kind of rude or bad reaction from them. And now that you know about it beforehand, you can prepare yourself for such an encounter.

You cannot always tell people how they should behave; neither can you keep explaining yourself all the time. And, you shouldn't have to do that either. But the person who is manipulating you knows how draining it is for you, and they also know that you can't keep up with them for long because there will come the point when your emotional energy becomes zero.

So, if you want to be successful while dealing with a manipulative person, your best bet is to have strong boundaries that are not penetrable and also to make them clear to the other person whenever possible. You also need to keep a check on your emotions and maintain a calm demeanor.

Always Communicate Your Intent

Communication is key even when you are dealing with a manipulator. It is in the nature of the manipulators to spread false information about you that is not true, and that can be harmful to your reputation. This will prove to be a very stubborn barrier in your path whenever you want success in life. But you can override the manipulator's word by constantly making it clear to others what your standing is either in writing or verbally. This will help them understand what you believe in and what you want to accomplish. This will also prevent anyone else from working against you, whether they do it unintentionally or intentionally.

You cannot let the manipulator paint a picture of you. You need to paint your picture yourself. If you let the manipulator dictate things, then they will misrepresent you in front of all those people. Thus, the more you communicate your intent, the more witnesses you will have to speak for you, and your records will be secured.

Confront Bullies

Manipulators are nothing but bullies because their intent is to harm you either psychologically or physically, and they try to achieve it through intimidation. But you need to confront them and not keep delaying it for later. However, there is something that you should keep in mind while doing it. Bullies target those people who they think have a lot of weaknesses and won't be able to fight back. So, you become a target in their point of view when you remain compliant and passive. Keep in mind that no matter how strong bullies seem from the outside, some of them are weak from the inside. The outside is only a façade. Such bullies will back off when they see that their targets are not as meek as they thought them to be, and they have a backbone too. This applies to all types of social settings.

Most bullies have probably been bossing around others for quite a long time, and no one has confronted them, which gave them even more guts. So, you need to tell directly that it is making you feel uncomfortable and that they need to stop. They might try to come back to you by denying any malicious behavior at all. But you standing up for yourself and letting others know that the person is a bully means a lot. And if you manage to strike a nerve, they might even change their tune from the next time onwards.

Most importantly, if you notice any such bullies and manipulators in your personal life, you need to let go of that toxic relationship. Tell yourself that you are better off without them. Sometimes, you cannot do anything to make someone change, and you have to accept that. Everyone deserves someone who will respect them and not toy with them for their own personal enjoyment.

Chapter 22: Learn Hypnosis



Hypnosis is a powerful term in the field of psychology, yet one of the most misunderstood phenomena among the common people. The misconception is due to the lack of knowledge and also the fear that is induced among people by the dark portrayal of hypnosis in movies and cartoons. Hence, there are various myths surrounding hypnosis. However, Hypnosis is just another phenomenon in the field of psychology.

What Is Hypnosis?

Hypnosis is most commonly defined as a sleep-like state, from where a person's mind can be easily diverted from or directed towards a certain path, which is partly correct.

It is a psychological event in which, through the use of certain scripts, a person can attain a state of increased attention or suggestibility. When hypnotized, meaning hypnosis on a person is successful or simply that a person is in a state of hypnosis, a person is believed to become more concentrated as well. Due to this powerful occurrence in the human mind, this process is often used in various clinical processes. However, it is also due to this strong occurrence that hypnosis is often termed to be hogwash and harmful by certain people.

The lack of knowledge about 'hypnosis' and the wrong representation of the phenomenon in various platforms has caused it to be treated as some fantasy. But in reality, it is among the many harmless and easy to explain the phenomenon in the field of psychological treatment, which is effective and efficient. Hypnosis, being a powerful clinical tool, should be practiced by professionals only, although self-hypnosis is possible as well.

Having said all the above things, one might think that anyone and everyone can be hypnotized and at any random point in time. This concept, if anyone has developed in their minds, needs to be let go of as not everyone can be hypnotized.

In order to make the process of hypnosis successful, a person needs to have a trait, which is often coined as "hypnotizability." Just like hinges on the door make the opening and the closing of the door seamless; similarly, the presence of the trait "hypnotisability" makes a person susceptible to hypnosis. But the presence of this trait does not guarantee that the process of hypnosis will be successful on someone. On that note, a person needs to undergo the process of hypnosis willingly or voluntarily for it to be successful.

In certain cases, a person having mild hypnotisability does not benefit from hypnosis in the first sitting itself. They need to continue going through few more hypnotic procedures for the suggestions or treatment to become effective. Thus, it can easily be concluded that the effect of hypnosis varies from one individual to another.

To conclude, the minimum requirement for the process of hypnosis to be successful on an individual is as follows –

- The individual should possess some degree of hypnotisability.
- The individual should be open or cooperate during the process of hypnosis.

Now, why is hypnosis used? As already mentioned above, hypnosis is used for various clinical treatments. Although used extensively for treatments, it can also be used as a good strategy in persuasion.

Depending on the method, hypnosis can be grouped into three categories, as follows –

- ***Self-Hypnosis***, as the name suggests, it is when a person practices hypnosis on himself or herself. This is probably one of the easiest ways of practicing the phenomenon. This could also prove if a person is at all hypnotizable or not.
The simplest way of doing it is to seclude oneself from noise and all other distractions and then calming the mind. Having done that, a person needs to repeat what they want to feel, or do or repeat some motivational or strong quotes to boost up their self-confidence or aura. If a person follows this procedure properly, then they will get so emerged in the notion that they are chanting to themselves, that they could feel like they are actually doing it or feeling the emotion.
- ***Guided Hypnosis*** is where certain tools are involved in carrying out the process successfully. Tools such as soothing music, any other form of music, certain visuals, or recorded messages or chants are often used.

Fun fact, many of our favorite websites and social media platforms use this technique to induce a certain level of hypnosis on their customers and to increase their engagement. We willingly succumb to that without even realizing it.

- ***Hypnotherapy*** is where a trained psychologist uses their knowledge of their patients for treating a variety of ailments. This can either be practiced on the patients singularly or along with other treatments.

Some aspects mentioned here are on the edge of the ethical boundary, and so, I sincerely hope you will practice proper judgment before implementing anything.

Myths Surrounding Hypnosis

Thanks to Hollywood, hypnosis wisdom is mostly laughed off or is cheapened. Most of us are filled with Hollywood myths about the subject. Some of us still believe that hypnosis exists, whereas a large chunk of people refuses to believe that such a thing even exists! Rightly so, as the term is surrounded by barriers of misconceptions and fear.

Here are some of the most common myths about hypnosis, along with the truth. Read on to attain more knowledge on the subject.

- **Myth:** Hypnotists, like wizards, possess special powers!

Truth: Ah! If only this was true, they could have found the cure to corona! Sorry to disappoint you, but this is not true. Hypnotists are regular human beings like us who learned and religiously practiced the process of the occurrence. Hypnosis requires no special power but proper techniques and tools and the person in front's will.

Even the stage hypnotists that we might have seen at some point in our lives, who made us believe that he was performing some magic trick to hypnotize people, possess no special power. He, too, has achieved it by practicing religiously.

To conclude, the only special powers that all hypnotists possess are dedication, perseverance, and hard work. If you think you have these qualities, then you too can try your hands in hypnosis!

- **Myth:** Under hypnosis, a person cannot lie!
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Truth: All credit goes to Hollywood fiction for the fact that hypnosis is treated as a “truth serum.” The belief that a person will only speak the truth under hypnosis is absolutely incorrect! Anyone can easily lie even when they are in a trance. In fact, when in a trance, a person becomes more creative or imaginative, so if we think that way, then a person can lie better when in a state of hypnosis.

The fact of the matter is, when under it, a person becomes creative, a creative person becomes more creative, and hence their lie either becomes extremely believable or absolutely stupid.

- **Myth:** Hypnosis is nothing but just another process of putting a person to sleep!

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Truth: Ok, now if you are someone who is having insomnia and want to fall asleep, then you might seek the help of psychologists who practice hypnosis to fall asleep, but you will not immediately fall asleep. If you think you will walk to a hypnotist's cabin, and they will make you fall asleep without you having to try or do anything, then my friend, you are highly mistaken.

Most people who believe in the phenomenon get disappointed due to this myth. This is because sleep is where we temporarily shut down all our thoughts and enter a state of complete relaxation. After we wake up, we feel relaxed, and our memories or thoughts crawl back into our minds. Hypnosis, too, can put a person in a state of complete relaxation and clear the head. But the exception here is that a person in sleep cannot hear anyone or any sound around them, or even if they catch noises, they are often not able to make out as to what is happening. But in the state of trance, a person is able to hear and understand every sound made or word spoken near their ear or in the surrounding. To conclude, hypnosis is a state between sleep and awakening. If a person was not perceptive sound or words around them, then that would be of no use. As one of the major advantages of hypnosis is that it can be used as a good strategy in persuasion; if the protagonist is not even able to hear the hypnotist, then there will be no persuasion.

- **Myth:** Hypnosis is 'Black magic.'

Truth: Magic, whatever kind be it, is in itself a myth, so goes without even saying that the statement "hypnosis is black magic" is a myth! It is no magic but pure science, which requires practice and

dedication. Once mastered, it can act as a powerful tool in the department of the human psyche. That's all.

Had it been some magic, dark, or any other kind, it would not have been accepted by medical departments, neither would people have to do research on it!

- **Myth:** Intelligent or smart or strong or creative-minded people cannot be hypnotized. Hypnosis only works on people who are mentally weak or are not very intelligent.

Truth: This is one of the biggest myths regarding the occurrence, and it is high time that this myth needs to get abolished. The truth is just the contrary. If you scroll back up to where hypnosis is explained in detail, you will find that it is mentioned that it lets people become more focused, suggestible, and imaginative. Tell me, who do we consider to be more creative? Smart people, right? Hence, in truth, it is the opposite of what the myth suggests.

Creative minds or intelligent people or ones with strong minds are easier to hypnotize. This is because they are already more focused and open-minded; thus, persuading them to concentrate on getting into the trance is easier than hypnotizing the one who is more fickle-minded.

Fun fact, the key ingredients that, when present in a human being, is believed to make them more susceptible to hypnosis are concentration, strong will, discipline, and good imagination power. Surprisingly, these are the same qualities that are believed to mark a person's intelligence!

- **Myth:** A hypnotist gains control over minds. A hypnotized person becomes a victim and gets dependent on their instructor.

Truth: It has been repetitively mentioned over decades that no one can control our mind unless we let someone do so. The same goes for this too. If a person refutes the process and is adamant on that,

that person can not even be hypnotized in the first place. Secondly, even during the state of trance, a person is in complete control over their minds. All the trance is doing is opening the door for suggestions and advice.

Let us take an example here. Suppose a person wants to stop smoking but is a chain smoker. Now, he will try to stop smoking, but since it has become a habit, he cannot stop at one go, but if he seeks the help of hypnosis, his motivation and will to stop smoking will be boosted or escalated. Depending on the strength of the person and the degree of hypnotisability present in him, he will stop smoking right after a single session. If not so, then he will stop smoking eventually after a few more sitting.

Again, if a person is asked to do something that violates his moral principles, then he will never carry that action out. Thus, all hypnosis does is make the process of persuasion smooth and easy, but the control over the mind remains to oneself. And so no question of dependency arises.

- **Myth:** Hypnosis is dangerous! Once stuck, a person can never come out of the state!

Truth: This statement is as true as “if we start digging in North pole, one day we will reach the South Pole!” - It means that getting stuck in hypnosis is practically impossible! Like any other practice, it too occurs very naturally. In due course of time, a person enters the trance and, in the same way, comes out of the trance. It does not matter if a person is not well receptive to the hypnotist’s instructions of asking him or her to come out of the trance or is himself or herself not willing to get out of the trance. It does not even matter if the instructor is not capable enough to use the right scripts to break the trance. A person will snap out of the trance at some point in time. Either they will get tired and naturally fall asleep, or if some things are happening or getting said against their will, they will immediately come out of the trance.

It has never happened a person has gotten stuck in hypnosis forever; after all, it all in the will of the person. They voluntarily subside in the phenomenon, hence snapping out of it is nothing but a single word or moment. The worst that can happen in between a session is that the person may drift to sleep.

- **Myth:** After the trance is dismissed, the hypnotized person will lose all memory of what happened during the session or practice.

Truth: This statement is partly correct. Hypnosis is often treated as a catalyst that leads to amnesia, which is untrue. Yes, in certain situations, when the instructor uses scripts and instructs the one to forget certain memory that he or she too wants to let go of, that memory does get pushed back. But hypnosis is nothing like amnesia else why would a different term be coined to indicate it, is not it?

It has been reported and proved that during hypnosis, due to increased concentration, a person is able to hear and process more acutely than normal time. Something heard or told or advised by the psychologist during the sitting is remembered for a longer period of time by the one than other advice or suggestions.

- **Myth:** Hypnosis will occur only to certain people and not everyone.

Truth: This myth that only a certain kind of people can be hypnotized is rather archaic. Archaic because this was the actual case a few years back, but not anymore. Several scientists, through various researches, have proven that every single person can be hypnotized. All that is needed are correct scripts and the right techniques. To attain that level where one can talk to a person and conclude the right scripts or terms to hypnotize requires an extreme level of dedication and hard work. Once attained that level, the hypnotist can hypnotize any person in front of him who volunteers.

- **Myth:** It is effective in just one session or sitting.

Truth: This myth is both true and false at the same time! If you have read this far, it should be clear by now that it is subjective and varies from person to person. Thus, it is absolutely possible for it to be effective on someone in a single. At the same time, another being might need to go through several sittings before the post-instruction finally becomes successful.

Willingness and concentration power have a key role to play in this matter.

Most of the common myths have been covered and being reasoned above with the intention to help one debunk the myths surrounding hypnosis.

Hypnotic Scripts to Get You Started

Before beginning with hypnotic scripts and how to make them effective, let us take a quick peek at what it really means. These scripts are basically a pre-defined set of instructions in the form of a script that can be followed to hypnotize someone. There is no hard and fast rule that these scripts need to be followed to hypnotize someone. If one is confident enough and expert in the field, they can skip these scripts and simply follow their sixth- sense.

The effectiveness of following a certain script is pretty controversial. This is because a script can be 100% effective on someone in the first go itself, whereas it can be of no use while trying to hypnotize another party. Hence, executing a script does not guarantee trance.

Having said that, let us take a look at some of the effective or rather commonly used hypnotic scripts.

1. Induction script

This is among the most used scripts. It is done in different phases or steps. An induction script is preferably performed on the one somewhere where he/ she feels safe. By safe, we mean comfortable or a spot where they can drift away to sleep without any worry.

The first step of the script involves instilling certain expectations in the person through words and also make it clear to him or her that the hypnosis will be successful.

Few examples of doing the above are as follows:

Stay calm. There is nothing to do, so let's follow my voice. You need not have to make any added effort; things will simply happen on its own. All you have to do is keep following my instructions, and you will quickly go into a state of trance.

The second state involves relaxing every muscle of the person's body and reassuring them that the process will be successful. Few sentences to help the process are:

Try to relax... take a long deep breath. Continue breathing... allow the tension from your neck and shoulders to release... yes, that is correct... now, loosen your hands and don't keep any tension in them...

Having the person in a relaxed state now is the time to lead the person into a deeper condition. After this, you will now guide the person into what is called incremental hypnosis. Example of that:

Since you are in a state of relaxation already, you can get even more relaxed.

After this, you can instruct them to do things that they might find difficult, tell them it is difficult but doable. After successfully leading the person through incremental hypnosis, it is now time for instant hypnosis.

To check the level of relaxation of the person, the hand of the person can be shaken. If his/ her hand is easily bent and is soft, then he is relaxed. After checking that, you can do a bit with his hands. Like say things like you will slowly drop his hand, and with every movement, he/ she will enter an even deeper state of relaxation and so on. And with that, carry on with your persuasion or practice.

2. Deepening script

As the name suggests, a deepening script is used to lead a person deeper into the trance. It is more often used in the phase of induction. It can be carried out in the following ways:

You are asking your subject to go deeper into the trance but not directly. Instead of asking them directly, present the instruction to them as a suggestion. For example, you can simply say, “relax, and you will go more deeply into the trance.”

A deepening script can also be applied to some next level with a few people. This can be done by simply wrapping or relating your instructions with something that is inevitable and happens on a daily

basis, like relating relaxing and going deeper by relating it to breathing, which is a natural and inevitable phenomenon.

Last but not least, this script is done by making the subject aware of the fact that there are several layers of trance. It is like an atmosphere, layers over layers. The extreme layer being the state of mild trance and the innermost layer being the deepest state of trance. All sorts of advice are usually given when a person is in the deepest state of trance, where a person temporarily becomes unaware of everything that is happening around them or is surrounding them.

3. Subject script

The next is a relatively simpler script. Here the person to be hypnotized is given instructions in the form of various suggestions. No instruction is given directly.

Take, for example, a person in depression is not said that “you need to try and get out of depression”; instead, the idea is put forward as “imagine yourself being happy for the next few months.”

4. Termination script

Termination script is the ultimate script in the process. After the entire process of trance is carried out and the post-hypnotic advice is already given to the person in front, and the person now needs to be snapped out of the trance, this script is put to action.

This script can be carried out by saying things like, I am going to count from one to ten. With each count, you will slowly get back your regular energy. And on the final count, you will finally be able to slowly open your eyes and come back to reality. A small example will help you understand this script better.

5. I will slowly count from one to five, and you will slowly wake up.... you will feel like your normal self again. One... you are feeling some energy. Two, you are feeling the energy more.. you are slowly moving towards your awakening. Three, you're your energy has slowly started to flow through your entire body... four, you can

move your fingers and wrists.. your eyelids are not feeling heavier any more. Five, you are finally opening your eyes. You are finally awake; your memories are coming back.

6. You are wide awake and are feeling positive!

Tips for Hypnotizing Someone

Following a script and having a perfect set- up is definitely a good approach towards hypnotizing a person but the real problem that most hypnotists encounter is the short attention spans of the patient. Short durations of attention and a wandering mind of the person to be hypnotized are the major problems. Thus, quick or instantly effective methods are far better options to hypnotize a person than using techniques like bright object hypnosis, etc.

Some tips for effectively hypnotizing someone are –

1. The Ericksonian hypnosis method is one of the most effective methods in the process. In this style, one should use positive words, positive body language, and positive situations to gradually hypnotize the person in front. Remember to not use or bring up any negative situation in the conversation as that might easily cause the person to lose interest, and you will lose grip on the situation.
2. Do not make sudden, huge hand or body gestures whilst the person is in a trance. Big hand or body movements is like to cause the patient to snap out of the trance. Instead, go for more relaxed facial expressions. Keep maximum eye contact so as to not let the person's mind to wander off somewhere else.
3. Just as rapid hand movements or big hand gestures can cause disturbance and led to snapping out of the trance, loud sounds or high pitched tones can do the same. Hence, keep your pitch and tone pleasant and appealing.
4. For self-hypnosis, relax your mind and body, calm your thoughts. One easy and effective way to do so is to stare at the ceiling and take deep breaths.
5. The most important point to be kept in mind while trying to hypnotize a person is to make sure that the person is comfortable. Until and unless a person is completely comfortable, he/ she will have various thoughts running across their minds. Thus, make sure to make your subject feel comfortable, safe, and relaxed.
6. Use the technique of controlled breathing. That means let your subject take deep breaths slowly while you instruct them to do so.

7. Give post-hypnotic advice in order to make your session successful. Posthypnotic advice is the ones that are given after a person has been successfully guided into a state of trance.
8. Try to inculcate the handshaking method. The handshaking method is one where you gain the attention and trust of your subject from the very beginning. That means you either draw their attention during the introduction itself or use certain positive words during the introduction phase.
9. While reading out a script, do not be obvious; that is, do not read the script like some machine. Emphasize the pauses and breaks. Read it with different tones, where ever necessary. Basically, read the script in such a way that you are leaving an impact on your subject. It should be clear to your subject that you mean what you are saying to them.

Chapter 23: The Connection Between Psychology and Language

Linguistics is a hugely interesting field, having an ability to intertwine with many interdisciplinary fields of studies. Computer science and linguistics combine to form computational linguistics, sociology, and linguistics combine to form sociolinguistics, and similarly, psychology and linguistics combine to create the field of study known as psycholinguistics. Therefore, it is quite evident that language is a cognitive and social science that allows it to have an intrinsic relationship with psychology, and over the years, massive studies in both these fields have made the relationship stronger.

However, it needs to be noted that psycholinguistics is highly fundamental when compared to the other interdisciplinary fields talked about earlier. Language acquisition is the primary focus of psycholinguistics and aims to build a theory that will allow people to understand universally how our minds comprehend and acquire language. The field has closely monitored and studied people suffering from aphasia. It is a language-disorder inhibiting the affected from properly comprehending language or limiting their speech. These patients have been studied alongside those without the disease, and the findings and comparisons have helped understand the connection between psychology and language to a great extent. A controversial yet hugely applauded theory introduced in the 1950s by Noam Chomsky talks about what he calls ‘universal grammar.’ While this theory has not been wholeheartedly accepted by the linguistic community, his theory talks about the supposition that language acquisition is biological and genetic programming that exists inside all humans whereby it provides people with the ability to learn and understand a language inside the preset grammatical parameters that are specified by the individual’s immediate environment. He further states that it is not a form of brutal memorization and that the human brain has been wired beforehand to help initiate and process this psychological phenomenon.

Therefore, it can be easily surmised that language is intricately related to psychology, and it is an important thing to know because language can also be used to effectuate various psychological responses and even persuade or

manipulate another person. NLP, a pseudoscience created by John Grinder and Richard Brandler, uses language and other linguistic techniques for psychotherapy, communication, behavioral modification, and even personal development. Therefore, in order to understand the relationship between psychology and language, it is important to know how persuasive language works and how language is essential for manipulation. The following sections of this chapter will deal with these concepts and aim to shed some light on the topic.

Language and Persuasion

It is essential to understand that language is one of the most powerful tools out there. Various linguistic devices can be used in order to maximize persuasion and make your words have the desired impact on your subjects. These linguistic devices may include pronouncing a particular word in a different manner or the use of linguistic elements such as rhetoric or metaphors. While the marketing and advertising business utilize such forms of linguistic persuasion the most, it is a valid tool to have in your arsenal when trying to win any argument or wanting to persuade someone to your will. You need to keep in mind that persuasion does not simply rely on the words that are being said but also the way in which the words are being said. To understand this better, gleaning over the persuasive-language framework created by Tina M. Lowrey, L. J. Shrum and Ruth Pogacar can prove to be hugely enlightening.

Persuasive Language: A Thorough Guide

Psychology and psycholinguistics have invested a huge amount of research and analysis in recent years to find out how specific devices found in linguistics can be utilized to further the goal of persuasion. While the research has garnered and produced considerable information, it was not until recently that distinct links could be established between the myriad studies to build a robust framework. It was Pogacar who researched heavily into the existing information that was present in the field and identified the distinct links that connected them, thereby helping build a comprehensive guide. The framework focuses on using the correct language in the correct manner with a suitable audience. The study and framework were primarily built for advertisers and marketers to help them build a guide by which they could best direct their ad-campaigns. With the help of the framework, users can learn more about the language devices that would require the audience to put in the extra cognitive effort as opposed to those that would require them to put in no effort at all for comprehension. The latter, therefore, would prove to be vital as it acts on the audience in an automatic manner, whereas the former would require the audience's active engagement for the delivered information to be correctly processed. The simplest linguistic device that you can use in this regard is the usage of only one word. With

the increase in the number of words, the complexity of processing that information also increases.

Cognitive Effort Is Vital to Persuasive Language

While creating the framework, the researchers delved into research that already existed in the field and analyzed the amount of cognitive effort each of the linguistic devices required from the audience in order to become effective. Based on the research, it was found that the least amount of cognitive effort was required to process linguistic devices such as number processing, sound repetition, pronunciations, phonetic symbolism, rhyme, and alliteration. It also revealed that the highest amount of cognitive effort, as well as active audience engagement, was required to comprehend linguistic devices such as usage of questions, syntax, analogy, and metaphor.

The study further showed that there are certain linguistic devices that are quite simple but still require some effort from the audience in order to process the information. These devices included unfamiliar pronunciation or words and the semantic appositeness degree of a name or word. In other words, the latter refers to the degree to which a particular word or name can convey meaningful information to the audience regarding its attributes and functions. Similarly, the study also revealed that certain complex linguistic devices are quite easy to process by the audience and demand low-to-no cognitive effort. These include politeness, assertive language, and the usage of pronouns.

Persuasion Techniques Embedded in Linguistics

The framework created by Pogacar, Shrum, and Lowrey also revealed that certain linguistic devices work the best when persuasion is the end goal. These devices help further the goal of persuading somebody in the most effective manner, and they include the following:

- **Complexity (or the lack of it)** – If you add complexity to a simple sentence or word, the audience would be forced to invest the greater cognitive effort to perceive the message that you are delivering. A study showed that people when asked what they thought about a

certain carnival ride's name, most answered by saying that a name that was complex and difficult to pronounce gave the impression of the ride being grander and more dangerous.

- **Phonetic symbolism** – This refers to a word's sound conveying information and meaning without demanding much cognitive effort from the audience. Consonant and vowel sounds are both interconnected to sensory perceptions that include color, weight, size, speed, and shape. A brilliant example is to consider a sound with a low-pitch such as 'R.' The first impression that the sound creates is of something soft, slow, large, and round. On the other hand, a word like 'E' will convey the audience with the complete opposite perception. This device can be used by marketers and advertisers to best create a brand that is new. They have to make sure that while naming, they use words and sounds that perfectly align with the product's attributes. Such usage will connect directly with the audience and automatically convey meaning to them.
- **Numbers** – The usage of precise numbers have a greater persuasive effect on the minds of the audience as opposed to the use of less precise numbers. For example, while rating a product, if a change is depicted through the usage of decimals shifting to integers, such as (8.2-9), the information is perceived more favorably by the audience, as opposed to the change being depicted through the usage of integers shifting to integers, such as (8-9). Although the latter shift is larger, the use of precise numbers makes the audience be persuaded in favor of the former than the latter.

The Power of ‘Because’ When It Comes to Persuasion

Language plays a huge role in manipulation and persuasion, and an efficient tool used to further that goal is the use of the word ‘because.’ In order to understand the true potential and control the word ‘because’ can have over an individual, it needs to be first understood that a majority of human behavior and reactions are completely automatic. If you look back on your life and the requests that you have complied with, you will find many requests in the list that had completely ridiculous reasons to begin with. The power of ‘because’ lies in the fact that providing a reason, however weak and ridiculous, works better in persuading another person than providing them with no reason at all.

In 1978, Harvard’s Ellen Langer conducted research to establish the power of ‘because.’ This study is often referred to as ‘The Xerox study.’ What Langer did was hire some people and ask them to go ahead and request those standing in a line waiting for their turn to use a crowded copying machine, whether they could break in and use the machine first instead. Back during the 1970s, printers and home computers were an unheard reality, making photocopying the only option. Therefore, photocopy machines on college campuses usually had a huge line on busy days. Langer gave her hired candidates three specific lines with specific wording that they had to use while requesting to use the copying machine before the other person. These lines included:

- “Excuse me; I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine?”
- “Excuse me. I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine because I have to make copies?”
- “Excuse me. I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine because I am in a rush?”

Based on the exact sentences that the hired candidates used, Langer was able to find out a statistical response rate of people who accepted the request for each of the sentences. While the first sentence that did not give any reason had a 60% compliance rate, the second sentence with a weak reason had a 93% compliance rate, and the last sentence with an urgent and important reason had a 94% compliance rate. Therefore, it clearly showed

that in order to use language in a persuasive manner, the use of the word because it is essential, regardless of the fact that the reason is a weak one. Not giving a reason lowers your chances of attaining compliance considerably. In relation to the findings of the study, the researchers constructed the theory that people tend to have an automatic behavior as a direct effect of heuristics and simply hearing 'because' being uttered, they tend to comply, irrespective of the gravity and importance of the reason provided. The same request was repeated by the research team, only by replacing five-pages with twenty-pages. In this case, it was seen that the highest rate of compliance came only when the requester gave the "I'm in a rush" reasoning. This clearly reveals that people tend to have an automatic behavioral response to requests when stakes are low and, therefore, using the word 'because' and follow it for any reason; however, lame will usually get the job done. On the other hand, when the stakes are a bit higher, there might be some resistance, but providing a reason, albeit a little stronger one, will nullify the said resistance, and it wouldn't matter much.

Language Is Essential to Manipulation

Looking at Orwell's dystopian novel 1984, you can understand what a huge role language plays in manipulating and persuading the citizens in the totalitarian regime of *Oceania*. Their governmental department *Ingsoc* creates a completely new language for the citizens, known as *Newspeak*, and replaces *Oldspeak* by eliminating words that might cause unrest and revolution. 1984 was a hugely applauded novel and received great recognition even during the time of its release in 1949. However, it is a remarkable piece of work mostly because of the relevance it holds in everyday life and the world that we live in and still remains true irrespective of the decade in which you read it.

One of the most memorable elements of this ingenious novel has to be the unique language that Orwell created, known as *Newspeak*, that was solely used in the dystopian world of *Oceania*. Through this created language, Orwell tried to convey how, in reality, a language is an essential tool used for manipulation and mind control. *Newspeak* aimed to diminish and limit the meaning that language imparted, and therefore, linguistic devices such as synonyms and antonyms were completely abolished by *Big Brother's* regime, considering them to be absolutely unnecessary in language. Therefore, 'ungood' becomes the polar opposite of 'good,' 'uncold' the polar opposite of 'cold.' By simplifying and limiting language through *Newspeak* *Big Brother's* Party is able to control the words of its citizens and in that manner even control their thoughts to a certain extent. It is well known that our thoughts are considerably shaped by our language, but then arises the question of whether the language has that power that it can be used as a tool for controlling and manipulating our minds and our thoughts, as was the reality in 1984. The answer to this question is as grim as the world that *Winston Smith* inhabited in 1984, which is a resounding 'yes.'

How Is Language Used to Manipulate in the Present World?

While most people do not inhabit a rigorous totalitarian regime as had been depicted in George Orwell's 1984, it is a sad and unfortunate fact that language is still utilized to manipulate the masses even in most democratic and progressive nations. This reality can be realized when the way in which people who hold positions of power communicate with the masses is taken into consideration. Orwell's 1984 speaks largely about *Big Brother* and *The Party* utilizing methods of psychological manipulation to keep the populace in check and prevent them from taking a stand against the ruling government. In that sense, the media that people listen to every day is one such tool that is used in modern societies in a similar fashion as the totalitarian government of *Oceania*. Media has a huge following, and most people tend to believe the things they hear on the news. The modern population is almost always glued to their television or phone screens, gathering information about the world around them from various media outlets. Therefore, it makes the media the perfect tool to manipulate and persuade the audience.

A great example of this phenomenon can be to consider the rampant issues of mass-shootings that happen in the US. It is a common trait for the media to focus deeply on the race and ethnicity of the shooter rather than the gravity of the actual incident. However, if the shooter happens to be Caucasian, a different approach of leniency is applied. On the other hand, if by chance the shooter happens to be someone of Middle-Eastern origin, it automatically becomes a 'terrorist attack.' However, irrespective of the skin color, ethnicity, or race of the shooter, the act of mass shooting is just as grave. Yet the media chooses to word it differently based on who the shooter is. Although many would debate this is to be propaganda, but it is an easily distinguishable fact that media uses the tropes of language manipulation as a tool to advocate fear and a sense of urgency in the viewing audience. It is for this very reason that immigrants and refugees, as well as certain people who hail from certain parts of the world, are generalized and thought to be individuals with agendas against the West. Although it is not true, and any rational human being should be able to resist such information, mental manipulation is a supremely powerful tool when implemented through the use of language. Any person hearing such

news on a daily basis is bound to believe in it somewhat, and in that very little essence of doubt, the goal of manipulation through the use of language is achieved.

Another example that clearly states how a language is an essential tool for manipulation is to consider the example of the former Prime Minister of Australia talking about the issue of refugees. Australia has had a long-standing policy of turning back refugee boats, depriving them of permission to even land on Australian soil (Operation Relex). While speaking about the issue, Abbott subtly uses the art of language manipulation to frame his speech. Although he is speaking in English, his suggestion and message are subtly embedded in the speech, such that even the most rational and open-minded person would have trouble distinguishing it. Throughout his speech, Abbott decides to use the word 'illegals' instead of using the word 'refugee' to describe the people who are actually, in reality, refugees. By doing so, he successfully managed to drive the idea of these people being illegals into the collective consciousness of the public, without them even realizing his manipulation.

A similar example is the usage of the word 'homeland' by the American politicians after the attack on The World Trade Center. This word was rarely heard before the incident on 9/11 and is still popularly used in the country, especially before each year's elections. Somehow, the word manages to instill a misguided sense of patriotism in any American who hears it. Such is the power of language and how it can be used to manipulate.

This chapter clearly elucidates the important role that language plays in helping people form their thoughts and thereby how closely it is related to psychology. It is a means by which people elaborate on various topics, communicate with one another, and even express their inner feelings and thoughts. Upon having control over language, thereby invariably provides the controller with control over the listener's mind. As shown in Orwell's 1984, establishing control over a language translates to psychological control, enabling manipulation as a result. It is a powerful tool that can be used to your benefit to persuade another and even provide them with suggestions of how you want things to happen. Language and psychology are, therefore, more connected than what they appear to be at first glance.

Chapter 24: Advanced Covert NLP Techniques Everyone Should Know

Life is not always about success, and sometimes you need to take things into your own hands to achieve a goal or gain the upper hand. It becomes urgent in those dire situations to achieve compliance irrespective of the methods utilized. Albeit living in a society deems you to use ethical measures, but the skill of covert hypnosis can help you achieve all that without breaking many or no legal boundaries. Covert hypnosis is a form of hypnotism that attempts to communicate with the unconscious mind of another person without letting them realize that they are being hypnotized in the process. Another name for this type of hypnosis is conversational hypnosis. This technique of manipulation and persuasion is actively used by practitioners of NLP or neuro-linguistic programming. NLP is a pseudoscience that deals with psychotherapy, personal development, and communication, and has been created by John Grinder and Richard Brandler back in the 1970s in California, United States.

Covert hypnosis aims at changing the behavior of a person in a subconscious manner such that they start believing that the altered state of mind is one that they had reached voluntarily. When successfully implemented, covert hypnosis can help another person do or not do the things that you desire, without ever realizing that they had been put under a hypnotic trance. However, it should be noted that covert hypnosis differs from normal hypnosis. While the latter uses attention and focus on arresting the subject, the latter uses methods of fatigue, confusion, interrupted sentences, and directed attention to hypnotize the subject. It aims to inhibit or 'soften' critical thinking by introducing the element of fatigue and thereby making the subject more compliant.

Why Should Covert Hypnosis Be Used?

When you are in a tricky situation and need to convince another party to follow your wishes so as to save yourself from impending harm, the use of a spiral or a pendulum to hypnotize the other party seems to be a ludicrous idea. There is no way that the other party or the subject would fall for that or give you the attention you require to help you guide them into a hypnotized trance. Therefore, it is clear that traditional methods of hypnotism do not work in real and practical scenarios. The best option you have in your hand, therefore, is the art of covert hypnosis. You need to operate below the radar and use subtle hints, suggestions, and hypnotic techniques that are associated with covert hypnosis to achieve your end result. Covert hypnosis can help you gain another person's compliance in an elegant and swifter manner, and all it requires is the normal flow of conversation.

Therefore, mastering covert hypnosis is an impressive asset to have. Using this technique, you can therefore gain compliance from just about anybody just about whenever you want. It is a communication tool and, therefore, not an overtone that is easily recognizable or distinguishable by the subject you are implementing covert hypnosis on. The following sections would provide you with more details about the art of covert hypnosis while also introducing you to certain advanced NLP techniques that you can use to gain compliance with relevant examples.

The Art of Hypnotizing Anyone Covertly

It is amazing to realize that hypnotizing anyone is extremely easy. The reason behind this is the fact that every human being has an inherent trance mechanism naturally imbibed into them. In order to realize how relevant this is, simply ponder upon a regular day in your life and try to figure out the many trance states that you have experienced throughout the course of the day. For example, when you have been driving for a long time, are there not periods during the drive where you suddenly seem to wake up and think to yourself how far on the road you have come? This is because, during the interim period, you were in a state of trance, where you seemed to have lost yourself to your thoughts. That, too, is a state of trance. Covert hypnosis takes that very idea and utilizes it to hypnotize the subject and gain compliance. It is a subtle art of making anybody get lost in their thoughts. There are two primary steps to inducing such a state of hypnosis when utilizing covert hypnosis. These steps include:

- Inducing a state of trance
- Providing suggestions to the subject to gain compliance

Inducing a Trance: How Can You Achieve That?

In order to successfully induce a trance, the first and foremost task at hand is captivating the unconscious attention of your subject. In other words, it refers to the goal of making your subject give their complete unwavering attention to your voice and you. There are several ways in which you can achieve this. These include:

- Eliminating distractions in the surrounding
- Taking the person to a secluded place where only the two of you are present
- Standing close to your subject

It is important to remember that your ultimate goal is to dominate their attention and to then use your voice and tonality to put them in a state of trance. Once you have successfully grabbed their attention, try producing the best full-bodied tone that you can produce. Your voice's tone has a major influence on how successfully your trance is induced. A pleasant-sounding voice has a higher chance of the subject surrendering to it. The next task at hand is to manage you and the subject to get on the same page. It is essential for a successful trance to work and helps them think that it is their thought process that is at play rather than yours. There are many strategies that you can utilize to achieve this, and once that has been done comes the final part of the process. Establish some sort of physical contact at this stage. This physical contact can be a simple touch on the shoulder or holding their arms. Owing to you being the one to initiate contact, it instantaneously catapults you to a position of control and power. If all these steps have been executed with precision, your subject is most likely in a state of trance.

Giving Suggestions: How Can You Achieve That?

It is important to note that the keyword here is ‘suggestion’ and not ‘command.’ Although your end-goal is to achieve compliance, covert hypnosis and NLP both understand that there may exist scenarios in which your subject might not adhere to the requests you are making. However, you may rephrase the word ‘suggestion’ to ‘instructions,’ as that best describes this stage of a covert hypnosis attempt.

It is important to note that suggestions are given in a very concise and exact manner, whereby you suggest to your subject what they need to do in a step-by-step fashion. It is for this very reason that this stage can also be called giving instructions, as the suggestions you are making should resemble the way in which instructions would be given inside a user manual. However, you also need to remember that your instructions should not be overt. They need to be delivered in a subtle manner, and the best way to do that is by embedding your suggestions inside a story and delivering it in that format. This prohibits your subject from distinguishing the fact that you are suggesting something to them while also being able to understand your suggestions and imbibe them into their own activities, thereby furthering your final goal of compliance.

Advanced NLP Techniques for Covert Hypnosis With Examples

Now that you know what covert hypnosis is and what are the two most important aspects of achieving such a state in your subject, it is time to know the techniques that you can administer to achieve that goal. Once you think about covert hypnosis, you might wonder if words even have the power to achieve something so major. However, if you look back at your own life, you would understand that words actually do hold that power. Your entire childhood, for example, can be considered to be a period where you were under some sort of hypnosis, whereby the words of your parents or your guardians helped you develop the core beliefs that you hold dear in your adult life. These beliefs are nothing but the cumulative beliefs of everybody around you that you had acquired, through nothing but words that they had spoken or teachings that they have imparted to you. Covert hypnosis, like any other form of hypnosis, uses the same underlying principles. It simply transmits information directly to the subconscious by eliminating conscious thinking and filtering. In order to achieve that goal, it is important that you take a look at the following techniques and their examples.

Keywords

There are certain phrases and keywords that directly send commands to the subconscious. These words or keywords force the subject to forego their critical thinking and act upon them subconsciously, without consciously realizing whether they want to do it or not. However, it needs to be ensured that the subject's mind is not distracted at that moment or consumed by other thoughts. Examples of such words include 'relax' and 'imagine.' The best medium to provide another person with a powerful suggestion is through the use of visual images. It is for this very reason that visualization also works as a great tool for a suggestion. Therefore, by asking another person to imagine something, you automatically program him/her with whatever suggestive idea that you want him/her to imagine. An example that would help you best understand this condition can be described through this hypothetical scenario.

Supposedly, you have a growing business, but you are reluctant to sign a business deal that would help you expand the same internationally. You have specific reasons for that decision. However, your business partner understands how lucrative it is and wants you to go forward. He has tried hard to convince you otherwise but failed. Finally, he tells you, “Imagine how brilliant it would be if we can expand our business to international markets. We will be able to garner interesting international prospects, and our market value, fame, wealth, and reputation would all increase. The life that we are living now would be improved substantially, and we can enjoy larger profits.”

By saying these lines, your friend helps create a vivid image in your head of a luxurious and successful future if you just sign the deal. It would result in you forgetting your past restrictions and inhibitions and give in to the temptation of a glorious future. The reason behind this is the simple fact that the subconscious mind in humans is more dominant than the conscious mind.

Conjunctions

The use of conjunctions is yet another way in which you can covertly hypnotize a person. It is a method that is used by traditional hypnotism as well. The method implements itself by stating a few absolute and irrefutable truths to gain the trust of the subject, only to follow it with a suggestion that the speaker wants the subject to follow or accept. You can do this by providing a series of true information to your subject, following it with the suggestion that you want to program inside his/her mind, linking the suggestion with the rest of the correct information via the use of a conjunction. One of the very common conjunctions used in this method is ‘because.’ Once you gain the trust of the conscious mind by offering it verifiable truths, it starts relaxing and considers you to be genuine, therefore, not becoming weary of the suggestion that you are about to drop. Once you do drop that suggestion, it considers the suggestion to be a truth as well and delivers it directly to your subconscious. It has no reason to doubt you given you had already provided it with logical and verifiable truths moments ago. An example would be to consider this typical speech that a political leader might give.

“Ladies and Gentlemen! I would like to state as I stand here on this beautiful evening and occasion with all of you gathered here excitedly and enthusiastically, that I share the same enthusiasm as you. As I am speaking to you tonight, I feel that all of you have gathered on this wondrous occasion **because** you believe in the mission and ideals of our party.”

Looking closely at this speech, you would understand that the speaker gains the audience's trust by providing certain absolute truths at the very beginning. ‘Ladies and Gentlemen,’ you know that people from both genders are present there. “As I stand here on this beautiful evening and occasion with all of you gathered here excitedly and enthusiastically,” you know that the speaker is standing in front of you, that it is evening, and obviously a grand occasion. You also know that you are enthusiastic and excited; why else would you gather to hear someone speak. “As I am speaking to you tonight, I feel that all of you have gathered on this wondrous occasion” you know that the speaker is speaking to you right at that moment, and it is also a fact that all of you have gathered to hear him speak. All of these strings of statements are absolute truths that you do not have to ponder over much to understand that they are true. They are verifiable and right in front of you. Thereby the speaker has successfully gained your trust only to follow it with the suggestion, “because you believe in the mission and ideals of our party.” However, the fact that the speaker is speaking to everybody tonight and that everybody has gathered on that occasion has got nothing to do with the fact that everybody listening believes in the party's ideals and missions.

The fact that everybody has gathered is because they want to know what the party's mission and ideals are, to begin with. Regardless, your subconscious mind starts looking for a reason to trust the statement but instead believes the absolute fact that the speaker provides placed intelligently before his suggestion using conjunction, “As I am speaking to you tonight, I feel that all of you have gathered on this wondrous occasion.” Before you can realize what has happened, you are already hypnotized and enchanted by the words of the speaker. You believe in the party's ideals and missions without even having a clue as to what they actually are.

Analog marking

Analog marking is the skill of highlighting certain keywords or phrases while speaking a sentence in an attempt to communicate directly with the subconscious mind of the subject. It is an inherent trait that has been passed down to all humans due to humankind's genetic heritage to pay attention to any change that happens in a person's immediate surroundings. It is the work of your unconscious mind, though you might mistake it to be a conscious decision on your part. This reaction that all humans have is known as the oriental response. It was a way in which humans remained wary of predators when living in the wild thousands of years ago. However, the trait has still remained intact in the human DNA, and any response to changes in the surrounding environment is your subconscious mind reacting to it. Analog marking exploits this very fact by causing a change in the subject's immediate environment while sending the intended suggestion or message to best facilitate the chances of being able to communicate with the subject's subconscious mind. There are five distinct steps to analog marking. These include:

- The first and foremost step in this process is the building of trust and rapport. This can be established by providing the subject with true, verifiable facts, friendly behavior, smiling, or the use of the technique known as mirroring.
- You need to decide from before the exact message that you want to deliver to your subject's unconscious or subconscious mind. For example, let the message be, "Allow yourself to be comfortable." This suggestion would immediately ask your subject to relax and feel comfortable while conversing with you. Comfort can prove to be a huge advantage while covertly hypnotizing someone. However, you need to deliver this message subtly, carefully, and intelligently.
- Deliver the message while speaking in a context whereby your message or suggestion does not feel awkward or out of place. You can deliver the message, for example, by talking about the beach with a sentence like, "I absolutely adore going to the beach because you can simply relax there, *allow yourself to be comfortable* without

having to worry about anything and lose yourself amidst the sound of the waves.”

- Once the context has been established, deliver your message by incorporating it inside a sentence that is true to the context but also delivers your message without making it look awkward or out of place. In the previous example, such a sentence would be, “I absolutely adore going to the beach because you can simply relax there, *allow yourself to be comfortable* without having to worry about anything and lose yourself amidst the sound of the waves.”
- Now the important thing with analog marking is that when you actually get to the message or suggestion that you want to deliver, the message here is, “Allow yourself to be comfortable” execute an action that would help your subject’s unconscious/subconscious mind to distinguish and notice that message directly. Example actions can include the lowering of your voice’s tone, touching them slightly on the arm, slowing down the rate of speech, tilting the head, or raising the eyebrows. The descending voice-pitch has been found to be an excellent method to effectively effectuate analog marking.

While these are only a few advanced NLP techniques that have been described here, there are many more that can help you achieve covert hypnosis in your subject. These include *The Piggyback Induction* method, *mirror*, and *matching* method, the modulation of voice pitch, the use of presuppositions, ambiguity, and trance signals, amongst others. This chapter provides you with examples and a basic outline of what covert hypnosis is all about. However, the process is a complex one, and it is absolutely okay to feel a bit confused with all this information. Apart from the many techniques and tricks there is, there are other varying conditions that need to be taken into consideration for the effective implementation of covert hypnosis. Therefore, it is evident that you need to dedicate yourself thoroughly to the science and read and practice of all of these techniques to become efficient in the skill of covert hypnosis. However, it should always be remembered that this technique is an impressively rewarding skill to

acquire, and with proper dedication, practice, and understanding, almost anybody can learn it.

Chapter 25: Outsmarting a Manipulator

Manipulation is a method that is used by almost everybody knowingly or unknowingly to some extent. However, while most people manipulate to get things done their way for simple and trivial things, there are many that would do the same in order to cause harm or gain the upper hand from you in important matters. Then come the master manipulators, who are extremely good at the art of manipulation. He/she will work covertly and subtly. There are two important goals that they aim to achieve. The first of these goals is to attain the things that they want through manipulation, followed by the second, which is to avoid getting caught in the art of manipulation. It would be astounding to note that every month Google receives almost 150 different searches from people wanting to know how to manipulate and what it takes for someone to attain mastery in the art of manipulation.

While manipulators are very good at what they do, it's all to do with the mind. Therefore, something that has got your mind involved in it can be used to your advantage as you can use techniques and methods to outsmart and outwit your manipulator. However, before learning the techniques to outsmart a manipulator, it is very important to know in detail what defines a manipulator and the things that make him/her tick. You also need to recognize these traits and then implement your techniques to get the best result and get out of the grasp of a manipulator. This chapter aims to provide you some insight into this topic and help you unravel the mystery of manipulation.

I am going to revise some aspects of a manipulator that we have discussed previously in the book so that you can understand the concept better.

Definition of a Manipulator

A manipulator is a person that uses certain areas of another person's life and uses these areas to influence certain things to their own advantage. These things that a manipulator aims to influence include:

- Seizing power
- A situation's final outcome
- Gaining control in a relationship or work
- Making a scapegoat out of the manipulated person
- Reaping benefits for themselves from the hard work that you had done

A manipulator uses various tools in order to manipulate another person. These tools include:

- Deceit
- Lies
- False hope
- Guilt
- Intimidation

What Is Meant by Coercive Control?

Coercive control is a complex form of manipulation. It combines pity, guilt, fear, and criticism in order to 'coerce' another person to do things the way the manipulator wants or do things that would be advantageous to the manipulator. Coercive control has many degrees attached to it. While all these degrees are wrong and unethical, the gravest cases of coercive control can be termed as abuse.

Master Manipulator: How to Recognize Them?

One of the hardest things to do is to cope with a master manipulator. Most people do not even realize when they are being manipulated, thereby making the task of coping with one even more difficult. Another reason why most people remain unaware of their manipulation is that a master manipulator would work covertly. Most people realize that they are being manipulated after being in the situation for many years and after having concluded extensive research on the subject. The worst part about being with a manipulator is the fact that most of the time, it is someone very close to you. It might be your father, your mother, your friend, your sibling, or even your spouse. The first step that comes to the task of coping with a master manipulator is recognizing exactly the type of person that you are dealing with.

The best results come from realization. Therefore, the sooner you realize that you are in contact with a master manipulator, the better. Self-awareness is the key to such realizations. You need to look deep inside yourself and recognize the different feelings that being with a manipulative person makes you feel. The most common feelings that you might experience if you have been in close contact with a master manipulator include:

- Feelings of defensiveness
- Feeling of guilt
- Feeling of confusion
- A feeling of anger, whereby you need to exert tremendous effort just to stay calm
- A feeling of being trapped
- Feelings of obligation towards the manipulative person
- Feelings of anxiety every time you surmise being with than person or when you are with them
- There always seems to be a ‘problem’ that you need to fix, and you give your everything trying to solve that problem. However, despite your best efforts, the other person seems to be unhappy with everything.

A manipulator can also be recognized through the patterns or habits he/she displays. One of the most glaring signs of being a manipulator is when someone always portrays that they are the victim. Another thing that can unmask a manipulator is when rules in a relationship seem to be applicable to you, but the other person seems to be exempt from such relationship rules. The existence of double standards in a person is one of the most glaring signs of that person being a master manipulator. Physical signs that can help you identify a manipulator are tendencies of sulking or pouting extensively without any obvious reason for him/her doing so. Even if you ask that person what the thing is that is wrong, he/she will not let you know while allowing you to give your everything trying to mend a situation about which you do not even have the faintest idea of what went wrong.

Feelings of powerlessness and emotional impotency are always associated with being with a master manipulator. You start feeling frustrated because you are not able to fix the problem, and your manipulator has made you believe that it is you who can make everything alright but that you are too selfish and self-absorbed to do anything about the situation or do what must be quite obvious to you in order to fix the present situation. Implication plays a very important role in this method, whereby they make you responsible for any feeling or emotion that they go through. This makes you feel liable and responsible for their happiness and anger, and there begins a journey of toxic manipulation. The deadliest thing about implication is that it isn't an overt tool. It works covertly and cannot be recognized most of the time, thereby making it extremely powerful. However, it successfully delivers to you the message that their unhappiness has been caused by one single reason, which is 'YOU.'

A master manipulator would also most likely use the tool of insistent requesting or persistent requesting in order to wear you down. All they need is a slight opening to make you do what they desire. Your personal boundaries and the individual person that you are is irrelevant to them. All they care about is that you can do something for them that they want.

One of the worst things that can happen to a comparatively 'normal' person is being in a relationship with someone who is a master manipulator. Any normal person would wish to crease out the differences existing in a

relationship and make things okay with their loved one. However, a master manipulator would deny you the chance of ever achieving that goal making your life miserable and the relationship toxic and unhealthy.

A great example of how this works can be realized by imagining the following hypothetical scenario. You might want to impress your loved one, who is also a master manipulator, and show him/her how much you think about them and care, and therefore, you invest your hard-earned money to buy a brilliant gift that you know they would like. However, once you give that gift to this person, he/she looks at the gift and does not even acknowledge the effort you put into it, but rather discards it nonchalantly. That look of disappointment you see on their face is nothing more than an attempt to manipulate you and make you feel exactly how they want you to feel. Responsible for their mock unhappiness.

A master manipulator understands the importance of control and exercises it exuberantly with ingenious strategies kept in place so as to retain that control over the relationship they share with you. Manipulation is primarily about control, and the end-goal of any manipulator, small or big, is the control the situation, the outcome, or the relationship. If executed properly, most manipulators are able to get their method to work perfectly over an unsuspecting subject.

However, it needs to be realized that nobody will put up with such a toxic environment for all of their lives, and a master manipulator understands this all too well. It is for this very reason that you would experience your manipulator giving back some of that love in order to make you feel that you are wanted. This makes you come back to them over and over again, forgetting their past derelictions and thinking that they love you as well. This method is known as positive reinforcement, and it is just the right amount of positive love that should make you stick. A simple scientific fact that justifies this theory is that when reinforcement is provided to a person on rare occasions, he or she will try to achieve that rare moment of happiness with renewed vigor because that dopamine rise in the head of finally being able to get things right means unmatched exuberance and they would be looking forward to experiencing that feeling once again.

Outsmarting Your Master Manipulator

There is no reason why you should subject yourself to such unhealthy treatment and keep yourself in the way of emotional and even physical harm. Rather than making yourself fall prey to manipulation, you can try out some of the following techniques that will help you outsmart them.

- Self-knowledge is the most important tool that you have. If you have a rigid and intricate idea about your own self, it would be very hard for a manipulator to convince you something else. Never allow a manipulator to make you feel bad about whom you are or imply to you about your own self.
- Keep yourself guarded at all times, especially emotionally. A manipulator always makes use of your inhibitions, secret buttons, and insecurities to take advantage of you. Make sure that you do not pay much heed to the words of a master manipulator, and let them bounce right off of you.
- Self-compassion is another important tool that you need to develop. It is important that you are compassionate towards yourself and that you have such compassionate dialogues with your own self after every encounter with a master manipulator. A manipulator would try to make you feel bad about yourself and by feeling that you give him/her the control they need to have over you. By being compassionate towards yourself, you learn to forgive yourself and, therefore, not be angry at yourself for the supposed mistakes you have committed, according to the manipulator. This takes away that chance of them ever being able to exert their control over you.
- Always remember that you are a human being, the same as your manipulator, and in that sense, enjoy the same rights that he/she does. Therefore, if he/she does not feel guilty about doing something to please himself/herself, neither should you. If things get awful, learn to walk away. Rather than being with a toxic person who makes you feel bad about yourself all the time, it is better to talk with someone who would help you calm down and feel better.

- Make your social circle full of people who mingle easily with others and are fun to hang around with. These people should be such that they like you exactly as you are, for the things that you are, and do not ask you to change for them.
- Keep a check on your emotions and feelings. Notice the way you feel when you are with a manipulator and if the feeling becomes too overwhelming, learn to retreat from the situation. Instead of engaging in a manipulative conversation, avoid such instances at all costs.

Chapter 26: Ethics of Persuasion

Come to think of any argument- be it a comment war you are having with a random person on Facebook, negotiation with your parents about extending your curfew by one more hour, or a conversation with a group of a friend about why the place you want to go to for dinner is the one they should all want to go to- deeply, and you will see that much of it always revolves around the art of persuasion. Throughout our lives, in smaller or bigger ways, we are constantly trying to- successfully or otherwise- persuade other people, and sometimes, our own selves as well, about various things. Details regarding the deliberate techniques of persuasion can actually be traced thousands of years back to Aristotle's Rhetoric .

A lot of times, the process of persuasion is not something we consciously do or are very much aware of, and therefore do not think about at a great length beforehand. However, during the times when we actively want to persuade someone, an important aspect we must always keep in mind is the ethical one. What are the ethics of persuasion? In simpler words- when should we be trying to persuade another person, and when should we decide against it?

What Is Ethical Persuasion?

Ethical persuasion is the approach you must be ideally following when you are trying to convince someone else about your viewpoint or opinion. This approach takes into consideration all the viewpoints involved in the discussion- be it your or the other person's – and treats them respectfully, without discarding any perspective just at its face value. Ethical persuasion is also aimed towards reaching a fair middle ground as an endpoint.

Although it might mean that sometimes you will need to compromise a bit on your standpoint, it will ensure that you have managed to create a resolution and not conflict, which might happen if any of the parties involved were unwilling to listen to the other person's opinion in the first place.

Ethical persuasion would also guarantee that arguments are dealt with a certain degree of morality. A lot of times, we might feel that misguiding others in a way that would benefit us in an argument is the right thing to do. But the principle of ethical persuasion advises against this since such an outlook towards persuasion will allow one of the parties involved to have an unfair advantage over the other and would not be very constructive in the longer run. So, to sum it up, ethical persuasion can be described as a way in which the art of persuasion is practiced, keeping in mind the guiding principles of fairness and mutual understanding. But even though this principle can be quite straightforward to understand, the real problem arises when we have to decide when and how to apply it.

When Is It Right to Try and Persuade Someone?

There are a few situations when it is absolutely alright to persuade someone, and there is nothing ethically wrong about trying to do so. In fact, in some of these situations, it might actually be ethically wrong to not try and persuade the other person involved! Some of these situations could be:

- When someone would benefit directly from being persuaded in a certain way by you, and you have realized it before them, it is completely alright (and maybe even necessary) to push them to the point where they agree to what you have been saying. Say, a friend of yours is reluctant to prepare for a surprise test in class because they do not believe the chances for it is high, but you have already heard from the teacher about a pop quiz being planned for the next class, it might be worth your time and efforts to push your friend to give up on an evening's worth of Netflix and turn to their class notes instead. Here, even without completely disclosing what you have heard from your teacher, there are ways in which you could subtly persuade your friend to prepare for a possible test. Eventually, this preparation is only bound to benefit them, without them even realizing it at that point.
- Sometimes, reaching a middle ground is very important. It often happens that out of information or age gap, people are unwilling to understand the importance or relevance of what we have to offer. This can often happen between parents and their children, teachers, and students, or in any other group where there can be a significant age difference. We need to keep in mind that the conflict in such situations is not out of any ill intent on anyone's part. Everyone involved in the conversation simply feels that their point of view is more important. In such a situation, you need to be very careful about driving your argument home. Be sure to acknowledge the other person's point of view as well as yours, and point out how they can actually complement each other. This way, you are persuading the other person and, at the same time, also making them feel validated.

- If it is a particularly stressful situation, then you might want to persuade the other person into trying to relax or calming down, be it your friend or even a stranger. During times of stress, almost all of us happen to act impulsively and sometimes, irrationally, which does not end up doing us a lot of good. So, if you see someone else stuck in a high-stress scenario, even if you are not very willing to, it is perhaps in their best interest for you to step in and try to ease things for the other person. Keep in mind that it is not your place to take anyone else's decision for them. What you can do instead is to help persuade them to see things from a leveled perspective so they can properly decide what is best for them.

When Should We Just Let It Be?

Being able to persuade another person can often feel like an accomplishment, and such an aftertaste of ‘victory’ is also why we are so driven to it. However, there are a lot of situations where you should just let things be and decide against persuading someone. Often, this can actually be out of the best interests of both you as well as the other person involved. Let us look at some of such situations:

- A lot of times, when you are trying to persuade someone you are not personally familiar with, the argument can reach a standstill with both of you still desperately trying to prove yourselves right. This is often the case with heated online debates. In such cases, it might be the right thing to do to take a step back and not obsessively attempting to prove yourself correct after a certain point. The ethical angle is certainly ambiguous here. It could be very well the case that the other person involved would actually gain from the information you are trying to provide. However, when an argument has reached a point where nobody seems to budge, it is best for you to leave things at that, purely out of your own interests. It is important to choose your battles wisely, as you have limited resources, so remember that the onus of educating everyone with an opposing viewpoint is never on you.
- Stepping back from persuading someone is also the right thing to do when you see the conversation is causing the other person any kind of distress. A lot of times, certain topics can be triggers for some people and can make them distressed or uncomfortable. In such a situation, we must prioritize their wellbeing over persuasion, of course. Recognizing such situations might be a little tricky but watching out for the person’s body language, and other non-verbal signs might be helpful. Similarly, it is also wise to step back when a topic of persuasion is causing you similar distress.
- It is also not ethically correct to persuade someone into doing or believing something which is targeted in a way that would primarily benefit you without their knowledge. If you want someone’s help, it

is always better to be open and direct in communicating that, instead of trying to convince them to do something for your benefit. In such a case, it actually becomes an act of psychological manipulation, which is completely unethical because it happens without the other person's direct and informed consent.

Any act of active persuasion naturally comes with an ethical dilemma. More often than not, this dilemma is easier to deal with because the pros and cons of persuading or being persuaded are clear in many situations. But like every the ethics behind every human interaction, persuasion also comes with its own set of grey areas, which becomes a bit more difficult to deal with. In such cases, the most important thing to remember is how and who is benefitting out of the act of persuasion, and then proceeding with caution.

Conclusion

Thank you for making it through to the end of *Dark Psychology*; let's hope it was informative and able to provide you with all of the tools you need to achieve your goals, whatever they may be.

By now, you have gained a lot of insight into the world of dark psychology, persuasion, and manipulation. And I hope that you have learned everything you need to know in order to deal with people who do not want the best for you and are out to dominate you. It is true that the world is not always full of roses; there are thorns too, and you have to be careful of those thorns. But that doesn't mean you have to live in fear because if you follow the strategies mentioned in this book, then you can work your way to the top without anyone pulling you down. No matter how happy you are at the beginning of the day, if you meet an emotional manipulator, they can completely ruin your mood, but you can stop that from happening with the help of the resources in this book.

Understand that mind control is a potent concept, but it will not work on someone who knows what he/she wants and has a clear vision. Always try to stay true to yourself and give yourself a pat on the back for scaring away people who do not wish you well. Believe that you are strong enough to handle manipulators, and you will be. Always be cautious about who you make friends with and what information you give away to people because if someone does not have the best intentions in mind, they will use that information against you. Never allow yourself to be treated with disrespect because you deserve way better than that. Repeat it like a mantra, and soon, you will find yourself effectively dealing with toxic people in your life.

Finally, if you found this book useful in any way, a review on Amazon is always appreciated!

