

# MANIPULATION PSYCHOLOGY

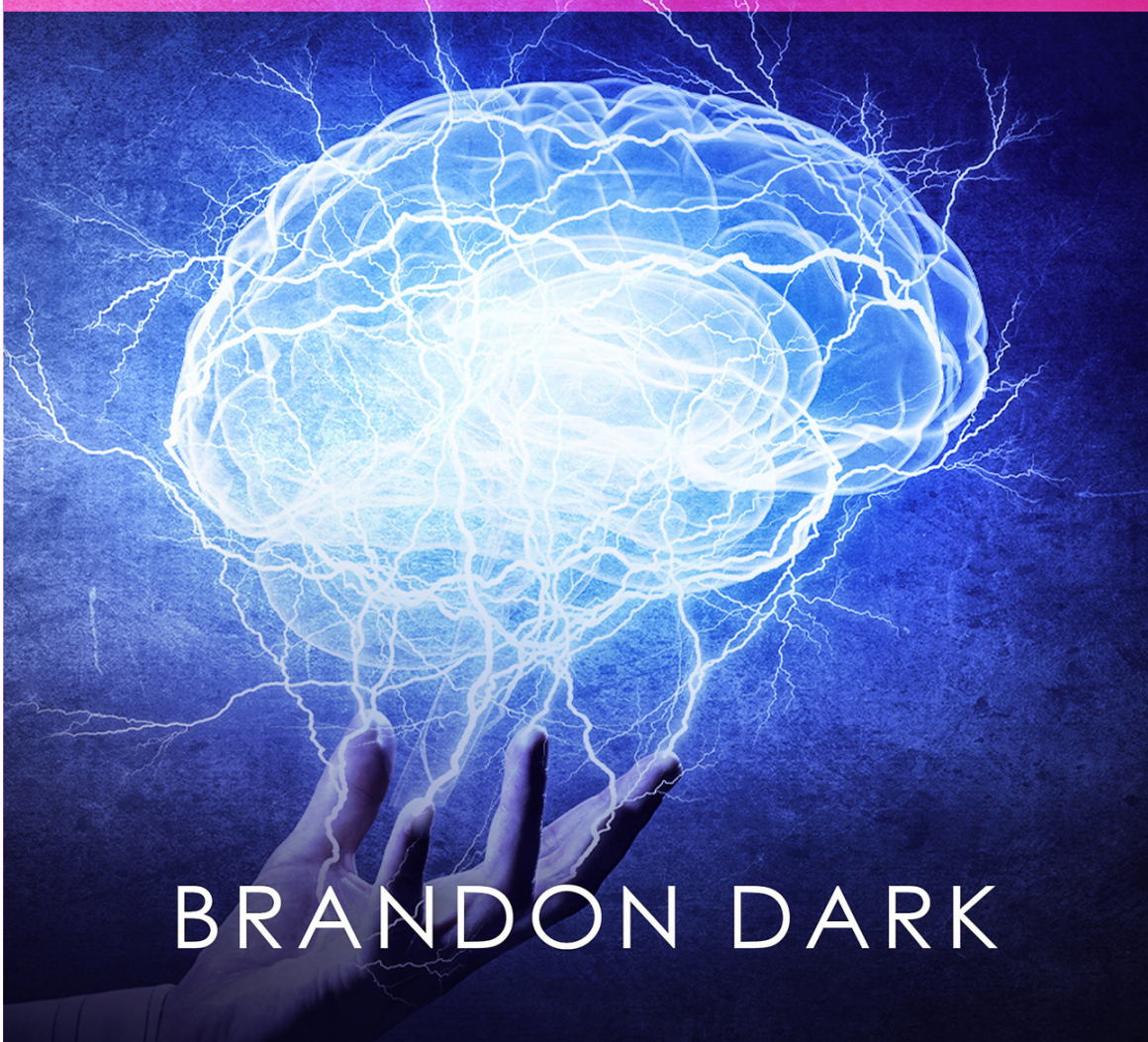
HOW TO MANIPULATE AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE USING EMPATH SKILLS.  
THE COMPLETE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO LEARN THE BEST PERSUASION  
TECHNIQUES AND AVOID MANIPULATION IN RELATIONSHIPS.

A glowing blue brain with intricate white lightning-like patterns, held by a hand. The background is dark blue with more lightning bolts.

BRANDON DARK

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# **Manipulation Psychology**

*How to Manipulate and Influence People Using Empath Skills. The Complete Beginner's Guide to Learn the Best Persuasion Techniques and Avoid Manipulation in Relationships*

**By**

**Brandon Dark**

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# Introduction



Evolution is regarded as a central survival tool that enables creatures to not only survive but also thrive under certain prevailing conditions. Of all creatures, humans are perhaps the most adaptive to their environments given their superior intellect. Unlike other organisms that rely solely on changes from within to adapt to the environment, human beings have the unique capacity to alter their environment to suit their needs. This capacity to alter the environment can be stretched as far as manipulating others to inadvertently do their bidding. This poses a significant threat to the much-treasured freedoms that ought to be enjoyed by all without external influence.

This book looks to shine a light on such schemers who look to apply manipulation psychology to influence others to act in a different way from how they would if they were completely uninfluenced. It is important to note that

manipulation may present itself in many different ways and thus the need to be aware of some of the general tactics that manipulators use. It is not only used to elicit certain reactions from people, but it can also be used to speed up, slow down or terminate other people's actions depending on the manipulators' needs. As such, virtually everyone is susceptible to the schemer's ways and we all need to up our guards.

This may be your first step into the schemers' mind, but a very good one at that. This book is however intended for information purposes only and the author bears no responsibility for how its teachings may be applied. However, the book will provide a wealth of knowledge on several topics about manipulative psychology. For ease of understanding the manipulation tactics discussed will be broken down into related topics on where they are applied. This is done so that you will be able to appreciate the scope of manipulations in our day to day lives. Every effort was made to ensure it is full of as much useful information as possible, please enjoy it!

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# Chapter 1: Manipulation in Relationships



This is perhaps the most common type of manipulation there is. The reason is that people who are in a relationship tend to trust each other too much to the extent of being blind to the schemes of each other. This is why it is not uncommon to find people who are being constantly pestered by friends to get out of certain relationships while they themselves seem utterly oblivious of what is going on. This must not be taken to mean that manipulation only occurs among couples. As you will see as you go through this chapter, this cannot be further from the truth.

Manipulation occurs in virtually all types of acquaintances—however intimate they may be.

While most of such influence is deemed negative from the way that they subvert people's freedom without their knowledge, it is important to note at this point that such influence is not always negative. Sometimes it is done out of love or to elicit certain desirable behaviors from people. This chapter will discuss influence in relationships, focusing on both the negative and the positive side of the same. The specific relationships that will be addressed include marriages, siblings, parents, children, and that of friends .

## **Manipulation in Marriages**

That love is blind is a very common saying. It has its foundation from the very widely accepted book, the Bible. This saying alone has many implications regarding the topic of manipulation and how the same may have the perfect conditions to grow in relationships where there is love. First and foremost, it implies that even when the schemes of a manipulator fail or are discovered by the potential victim, they will most likely be viewed through the blind eye of love and be chalked down as a minor mistake. For this reason, under these conditions, it will be very difficult for a regular victim of unsolicited influence to notice regular trends of the same.

As such, they may never be able to react accordingly to correct the situations and may, therefore, wind up living as unknowing slaves forever at the mercy of their manipulators. At this point, it is necessary to discuss some of the specific tactics used by married couples to influence one another. You will notice that some of the tactics used

will be replicated in some or even all of the other forms of acquaintances that will be discussed.

### **Seductio n**

Couples are often drawn into one another by a strong force of attraction. Although this is a good thing, it can be used as a way to manipulate others. Depending on the skill of the manipulator, seduction can be a very powerful tool and a very subtle one at that too. It may begin through veiled suggestions or criticisms that go rewarded very elaborately by acts of romance whenever they are heeded by the unsuspecting victims. This is a common form of positive reinforcement masked as acts of intimacy.

More often than not, the people being manipulated through seduction seldom realize that they have much-diminished control over their actions. This is because a skilled manipulator would not make it so obvious that their acts of romance and intimacy are entirely pegged on the other parties' conformity with their personal wishes. This means that they would bend over backward to please a skilled influencer without the slightest idea of why they are doing so. Even more compelling is the fact that a seductive manipulator who has perfected his or her art is bound to be at the top of his game .

For this reason, the romance and intimacy sessions aimed at manipulation would be very intense to the level of making the recipient virtually helpless to such advancements. It is little wonder then, that some of the deepest and darkest secrets have been brought to light through the skillful art of seduction. Actually, one of the worst spies this world has ever seen was a woman seductress by the name of Mata Hari. She was an exotic dancer during the First World War era and was convicted in France for spying for Germany.

Mata Hari was a well-known seductress who had perfected her art. She had affairs with generals and other high-ranking military officials and successfully manipulated them into divulging closely guarded secrets pertaining to the war. It is clear that seduction as a manipulation technique is an old one and that it keeps on evolving with time. If it was so successful in the First World War era, with an exotic dancer manipulating strangers, who are we to say just how potent it can be for couples who have known each other for a long time.

### **The Silent Treatment**

Human beings are not solitary beings and do not often do very well where there is no affection from others. As such, we are constantly looking for approval from our partners on virtually everything we do. When the said approval is not forthcoming, we often feel at a loss as we experience a dip in self-esteem and self-worth. Most people in relationships have either experienced or practiced the silent treatment in a bid to elicit certain relationships from their better halves.

This may seem like a rather childish maneuver but you will be surprised at the frequency with which it is used. Even more surprising would be the success rate of this infantile move.

Just like most of the other tools of psychological manipulation, the application of the silent treatment can be done in two ways. The first is straightforward as suggested by the title. This is when a partner in a relationship becomes intentionally withdrawn from the other when he or she feels that the other partner has done something wrong. One telltale sign that you are the recipient of the silent treatment is when a usually talkative partner suddenly has nothing to say whenever he or she is in your company. To be certain that you are the target of this reaction, you will

notice that the person's talkative demeanor remains unchanged when he is with friends or other people.

A variation of the application of the silent treatment can be viewed as its positive reinforcement variation. This is when a spouse showers their other half with extra attention as a means of validating a particular action of theirs. It is expected that the recipient of the extra attention would want to keep on receiving it and will, therefore, look to continue doing whatever it was that led to it in the first place. Many people may fail to see how such actions may lie in a grey area morally speaking seeing as though both parties involved receive something out of the arrangement.

While this may not pose an immediate threat to a relationship, if left unchecked, it is bound to spiral out of control eventually. This is because the fear of receiving the silent treatment coupled with being showered with affection in the case of compliance offers a healthy set of situations for the propagation of the psychological manipulation tactic. In addition to this, the trait is further enhanced by the propagator's desire to have their way and a prolonged history of having the same.

### ***Inexplicable Rage and Throwing Tantrums***

This is not a subtle psychological manipulation tactic. It is precisely for this reason that not many people consider it an influential tactic at all. However, a closer examination will reveal that it can also be used as a manipulation tactic and can be a very strong one too. Many couples wind up in therapy for this very reason. It is important to mention at this point that acts of inexplicable rage and tantrum-throwing can be propagated without the intention of the propagator. This is to say that some people are just wired to

be short-tempered and that their temperament can go a long way in influencing the actions of others.

The success of this manipulation tactic is largely based on fear. This is because it is often accompanied by violence whenever a person feels that his needs are not met. A big percentage of the victims of such arrangements are females since they are mostly overpowered by their violent spouses. Many people may disregard this as a manipulative tactic by arguing that the victims almost always know that they are doing things out of fear or coercion. However, when you consider that after some time, the victims are likely to start anticipating the reactions of their spouses and acting early to avoid them; it becomes clearer why it can be considered a manipulative tactic.

What is surprising about this tactic and its victims is how they are often reluctant to come forward and speak about the abuses that they face. Sometimes these victims even go out of their way to protect the perpetrators of these heinous acts and in this way making it difficult to access help.

## **Manipulation Among Parents and Children**

There is a lot of manipulation that goes on in a family setting. Parents need to raise their children with their desired ideals and children require the attention of their parents. This requirement makes it necessary to use certain psychological manipulation skills that will ensure that every party involved comes out satisfied. It is noteworthy that not all techniques of influence that exist among children and their parents are voluntary. Some of them, especially those used by children on their parents are honed over time from a very young age as will be discussed in this chapter.



Another point to note is that such manipulations within the family setting can be two-sided. Some of them are done with the best intentions at heart and therefore end up doing more good than harm whereas others are done to drive hidden selfish agendas. The former mostly refers to those tactics used by parents whereas the latter has more to do with how children manipulate their parents. A perfect example that is common to this effect is when a child feigns injury or illness to get out of performing chores or even going to school. Such a child is aware full well that the parent would be so concerned and may not suspect that the injury was being feigned in the first place.

The two-sided nature of familial and all other forms of psychological influence makes it hard to endorse it as a positive thing or dismiss it completely for its inhibitory nature to real freedom and free-will. As such, the best that can be done in gauging the same would be to try and understand the motive behind it. An example is if a parent employs the guilt tactic that will be discussed to try and get their child to make the right decisions in life, say, lay off drug abuse. Can such an influence be written off as an infringement on the child's freedom and personal space? Absolutely not.

### **Positive Reinforcement**

Positive reinforcement is a manipulation tactic that is virtually as old as time itself. It is so as a result of its overly simplistic nature. It is common to reward someone for something that he or she does that is considered good. The rewards are usually meant to encourage the commitment of the same positive acts that warranted them. This is because if the reward is deemed acceptable or desirable by the recipient, they would strive to continue doing what they did in the hope of receiving another in the future. A good

example is when a parent buys a present for a child in recognition of good performance in school.

Another reason why rewards can be used to elicit positive behavior is the fact that they can be viewed as recognition for jobs well done. It is for this reason that certain award ceremonies are often carried out in publicized events as an act of public recognition. This renders the wish to attain future rewards a non-issue in inspiring positive behaviors. This is to say that public recognition for good work may be all it takes to bring about an effective positive reinforcement.

As explained, most manipulative psychology techniques can be used either positively or negatively. So does positive reinforcement, despite its seemingly misleading name. This means that one can positively reinforce negative behaviors. Unfortunately, this happens in a lot of family settings a lot more than many people would care to admit. One common manifestation of the same has its roots embedded right from the period that a child is born, through infancy and even during later stages of the child's life. It goes by several names and in many different variations.

At its most basic form, it is known by many as parental instincts. This is when a parent forms an almost supernatural connection to their children right from when they are infants and the same is propagated towards the child's life. It is an expected attachment, and a healthy one at that, except for the fact that some parents feel the overwhelming urge to protect their children from everything, even when they are wrong. Often, it begins with seemingly innocent statements such as "Who has angered my little angel? Let's go get him." Or pacifying acts towards children such as giving them treats even when they don't deserve.

Such activities, although they stem from a good place, are bound to create a sense of entitlement among children. If this is let to go on long enough, the child subjected to such overprotection from parents is likely to grow up to be a spoilt kid. It is clear from this description that positive reinforcement is a manipulation tool that can bring about negative results within the family.

### **Negative Reinforcement**

Negative reinforcement, just like the positive one, is also a manipulation tactic that is as old as time. It is common to punish people for wrongdoing as a deterrent for similar activities in the future. This is the reason why there are several correctional and detention facilities for just this purpose. Parents also use negative reinforcements to elicit certain reactions from their kids. However, the main reason why most parents use negative reinforcement on their children is to stop them from doing certain things as opposed to causing them to do others. Positive reinforcement is the aptest for the latter reason.

Just like was the case with positive reinforcement, this type of reinforcement can be used for both positive and negative reasons. This means that it can be used to bring about positive results as well as negative ones. It is clear from its name that negative reinforcement is mainly used as a deterrent. For instance, when a child breaks certain rules enforced by parents, it is expected that parents would implement some punitive measures to deter the child from breaking the rules a second time. The fear of a similar punishment in the future is certain to make the child think twice from breaking the rule again in the future.

### **Guilt**

This is another tactic that is often used by parents to cause their children to do certain things or to cause them to stop doing others. It is often preferred where negative reinforcement proves ineffective or cannot be applied. A good example of a situation where negative reinforcement may prove ineffective is when the child is grown and now lives independently from his or her parents. Seeing as though a child in this situation may no longer need much from the parents, it may prove difficult for them to implement negative reinforcement for certain behavior that they deem unbecoming of their child. In the worst-case scenario, negative reinforcements under such circumstances may even cause the child to run away from home or to cut ties with the parents.

There is a better way that parents employ when dealing with such children. This is one of guilt. It is common for children to have some level of affection and appreciation towards their parents. The levels of this affection and appreciation vary from child to child depending on the relationship that exists between the two parties involved. However, there is always a way that parents can use such relationships to their advantage, and believe me, they do so quite frequently.

For instance, how many times did your parents tell you how lucky you have it by relating some of the ways in which their childhoods were a lot tougher than yours? How many times did they tell you how hard they worked in school, in a bid to get you to up your grades? How about how they grew up in poverty but made it anyway when you requested something that they consider as an unnecessary luxury? All these are scenarios where parents use guilt to influence their children to do something or to elicit a certain behavior. At this point, it is clear that all of us have been victims at one point or

another to clever parental ploys of using guilt as a manipulative tool.

## **Defiance**

In a family setting, defiance as a manipulative tool is largely the domain of children. In protest against some of their parents' actions, children have been observed to portray acts of blatant defiance. Although this behavior is rampant among teenagers and adolescents, it has also been noted among younger children, even in toddlers. An example of this is when for the need of a mother's attention, a toddler shoves a glass or other objects off the table to the ground. Another one is such as after having been left alone for some time, the young child cries incessantly and cannot be calmed by anything .

It is clear from this example that defiance is in human nature. However, the same trait can be magnified or diminished depending on how a child is brought up. It is only after hitting adolescence that the true scope of the defiance can be ascertained. It is common at this age to hear parents complaining that their children are no longer the sweet little angels that they knew or that their children had turned into complete strangers overnight. Usually, the defiant child begins portraying erratic behaviors which, deep-down, are meant to draw their parent's attention. An example is when a previously obedient girl dyes her hair or gets a piercing she knows will be frowned upon by her parents.

Others may begin to indulge in drugs or begin hanging out with the company that their parents don't approve of. More often than not, for the fear of allowing such defiance to deteriorate any further, such parents are forced to compromise and bend to the will of their manipulative children. However, it is important to note that always giving

in to such pressures from children can backfire when they resort to the same tactics over and over again. It is therefore important to find other means of addressing the said defiance. Some of them are discussed in a later chapter on how to deal with manipulations.

## **Manipulation in Friendship**

It is common to hear people saying that trust is a hard thing to come by and that it is earned the hard way. What is not often addressed along with this statement is how easily people betray the trust that they take so much time building. The most cunning people of this lot would betray a person's trust without the betrayed ever suspecting anything. They are merely reduced to puppets dancing to other people's tunes without the least bit of suspicion. It is in this area that manipulation in friendships reigns supreme. A common term for this manipulation is 'use'—where a person would accuse another of using them to advance their personal selfish agenda.

The key to success in any form of manipulation is stealth, patience, and a good plan. These qualities alone show that manipulation is a lot like an elaborate game of chess where one player holds all the pieces and makes all the moves for the other oblivious player. It is obvious from this analogy that one player is set to lose from the beginning and may never even find out that they were played in the first place. The same keen mind that is required to beat a worthy chess opponent is the very same one that will be required to identify, let alone beat a scheming manipulator. A true schemer would have so many tricks up his sleeve, some of which are discussed below in the context of friendship.

### **Unsolicited Compliments**

One well-established way of getting into one's good graces is to pay them an unsolicited compliment. This tactic has and continues to be in used in many different ways. Say for instance you want a favor of access to a particular office without booking a prior appointment. It may do you some good to compliment the nice dress or the nice hairdo of the secretary sitting behind her desk outside the office. If you approach her looking all formal and business-like, chances are that she would send you back with an obvious 'You need to get an appointment first.' However, a well-placed compliment may get your audience with the boss, or a fast-tracked appointment. You will be surprised at how such a small gesture may do wonders .

If it can work for a total stranger, imagine how it would do for someone you are acquainted with, for instance in our case, a trusted friend. A good influencer would know better than to just blurt out a request, even if it is to a very close friend, without first setting the stage for its acceptance. Such an influencer would first indulge in small talk, show you how he or she is interested in your affairs, throw in a flattering compliment here and there, and then finally make their request. By the time they do this, you will have no option but to acquiesce to their request.

### **Unsolicited Rewards**

An unsolicited reward is even better than an unsolicited compliment as a tool for psychological manipulation. This is much more potent because a physical reward would instill in the recipient a very strong feeling of the need to reciprocate the kind gesture. Believe it or not, it is human nature not to want to be indebted to someone. Psychological manipulators would know this and recognize it as a perfect tool to manipulate others. A good example of the tactic in action is such as by insisting on picking up the check or the

tab or a colleague bringing you an extra cup of coffee just the way you like it.

Many may not see the obligatory sense in this and may argue that since such a reward was unsolicited, there is absolutely no obligation to reciprocate it. However, the urge to reciprocate cannot be overemphasized. This has been proven on many occasions, even in business settings as will be demonstrated in the chapter on manipulation in business. It is important to learn that the nature and magnitude of the reciprocation action in this situation are not always informed by the initial reward. This is to say that a small gesture or token has the potential of triggering another that is so much bigger and far more significant.

To demonstrate this using the examples listed, suppose you are running for an elective supervisory role at the office and your colleagues are to decide through voting who gets to occupy the position. The simple cup of coffee along with a well-placed compliment might go a long way in swaying a colleague to vote your way. Here, the compliment would serve as a polite gesture of you warming up to him and the cup of coffee would instill in the unsuspecting colleague a feeling of being beholden to you. It is clear that a mere compliment and a cup of coffee are by no means close in magnitude to a vote to a supervisory role. This is a mere demonstration of just how far the power of rewards can be used to drive one's agendas in a subtle way.

### **A Friend in Need**

Absurd as it may sound, helplessness is sometimes power. Only the most experienced manipulators are able to capitalize on this. By seeming to be helpless and completely at your mercy, certain people are able to trick others into dancing to their tunes. So the question is; do you have



someone in your life, a relative or a friend, who seems to always be in need of your help in doing something? This may be a manipulator in disguise, a needy tycoon, and a helpless giant. Caution must, however, be exercised lest you tag a genuinely needy friend a manipulator.

A manipulator in need will form close ties with you, always making sure to inform you how appreciative he or she is of your help. Such people are often so good in soliciting help from and often even come across as being genuinely polite in how they make their requests. The unsuspecting victims are left with no option but to agree to help them. This may not seem like a very sophisticated way of manipulation but depending on how it is applied, it can be one. Crucial alibis have been falsified and others forged where unsuspecting victims of the friend in need swear upon their lives the innocence of the clever masterminds.

Often, the needy friend will make your decisions for you before you have the chance to decide. Statements such as 'If it weren't for you, I don't know what I would do,' or 'I know I can count on you for this small favor...' make it very difficult for a target to refuse the needy friend's requests.

### **The Good Snake**

As the name suggests, these are people who are very sly and are good at hiding this fact. A good snake would cause you to clash with someone by fanning enmity between both sides then take your side during the argument or clash. As such, they succeed in blinding others from their treachery and present themselves as loyal friends. It is very easy to trust such people when they themselves won't hesitate for a second to sell you out to drive their secret agendas.

In most cases, the good snake does what he does when he has an angle to gain from having a good rapport with you. This tactic can be viewed as an advanced stage of the unsolicited reward seeing as though they are always quick to take your side; hence, making you feel indebted to them. In so doing, the good snakes essentially disarm their targets from shooting down any and all of their requests after taking their sides.

It is obvious that this kind of manipulation tactic only has a negative side to it. This is clear because the propagators hold all the cards from the word go. Their help, even though given apparently freely, is not genuine. This is because they are often the originators of the problems in the first place. With extra caution in dealing with people, it is possible to identify and avoid falling into ploys of such characters as will be shown in a later chapter .

### **The Deflector**

The deflector is never to blame for anything that goes wrong. This is at least from his point of view. He is always the victim of circumstances and the environment around him. Deflectors have perfected the art of deflecting blame away from them. As such, it is always very difficult to win an argument with them. This is because they will find a way to change the conversation or twist it and turn you into the bad guy before you get a chance to make your point. A deflector will shift blame to the accuser using everything he has. In the end, he ends up disorienting everyone involved by masking the truth, misrepresenting facts, or changing topics.

## Chapter 2: Manipulation in Business



The best marketing plan for any business is to find out customer preferences and deliver it. This way, such a business ends up promoting customer loyalty, and also increases customer references as a way of advertising. The values that most customers hold dear are easy to identify since they are almost universal. These include but are not limited to; best quality goods, good customer service, affordability, and other customer incentives such as loyalty discounts and flexible return policies. It would be in a good sense for any company to try and abide by these and other customer preferences. However, this is not always the case.

Company priorities may not be in sync with customer preferences. This is because often, the central goal for most businesses is to widen their profit margins as much as possible. As such, paying so much attention to their customer preferences may prove counterproductive. This is because producing the best quality products at low prices while offering good loyalty discounts may not make for the best business strategy. It is for this reason that many business holders have developed clever ways of 'tricking' their customers so that everyone goes home satisfied.

Advertising and miscommunication is often the area of target in manipulating clients. A well-designed advert holds the potential of significantly increasing the sales of a particular product. As a matter of fact, a well-executed advert can have the capacity of causing you to purchase something which you had no prior plan of purchasing. Such manipulation schemes are often executed in batches. This is to say that it is rare to have a single fool-proof plan to sway customers, but rather, separate methods are executed in conjunction with each other in order to achieve the best results.

The methods through which business people manipulate their clients are numerous. While some may be considered prudent business measures, others border on the downright shady and illegal. Some business owners have been known to pull no stops in their efforts to milk the clients of their bottom dollars. As such it is important to learn how some of these methods are used, how to spot a manipulative businessman, and best of all, how not to fall prey to their scheming minds and tactics.

## **Persuasive Advertising (Misleading)**

In business, there are two types of advertising. The first kind is the straightforward type where what you hear or perceive is what you get. This is the honest type of advertising that is void of any trickery or manipulation of potential buyers. Seldom this type of advertising brings profits in the form of improved sales. This is because customers need to be given reasons why they want to buy an item rather than just being given the specifications of various items. This is where the second type of advertising (persuasive) comes in. This section will deal with the different types of persuasive advertising and give common examples of instances of the same.

### **Non-Specific Type**

How many times have you run into adverts that are seemingly very attractive but are non-specific when you consider them deeply? Such adverts are usually connected with post-purchase advantages of various items. A good example that I am sure you have come into or will in the future is “Buy this item and benefit from a ten percent discount and an extended warranty.” I have no problem with the first part of the advert. In fact, it seems genuine enough as a result of its specificity. However, the part on the extended warranty is where my problem with the advert lies. Just what is this extended warranty? It would have been much more helpful to specify in the advert the exact amount of time covered by the warranty.

You will be surprised to learn the extent of such and other forms of treachery in adverts. Other examples you might find to this effect are; “this product has a long shelf-life,” or “Buy this item at a now reduced price of...” Both of these statements are certainly appealing but non-informative. They would be far more informative and trustworthy if they were more specific. The first one, for instance, should have

expressed the shelf-life in exact time while the second one should have stated the initial price of the item. Although not all advert statements similar to these are designed to mislead, a significant number of them are.

The primary targets for such adverts are those shoppers who may be in a hurry to purchase items. Specifically, they target those people who may not be loyal to any brands and are therefore dependent on adverts to make their choices. When you are in a hurry and have to purchase something, it would make perfect sense to settle for the one with the “extended warranty and shelf-life” even though you may not have a clue just how extended they are .

## **Pricing**

Believe it or not, but how items are priced can be used as a manipulative tool to dictate purchasing tendencies. You may disagree with this statement by arguing that goods are priced based primarily on their value. You will not be wrong from this argument but yours would be a rather myopic view of how business is conducted. This is because the values that people attach to items vary from one person to another and so does the financial abilities of individuals. A good businessman is able to appraise a potential buyer and adjust accordingly.

This is to say that a prudent business person may not treat everyone that walks into his or her store the same way. Take for instance a situation where an obviously well to do business executive walks into an electrical outlet looking to buy a television set. The first selling points regarding such a person would be his general demeanor and his dress code. These two things alone would be enough to tell the salesperson where to begin the tour on the available sets .

Take another instance where your average Joe walks into the same store also looking to buy a television set. For better comparison, let us assume that the store is bent on pushing a particular brand for different purposes. Just like was the case with the first customer, there are some indicators that will act as the selling points for the customer's financial ability, tastes, and preferences. What then, is a good salesperson to do if they are to sell the two very different customers the same item?

There are several different marketing strategies that have been tested and proven to work. You just have to pick the right one depending on the potential client and the prevailing circumstances. I will take you through how both clients may be 'driven' into purchasing the same model despite their obvious financial differences. The success of the same is to be taken as an example to just how manipulative salespeople can be without the slightest suspicion of their victims.

It is obvious that the first client, a business executive, has tastes that are bound to rhyme with his financial status. As such, an observant salesperson would know straight away that such an individual would be looking to buy the best television set there is. For his case, money may not be an issue when it comes to deciding which set to go home with. He would most likely also accept all the extra accessories and installation services that come at an extra cost. Knowing this, a salesperson may be tempted to take him straight to the set they intend to sell seeing as though he has the capacity to buy it without any qualms. This would be a wrong move. The first rule of business is to always ensure that the customer leaves the store feeling like they had a good bargain especially when the opposite is true.

Given that money is a non-issue for the first client, how else would a good salesperson make him feel like he is getting a good bargain? He would capitalize on his tastes. The best action would be to take him through a series of television sets that are obviously inferior to the intended sale and yet ridiculously overpriced. At this stage, the overpricing of the inferior sets acts as a trap for the asking price for the intended sale. Naturally, a client of his caliber would want to know if there are any better, perhaps bigger television sets in the store. This is when the salesperson moves in for the kill .

He introduces him to the set that has been his target set to sell all this time. Compared to the rest of the initial sets, the last one is sure to impress the unsuspecting potential buyer. This is because it would be larger, more powerful and appealing relative to the mediocre ones he had seen before. Again, the asking price will have been inflated both as a tactical maneuver and a lucrative business strategy. The salesperson would be quick to assure the buyer that he is getting value for his money and thus the high asking price would appeal to him as value and class.

For the second client, a similar approach would be employed. The only difference this time is that it would be done in an inverted manner. It must be clear that for such clients, a good bargain would be to get the best set they can afford for as little money as possible. It might, therefore, backfire to introduce them to the smaller, cheaper, and less powerful sets before moving in for the kill. For this second type of clients, an entirely different set of rules apply.

First, the salesperson would take them to bigger, more expensive sets than the intended sale. Again, the prices of these sets would be inflated as a trap just like in the first



case. Obviously, these sets would be way out of range for such a client and he would ask to be shown cheaper sets that are more to his price range. This is when he is taken to the target sale. Relative to the pricing of the initial ones he had been shown, this television set would seem cheap to your average Joe. This is despite the fact that the asking price might still be high or even inflated a bit for that matter. Under the circumstances, the client is likely to accept this set.

However, if the target sale is still out of the client's price range, there are yet other tactics that can be used to win him over. This includes offering that he could make the payments in small installments over a specified time period. This, of course, would mean that they would ultimately pay more, which is still a big plus for the store. Having seen just how manipulative business people can be from these two examples, rest assured that this is just the tip of the iceberg and that there are a lot of different more ways to politely arm-twist unsuspecting clients .

## **Free Samples**

You may have wondered before just how those businesses with free samples for anyone who cares make their profits. Well, worry no more. This next section will put your mind at ease regarding this issue. The art of offering free samples borrows heavily on a matter that has been discussed before and one that will be discussed in finer details at a later chapter. This is the issue of reciprocation. As stated earlier, it is in human nature to abhor being indebted to others. This means that to want to give back to those that have given us is in our very core as humans.

To recognize this human characteristic is one issue and to apply it successfully in business is another. Blind application of free sampling has the potential of driving a business to the ground. As such, we need to look at just how those who manage to apply it successfully do it. This tactic requires skill and manipulation for the best results. The first thing you are bound to notice when you are at a free sample stand is that the vendor is always talkative and in a good mood .

Outside a minimart where I used to shop sometime back in my previous neighborhood, there was this woman, whom I later came to know as Margaret, who used to sell popcorns in a stand. For any customer that walked out of the minimart, she would offer free samples of her popcorn in her customary jovial and talkative mood. I recall the first time I fell for her charm very vividly. I had my hands full of grocery bags and was heading to my car, barely able to see a few steps ahead. “May I?” she said, as she extended a hand to help me with some of my bags. Before I could reply, she had reached and grabbed the largest one, greatly putting me at ease. “Thanks” I mumbled and began strolling in the direction of my car which was a few feet away. Having put the bags away, I turned to thank her once more but she was already heading back to her stall.

I was curious as to her warm-hearted nature and found myself strolling to her stand where she promptly offered me a free sample of her popcorn. As I munched away, she talked away explaining some of the different popcorn flavors she served. Finally, she handed me a paper towel and asked politely what I thought of her merchandise. I was baited without knowing. Her act of unsolicited help—coupled with the free sample—was enough to make me a customer forever, even during the times when I was not particularly

inclined towards popcorn. From that day onward, I never visited the store without buying popcorn from the woman. And guess what, having been a customer once, I never required nor received another free sample.

So, just what made Margaret so successful in employing the free sampling strategy in her business? The first step is to choose a convenient spot. By setting up her stand outside the minimart, Margaret showed that she understood this full well. This way, customers would most likely have money to spare for popcorn. The second bait employed by Margaret was her charm and warm personality. This made it very difficult for people to refuse her free samples and therefore effectively setting them up to buy more in the future. The paper towels and her talkative nature were just icings on her elaborate cake. At this point, a sampler would be led to think that Margaret had gone into too much trouble to offer the free sample and therefore it would be rude to leave without making a purchase .

## **Threat of Loss**

A common advertising statement is a call for people to hurry and make their purchases 'while stocks last.' A keen eye and a sharp mind should be able to see through such business lingo and interpret them for the nonsense they are. The first question you should ask yourself when you come across such an advert is; why on earth would an advert be required for a fast-selling item that is about to run out? Why not just let the stocks run out now that it is fast selling? The answer, of course, is that the item is not selling as fast as they make it seem or that there is no risk of it running out any time soon. In fact, the opposite may just be true. That there is an oversupply of the same in the market and they are just trying to bolster their sales.

So why do business people use such statements in their adverts despite the obvious flaws in them? The answer is quite simple really. There is a sense of urgency that is created at the point of imminent loss. This implies that people are bound to make impulsive decisions the minute they realize that time is running out. It is not always that this strategy works, but rest assured that its success rate is significant if not impressive. If it weren't, how would you explain phenomena such as sales of artists or authors skyrocketing posthumously? A good example of this effect was the aftermath of the death of the famous pop star Michael Jackson. His record sales hit an all-time high the period following his passing. To explain this crazy sale, one might chalk it down to the same impulsive buying that is common at the threat of a loss.

The same threat of loss works so well in other forms of advertising too. More often than not, people will react to threats of losses more than they will to the promise of gain. This is something that business people know very well and have turned it into a very potent manipulative tool. This is the reason why you are more likely to hear messages like "you stand to lose a lot if you don't go this route" than "you will gain this much if you go this way."

## **Capitalizing on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

Maslow categorized the needs of individuals into three main groups. The first groups represent the basic needs such as shelter, food, and clothing which everyone must have at some fundamental level. At the next level are the social needs where people aim to fit into a certain social class. This desire to fit in is often expressed in mimicking other people who belong to that particular class. This is because human beings are social beings who thrive in social groups.

At the final stage of needs come psychological needs. Quite a few people often transcend the initial two stages of basic and social needs to actually arrive at this final stage.

A good business person will understand how Maslow's hierarchy of needs works and structure his or her business accordingly. The main target category of needs to this effect is often the social needs. Discussed below are some ways businesspeople capitalize on this gem of knowledge.

## **Selling Brands**

It is expected that whenever you go shopping, there are a few brands that you will definitely stick to. This might be because you've personally tried them out and they perfectly suit your needs. If this is the case, then, by all means, go ahead and buy them every time you need a refill of the same. This is, in fact, a good thing since this will mean that you are getting exactly what you want. However, there are some people who choose to buy things simply because others do so. This is the target group that is most vulnerable to business manipulators.

A few years ago, I had an opportunity to visit a long friend in his home country Kenya. While there, I witnessed brand selling at its best. We were stuck in traffic when some roadside vendors approached the vehicle we were traveling in and began selling their merchandise through the windows. The vehicle was a matatu, a popular public service van that sat fourteen passengers at once. We occupied two seats close to the back and we're at a good vantage point to observe everything that was going on. I noticed that the main commodity that the vendors sold was water. This came mostly in two brands, Dasani and Keringet, as I later came to know.

My friend Musa purchased two bottles of Keringet. I, however, could help but notice that most of the other passengers who also bought water settled for the other brand, Dasani. After the traffic eased up and we were once again on our way, I asked him why he went the other way in choosing the water he bought. He simply smiled and said, “I wasn’t willing to give up an extra cent for the same thing.” Puzzled, I asked him what he meant by this. He told me that the two brands of water were actually the same, only bottled differently by the vendors to suit their customer needs. He happened to know the exact source of water and where the bottling was done and he offered to show me the next day. To my surprise, both bottles were acquired from the county government and were safe for consumption.

This puzzled me even further, “so why the lies in packaging them different?” Musa told me that the preferred brand was a little more expensive and spoke to someone’s class. This was why many people preferred it. Little did they know that they were being duped into paying more for less. This is a classic example of how business people can play us using our desire to fit into a particular social status. How to overcome this type of manipulation will be covered in detail in a later chapter .

### **Everything is Not How They Look**

While still in Nairobi with my friend Musa, I noticed another interesting manipulation tactic that was used. As I stated earlier, our main means of transport was the fourteen-sitter public service vans which were natively referred to as matatus. To board one, one had to go to a particular terminus in town and select any from a number of them that would be heading the same way. They were grouped

according to the routes they operated and so the competition for passengers was stiff.

It is expected that in an effort to save time, a potential passenger is likely to settle for the vehicle which is closest to filling. This is because this would be the first vehicle to leave the terminus and would, therefore, be the earliest to arrive at the desired destination. Using this rule, we once got into a matatu that was almost full. From the look of things, only three more passengers and we would be good to go. Not long after we boarded, one of the required three passengers required to fill also boarded. Sadly, one of those who were already sat seemed to have forgotten something and alighted two minutes later .

Bad luck, but three aren't that many, I told myself. Less than five minutes later, another passenger got in and so we only had two to go. Sadly again this time, a lady in her twenties received a phone call and also alighted. Again, we needed three more to leave. It was not after the fifth boarding and the fifth dismount that I realized that this was no longer just a sad coincidence. Musa noticed my concern and offered an explanation that had me both bewildered and amazed. "You see all those people who have alighted shortly after every boarding? Well, they are professional seat warmers." "What on earth is a professional seat warmer?" I enquired.

Apparently, there were people whose job it was to sit in the vans to trick people into believing that the matatus they were in were nearly full. They had a strict code to balance their exits with the entries of the genuine passengers. By so doing, the 'seat warmers' managed to maintain an image of a vehicle that was almost full when in fact, this wasn't the case. In the end, I was more impressed than offended by the

ingenuity when I learned that Musa and I were only the second and third genuine passengers to board that day .

This trick is in use more times in varied ways than you can care to believe. A good example that I have read about before is the use of professional customers. These are people who are paid to 'buy' things so as to influence real customers into buying. Often, these professional customers are trained to use anything at their disposal. Consider, for instance, that you are walking downtown when you come across a shoe department that is swarming with clients all eager to buy a pair.

Your curiosity gets the better part of you and it just so happens the first person you ask has all the answers ready for you. The guy tells you how the store is aiming at closing the shop to set up someplace else and how everything being sold is generously discounted. From this point on, there is no turning back. You have fallen prey to one of the oldest manipulative tactics in the books.

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## Chapter 3: The Empath



Debates abound as to the existence of empaths. Most people in society don't believe that people exist who can actually immerse themselves in other people's emotions and feel what they feel. This is precisely the definition of an empath. An empath is a person that can relate to another at a very close level, that of a very strong emotional connection. Essentially on some level, they may be considered mind readers because they see what other people can't. This is to say that if you were to compare how a regular person and an empath view the world, you are bound to get two very conflicting perspectives.

Take for example that you come across a mother who strikes you as rather abusive to her child. You conclude this because of the way she treats her young boy of about five years. She yanks him through the streets, walking way too fast for his pace. She smacks him once or twice when the boy momentarily loses attention and stares at something across the street or looks back at someone who just passed them. Her general demeanor is shifty and suspicious. The first thing that would cross your mind is that she is a bad mother who has done some terrible things. This was exactly what landed an innocent mother and her child behind bars according to a 2009 issue of The London Times. Apparently, she had been mistaken for a kidnapper and thrown in jail.

It was later ascertained that she was the child's mother and was fleeing from a very abusive relationship. After enduring years of physical and mental abuse, she could no longer take it and was determined to get herself and her young boy as far as possible. To an empath, such an unfortunate mistake could not have been possible. An empath would have the capacity of connecting with the mother's emotions and forming an accurate assessment of her plight. He or she would have felt the mother's pain without as much as a word from the victim.

So, just what causes a person to be an empath? It is estimated that a significant percentage of the population qualifies to be identified under the category of highly sensitive people. Other sources claim that close to half of all people fall under this category. This percentage drops significantly to less than twenty percent when it comes to empaths. One can say that highly sensitive people (HSPs) and empaths are cut from the same cloth since they generally possess similar characteristics. However, empaths

are a much more superior variation of highly sensitive people. They can feel things that HSPs can't.

There are several theories that try to explain what causes people to develop empathic skills. There are those who maintain that being an empath is nature rather than nurture. This group thinks that an empath can only be born and that no set of circumstances can cause a person to become one. The other group of people argues that empaths are made by circumstances. These people hold the view that people's sensitivities vary depending on the environment in which they were brought up when they were young.

Most of such individuals link traumatic and stressful experiences during childhood as the main trigger of empathic tendencies in people later in life. Irrespective of whether the cause is nature or nurture, the fact that empaths walk among us remains the same. It is healthy to think that both views are valid and that empaths can be born or made. This is because to date, there is no conclusive scientific evidence to disprove or uphold one or the other. Partial proofs are all we have regarding both views. The truth is that sometimes when we mimic the physical actions of others, say smiles, nods, etcetera, we begin to experience some of their emotions ourselves. This has been proven to be true on so many occasions. Another example is when while watching a sad movie, different people are affected differently. While others may show no emotions at all, others will be moved to the point of tears by the same clip. This observation lends credence to those who think that empaths can be nurtured by their environments .

## **Skills of Empaths**

Judging from the definition of an empath, it is easy to see how most people might be misled to believe that they are always nice people who are always concerned about the welfare of others. However, the truth is that to be or not to be nice to others is a different thing completely. Although most empaths may be nice people, there are those who may choose to use their uncommon powers for evil. This next section will look into some of the skills that are possessed by empaths with the aim of trying to paint a picture of just how powerful they may be.

### **Experts in Detecting Micro-Expressions**

The 2010 TV series 'lie to me' captured this skill very well. By skilled application of the talent of detecting micro-expressions, the Lightman group solved several mysteries and crimes. This was, of course, all staged and none of it was real. If there are people capable of such extraordinary powers, such attention to fine details virtually invisible to the common eye, these would be the empaths. An empath can pick up on the tiniest tone variations, the slightest shift of an eyebrow or an almost non-existent quiver of a lip when in the company of another.

It is common knowledge that such details are often used as accurate gauges to tell the truthfulness of what someone is saying or to weigh his thoughts or intentions. Possession of this extraordinary skill, therefore, lifts empaths above ordinary human beings seeing as though they are able to pick up on things that they can't.

### **Ability to Emotionally Gauge and Control a Gathering**

Unlike other people, empaths possess the ability to emotionally gauge any gathering. It sounds like something

that we all can do, doesn't it? The answer is no. When the rest of us use feedback such as applause, cheers, jeers, claps, boos, and others from the crowd to do so, an empath is perfectly capable of doing the same for a completely silent and unresponsive gathering. For instance, they would be able to tell if the silent group of people is receptive, indifferent or hostile from the first minute they set foot in the room. This is because they are able to pick up on the energies radiated from the individuals within. Even better, the empath will be able to tell who in the crowd is going through which emotions. He or she will be able to feel their pains, happiness, distress, or other emotions. The empath would not only know what to say but also how to say it, to sway the gathering their way. The full implication of this awesome ability will be discussed later on in this topic.

### **Intuition Before Major Turbulence**

Have you ever had that premonition that sometimes comes before something terrible happens? Or have you ever lost a loved one and felt it before you ever heard about it? For most people, the answers to these questions are simple no. Still, there is a good chance that you might have experienced one or both of these things in the past. This does not make you an empath. Empaths almost invariably have these premonitions and feelings. The main variation with regular people regarding this is that an empath would feel such even when the proceeding turbulence does not concern them. Again, it is clear to see how such a gift may be useful or harmful depending on how it is applied. Premonitions can be a very powerful tool for manipulation.

### **Highly Creative Individuals**

Empaths are very creative people. Whatever form their creativity takes, they almost always rise to the zenith of their professions. In many cases, the creativity of such

sensitive people leads them to fields such as music production acting, writing dancing or art. The reason why empaths are so successful in such fields is that they are very emotional people and they usually project these emotions in whatever it is that they indulge in. Take for example acting. A good actor must be able to indulge his or her audience. They must be able to 'feel' what the actor is trying to enact or else, they are lost in an instant. Their emotional nature means that empaths are able to captivate their audiences in such a manner. As a result, highly sensitive people make such exemplary actors. The same applies to the other forms of creativity such as music, writing or art. The audiences of these other forms of creativity similarly feel the emotions exuded by the empath.

### **They are Expressive with Non-Verbal Cues**

With empaths, the expression *actions speak louder than words* can be taken quite literally. For communication, the average person mainly depends on words with little help from non-verbal cues. However, for empaths, they are just as good if not better with non-verbal cues as they are with other communication forms. This implies that they are a lot better at getting information or ideas across.

### **Can Pick up on Hidden Motives**

To an empath's eye, sheep cannot hide under wolves' skins. Their amazing ability to experience other people's emotions makes it very difficult for them to miss a sinister motive—however well-hidden it may be. This is because they have an elevated sense of perception, not only to minute details but also to personal emotions. Part of the reason why empaths are built this way traces back to human's need for survival. As stated, one reason why empaths have heightened senses is because of suffering a traumatic childhood. In many cases, the kind of trauma is violent and

abusive in nature. In an effort to survive the abuses, empaths developed a heightened sense of their environment. They had to know from an early age who to trust and why. Empaths know all too well never to judge a book by its cover. They rely on subtler signs that are in most cases excellent judges of people's character.

## **Can Cause People to Spill Their Deepest Secret**

### **S**

Empaths have been known to possess the ability to connect with people at a very deep level. This is because they can actually experience whatever the other person is going through by feeling and sharing their emotions. For this reason, you may come across an empath who is a total stranger and within the first few minutes of conversing with them, you will already be feeling as though you are talking to an old friend. You will feel so comfortable around them because they stir this feeling within you that they understand you completely. Not even a close family member can connect with you in this manner because when empaths actually do feel your emotions, a close family member can't. Unless of course if they are empaths themselves. Chances are that you will begin divulging information that you would never dream of telling someone else when you talk with an empath. And what is more, is that you will feel very secure while doing so.

## **Manipulation Using Empath Skills**

Having highlighted and explained some of the amazing skills and abilities that empaths possess, it is necessary to look into how some of them may be applied in manipulative psychology. As stated, not all empaths are as nice as many may be led to presume. After all, they too are human, and being so, are slaves to temptations and have the shortcomings that are common to all people. This is to say

that while most of them may be nice people, others may opt to apply their abilities in a different manner. It is clear to see that such empaths are bound to do a lot more harm than the average person when they go rogue given their unique abilities.

Just imagine how powerful a manipulator can be if he can see through all your acts and pretenses, just how vulnerable you are when your deepest emotions are an open book to another, or when someone wields the power to turn you into a chatterbox that spills all your secrets by merely talking to you. Certainly, such a person has unfathomable power over you. He or she may choose to manipulate you in many different ways both directly and indirectly. Many people think that all types of manipulation are bad because it influences people to do or believe things differently. It is important to state here however that the nature of manipulations doesn't have to be negative. Depending on the motives of the manipulator, the outcome can be positive for the target too. Consider the examples below to comprehend just how empathic skills can be applied in manipulation, and whether the results are positive or negative for the target or the manipulator.

### **High Creativity Levels**

As stated, empaths are very creative people. As such, they have the capacity to 'talk' to people through their creativity, given that they are bound to be captivating. Take music for example. An empathic musician will be capable of producing music that will be loved by masses for their emotionality. Someone with such a talent has the power to manipulate people by the masses. To begin with, many people will cling onto every word of their lyrics. As a result, an empathic musician could opt to deliver any message to the masses through their lyrics. Change, sometimes even revolutionary,



has been known to be driven by messages embedded in such forms of creativity. From this, it is clear that empaths possess the capacity to bring change through different forms of creativity .

### **Detection of Micro-Expressions**

Knowing whenever or not a person is lying can be applied towards some very serious manipulation. Take for example a court case where the prosecution attorney is an empath. Even before I begin, it is quite apparent that an empathic prosecution attorney is the last thing that a defendant can wish for. Picture a murder case where the defendant is innocent but the circumstantial evidence is too compelling. The jury has to decide in the end whether to convict or release the defendant depending on evidence provided and how the case is argued by both sides. If an empathic prosecutor armed with compelling circumstantial evidence is out to hang the defendant, then the defendant stands no chance.

The first assault salvo that our prosecutor will fire would be towards the jury itself, during the opening statement of the case. He would play on their emotions however he chooses. This is since he would be able to identify those among the jury who have issues with issuing harsh sentences, those who may have very little tolerance for capital offences, those who may have had bad experiences with murderers before, those who are already prejudiced about the case, and so many other useful pieces of information about the jury. He's statements would be crafted to strengthen the resolve of those among them who are prejudiced to his side while shaking that of those prejudiced otherwise. He would play with the insecurities of those against capital punishments with the aim of bringing them on board. What would make his strategy even more potent is the fact that

he would target each member of the jury personally on an emotional level.

The second and even more important round of ammunition would be directed to the witnesses brought by the defense. The empath's capacity to read micro-expressions would be particularly helpful for this round. He would dissect every witness statement and separate the truth from the false. Having done this, the prosecutor would then capitalize on the false statements so as to weaken the defense's case. If this doesn't do the trick, the prosecutor will call his own witnesses as the final round of assault. He would look to present them to the jury in the most emotionally appealing way not only to make their statements believable but to make them irrefutable as well .

To this point, it is clear that an empathic prosecutor is hardly a fair game when it comes to trial because he would almost always land a guilty verdict. Consider now if the facts of the case remained constant and the only difference is that we have an empath for the defense attorney as opposed to the prosecutor. The manipulation would be the same, only this time skewed in the opposite direction. Given that the defendant was innocent in the first place, it means that empathic manipulation would have done some good unlike in the first case.

### **Can Cause People to Spill Their Deepest Secrets**

Think about the repercussions that such vulnerabilities might have on an individual. Spilling your deepest secrets to another person is tantamount to empowering them to manipulate you however they may wish. If for instance you tell me what spooks you, or your deepest fears, you open a way for me to use the same to push you into certain actions.

In such a situation, I may use your fears to scare you into doing something for me. I may not come out to blackmail you outright but may opt to take a subtler approach, even acting as your close friend while using the information you spilled to manipulate you .

Take for example that in your moment of vulnerability, you tell me that you fear that your spouse is being unfaithful. If I am not as good a friend as I present myself to be, I may choose to fuel your fears by also piling on my suspicions regarding the same issue based on lies. For instance, I may point out other broken marriages with the same circumstances as yours. This, of course, will be a tactical maneuver to fuel your paranoia and you can bet your last coin that it will work. This is because I will simply be reinforcing what you think is right.

Another way that empaths can manipulate others is to help them. Usually, unburdening your emotions and fears to someone goes a long way in making your worries lighter. Empaths are known to be excellent listeners and therefore the fact that you are more likely to unburden yourself to one means that they have healing power. By simply opening up to an empath in this manner, you will feel a lot lighter and free. In addition, beyond listening and understanding, an empath will try to help you to sort out your issues. He or she may do so by offering consolation, advise you on the way forward, counseling or encouragement to forge ahead depending on what you share. It is clear from this description that an empaths manipulation can go either one of two ways; negative or positive. This all boils down to the kind of person who the empath you are dealing with is.

## Chapter 4: Manipulation in Leadership



With the term leadership, most people assume that it refers to a lucrative position where one has the ultimate decision-making powers over the people they lead. While this qualifies as leadership, it hardly covers the full scope of the same. For purposes of this next section, the term must be taken holistically. This means that it should include even the most trivial, often ignored leadership roles for example when one has as few as five followers or even less. A good example of this is when the parents are out of the house and leave one sibling, often the eldest, in charge of the others. For such a case, consider the sibling left in charge as a leader. The reason why this holistic definition of leadership

is relevant for this section is that such minor positions too, require some level of influence and manipulation.

All leadership positions require some level of manipulation for efficiency. As a leader, you will need everyone under you to trust your leadership capabilities and must, therefore, present yourself in a certain manner. You must portray certain qualities that are associated with your leadership style. For instance, if you are a dictator, be dictatorial; if you are a leader for a revolution, be revolutionary; if you are a CEO or a manager of a company; be managerial; or if you are a class representative, act your capacity. Irrespective of the capacity in which you serve as a leader, manipulation to some extent is inevitable. This chapter will look into the different types and specific examples of manipulation in leadership.

Just like was the case with other forms of manipulations discussed this far, it is important to note that manipulative leadership can also take two forms. On the one hand, a leader can manipulate his or her followers with the aim of pushing them towards achieving a common goal that will serve the greater good. On the other hand, he may use his position, power, connections or title to manipulate people for the advancement of his personal selfish agenda. For this reason, manipulation in leadership can neither be lauded nor admonished. is since the end effect is clearly dependent on the manipulator and his or her goals.

## **Ruling by the Iron Fist**

This is perhaps where manipulation is required the most on the part of the rulers so as to keep their subjects in line. Examples of what should come to mind with this type of leadership include but are not limited to; dictators, monarchs, ruthless business leaders, harsh parents, among

others. What is common among all these types of leadership is that at some level and in varying degrees, they all require coercion of the people being led. Such forms of leadership thrive only where the led are deprived of their freedoms using a number of manipulative tactics. Examples of such tactics include: instilling fear by intimidating others and brainwashing, among others.

At this point, it is necessary to use an example to demonstrate this type of leadership. Consider a scenario where a coup is used to overthrow a particular government and a new dictator is in charge. History shows that more often than not, such dictators need to urgently establish a firm grip on things or else they stand the risk of losing power as fast as they got it. To do this, such dictators have to silence any and all forces that are opposed to the takeover while instilling fear to others who may entertain similar thoughts.

It may also be necessary to brainwash people's minds to make them more receptive to the doctrines of the new regime. Certain dictatorships in power today have been known to do this through national media which is often closely controlled by those in power. While some people may have a problem qualifying brainwashing as a manipulative tactic, it is clear to see how it is, in fact, a very powerful one. Convincing people to abandon their beliefs and to adopt new ones qualifies as psychological manipulation irrespective of how it is achieved .

### **Brainwashing by Certain Regimes**

Brainwashing takes several different forms. Most people, however, don't have the slightest clue on some of the ways it is achieved. They are only stuck with what they are exposed to in movies, which couldn't be further from reality.

However, it helps this section to know that brainwashing is mainly a form of re-education where coercion is the main facilitator. The person being targeted for brainwashing usually has no option but to conform. Everything about the subject is controlled; what he eats, when he eats, if and when he sleeps, even when he relieves himself. All this control is meant to break him in order to make him more receptive to the new teachings. In most cases, it must occur in a very controlled environment under total seclusion from the rest of the world.

Using the initial example of a new dictatorship however, it may not be possible to brainwash everyone in a secluded environment. This is where the newer forms of art come into play. A common tool for brainwashing at this point would be mass media. By controlling the programs that are aired, their frequencies and the lengths of time that they are aired, it is possible to attain some level of brainwashing of the masses. This, of course, would be the most ideal for our example above.

The group that would be most affected by such a tactic would be young children. This is because this group will know very little with which to contradict the information they receive on the media. Children would have no option but to believe everything that they see or hear from the controlled media. The older the target, the harder it would be for this form of brainwashing to take effect.

### **Fear and Intimidation of Subjects**

Fear is a very strong motivator to do or not to do certain things. The knowledge that there are consequences for every action taken (or inaction where there should be action) is why people act the way they do most of the time. For instance, if I know that I'll probably wake up late if I go

to bed late, I'll make a point of going to bed early if I want to get up early. Fear as a motivator is often stronger than a reward for doing something. Take, for example, that there is an official policy on punctuality. The first one is that there will be a reward for a cash bonus every week for the most consistently punctual employee. The other one is that the most consistently late employee will be laid off. Which policy do you think would be most effective in getting people to work early?

The same use of fear is sometimes necessary for leadership. As a good leader, you are responsible to ensure that everything runs smoothly and that everyone delivers according to expectations. To do so, it is necessary to introduce punitive measures that will be taken against all those who fail. For maximum effect, the implementation of these punitive measures must be strict, fair, and unbiased. As a result of being punished, the people you lead will toe the line making your work a lot easier for you. Dictators borrow from this knowledge when they carry out harsh and degrading punishments to those who are deemed defiant. In the past, extreme cases of publicized public executions by dictatorial regimes have been witnessed. This instilled mortal fear of going against the regime among the rest of the public .

Depending on how it is applied, this manipulative tactic can have either positive or negative undertones. For example, dictatorial fear and intimidation are often violent and degrading and is therefore considered negative. On the other hand, the fear of punishment for certain behaviors from parents is mostly positive as it manipulates children to act in certain desirable ways. A successful leader must always know when and how to use fear as a manipulative tool.



## **Political Manipulation**

You must have heard somewhere the statement that *politics is a dirty game*. Many people don't appreciate the gravity of this statement. It means that in politics, rules are often thrown out of the window and that anyone who comes out the victor is not always the most deserving contestant. To thrive in the political game, one needs an arsenal of dirty tricks and underhand methods up his or her sleeve. Manipulation is the main ingredient necessary to succeed in the political arena. Not only does an ambitious politician manipulate the public, but he also manipulates his rivals into playing into his tricks and also potential donors to giving generously to fund their campaigns .

Politics is never short of drama and surprising twists of events. Situations are not unheard of where certain candidates vie for certain positions, not for the purposes of winning but rather to cause others to lose. Others choose to propagate propaganda and lie in an effort to slander their opponents and attain political mileage. One common tool of manipulation when it comes to politics is the media.

### **Manipulative Campaigns**

All political campaigns are manipulative in nature. Politicians need not only to speak the part but to act it as well. In speaking, a political aspirant who is campaigning must endeavor to find out the most pressing needs of the people and make these needs their own. They have to speak like all they care about is addressing these needs if they are to stand any chance at all of winning voters over. If you take some time to listen closely to a campaign message, chances are that you will detect some clauses designed to manipulate the electorate .

The first fishy selling point that is bound to catch an inquisitive mind is the numerous promises made. A politician will promise you heaven if he has to, provided that that is what it will take to land your vote. Here, exaggeration is a manipulative tactic for those who are not so perceptive or inquisitive. They will rush to pick their choice of a candidate without examining the promises made. In the end, such voters end up being disappointed having fallen for unrealistic expectations.

As stated earlier, politicians also need to look the part when they campaign. They have to present themselves as the people servants that they always paint themselves to be. This is to say that a politician's demeanor must complement rather than contradict their statements. Of course, all this acting is to manipulate the public to believe the picture of them that they try so hard to paint. They have to take the popular route even when it is not one that they individually believe in. a good example is how politicians are always on the frontline to condemn vices in society, how they are always the first to laud achievements and how they always have calculated opinions about everything. All this showmanship is to manipulate the public to vote on their side.

### **Propaganda and Slander**

Have you ever heard of the saying about *calling a dog a bad name and then killing it*? This is a game that politicians play on their adversaries. To rob them of political support, they have to find a way of manipulating the voters into believing that their preferred candidates are not worthy of their support. This manipulation can be achieved through a number of different ways. The most common one employed by politicians involves leaking negative information related to their political nemeses. It doesn't matter whether the

leaked information is true or not, mudslinging always works to the detriment of the target. Most people will believe such propaganda without making any effort to verify it. In this way, they would have been manipulated successfully to withdraw their support from their favorite candidates.

It doesn't matter if the lies can be proven as such otherwise. Politicians will always go for the kill knowing very well that it will be hard to recover from the slander irrespective of the accuracy of the information used. As such, it essentially acts as a knockout blow to a political adversary. The same applies to the mind that is swayed as a result of propaganda. Whereas some may be able to reconsider and recommit their support after ascertaining the accuracy of the information, a majority of the other voters may be unable to do so. The well will have already been poisoned and such individuals will always have doubts regarding their candidates.

Political moves are always tactical. As such, you should expect that such mudslinging will be done in a manner and at a time that it is bound to inflict the worst effect. The strategy chosen ensures that the manipulation of people's minds is the most effective.

### **Luring Campaign Financiers**

Running a political campaign can be a very expensive affair. Depending on the seat in contention, the budgets of such endeavors have been known to run well into several millions of dollars. An expected example is when one is running for the presidency of a country. Given the wide geographical region to be covered along with extended logistical and other costs, running such campaigns is always expensive. As such, very few people can successfully fund their

campaigns out of their pockets. They depend on political financiers to do this.

There are several tactics that politicians use to urge financiers to make generous donations to their campaigns. The most common one of them capitalizes on the good old give and take arrangement. This is where both sides come to an agreement as to who gets what and everyone leaves the table satisfied. This strategy involves a lot of manipulation that goes on both ways. This is because both parties involved are always looking to benefit the most from the deal and must, therefore, craft their proposals and offers so persuasively.

Beginning with how a politician manipulates the financiers, he will begin by studying their businesses to establish their most urgent desires. This is because a good number of such political financiers are business moguls looking to further their interests. If this is not the case and the financier has no interest in business, the politician will endeavor to find out what it is the potential donor wants. Everyone has got needs and these needs are what are used by politicians as leverage to secure funding for their expensive campaigns. Having acquired this information, the politician then promises to deliver them once he is elected depending on the size of donations made.

This strategy often secures fat donations, especially where the candidate involved has got good prospects of actually winning. Although illegal, part of such deals sometimes involves the promise of lucrative government tenders and other profitable incentives such as tax breaks. When the carrot does not work, the stick probably will. If the potential donors don't buy the offers made, the politician may be forced to switch to a different manipulation tactic. This is

one of the threats and intimidation. For instance, the politician may promise hard times for them and their businesses if and when he gets in office. This is bound to capture their attention if there is any realistic chance of the candidate pulling it off. All these counts as manipulation tactics although the intentions are quite clear to see, even for the target .

The fact that the donor has something that the politician so desires means that the manipulation can just as well go the other way. For instance, the donor can come to the table with certain demands if he is to make any reasonable donation. This is often the case when the politician does not have much leverage and when his or her prospects of winning are not that good. As such, such a politician will most likely have pegged all their campaign on such a donation and will, therefore, most likely bend to any demands made by the donor.

### **Decoy Candidates**

This manipulation tactic is common when a competitor wishes to weaken his or her opponent by dividing his or her voter strong-base. This is a manipulative tactic because the voters will be blinded as to the true intentions of such a candidate. Voters inclined towards a particular political side, or certain political ideals will, therefore, be presented with a dilemma of two equally desirable options. By dividing the voters in such a manner, both candidates who are aligned either regionally, ethnically, racially, ideally, or in any other way, end up losing. This paves a direct way to the third manipulative candidate whose idea it was to split the voters in the first place.

In politics, this manipulation tactic takes advantage of a phenomenon called the spoiler effect. This is when apart

from the two main candidates; there is an option for a third, usually the weakest with no chances of winning. The third candidate is likely to spoil the votes for one of the other two main candidates. More often than not, the likely victim among the remaining two candidates is usually the one whose political ideals align with those of the third candidate. This is because the similarity of their political ideals will likely lead to the candidate losing some of their voters to the third candidate.

Politicians are not above deliberately running such candidates with the aim of achieving the described results. This is the manipulation of voters at its highest form. This is because the voters will not in the least be suspicious of such an activity. They cannot begin to comprehend how someone can waste time, money and resources all for a lost cause. You can see how trying to convince them otherwise may prove to be difficult.

### **Media and Politics**

Media has both a positive and a negative angle when it comes to politics. It may be used to promote transparency and democracy on one hand or hinder the same on the other. Given that most media houses are profit-oriented, coverage ends up being sold to the highest bidder, therefore, undermining democracy due to bias. Political influence has a direct relation to the choices the media make concerning the adverts. The political adverts mostly influence public viewers who are loyal to the media firm through the entertainment they run. They, therefore, vote for the politician with respect to the loyalty to the media firm and not the policies given by the politician. Most of these viewers are regarded as “swing voters” as the media influence them into making their choices. This is among the negative consequences of media in politics.

On the other hand, unbiased media coverage gives the voters all the required information that is required to enable them to pick their desired candidates. This is what the ideal role of media in politics should be. Sadly, this is far from the case. As stated, rich politicians are favored where they are given more coverage or their opponents slandered through the same media outlets.

Another media frontier that has had a meteoric rise recently is the sector of social media. This includes sites like Facebook and Twitter. Given their ballooning subscriptions internationally, the same social media sites have become targets for political manipulators. A good example of this effect is the last United States elections where Donald Trump was elected president. Although unverified, there were unverified claims of voter manipulation and foreign collusions. If a country like the United States can be vulnerable to media manipulation to sway political views, which country is immune?

## **Voluntary Leadership**

At one point or another, you must have been in a situation where a volunteer was required among your group to oversee a particular task. This is often the case where the activities you are involved in are non-profit in nature and as such, the success of the same is pegged on the goodwill of all those who are involved. Consider, for example, that there is an environment watch group that operates in your area. Every Saturday, they invite volunteers to take part in some pre-planned tasks aimed at protecting or preserving the environment. A Saturday, you volunteer as it is your habit and the task at hand is to plant trees. You are split into groups and for each group; a volunteer is required to take a supervisory role over the rest. You volunteer for this position and you are now responsible for your group.

While such a position may not be viewed by many people as a leadership position, it has all the characteristics. First is that you will be responsible for ensuring that everyone does what is expected of them, you will be responsible for assigning them various tasks, any tools assigned for use will be under your care, you will determine the pace of work to ensure that you complete the work on time, and finally, you will be responsible for the safety of everyone involved. These and other responsibilities qualify the voluntary leadership position as any other type of leadership .

### **Marshaling People**

Manipulation is required to pull off such an undertaking. Seeing as though the position is temporary and doesn't come with the powers that often come with other leadership positions, it is fair to expect some lack of cooperation or motivation from the other team members. As a team leader, you will be required to come up with ways to ensure that this does not come in the way of you achieving your target goals. Considering that you are all volunteers, the application of punitive measures against some group members may be out of the question. What then will you do to win them over?

One way of ensuring this would be to apply tactics that may motivate them to work hard. The best strategy to do so would be to lead by example. If your group sees how dedicated you are and how hard you work, soon your motivation will begin to rub off on them. Rather than order them around and lazy around in the name of supervising, you should get your hands dirty and lead from the front. This is likely to manipulate them to work instead of just telling them to. What this strategy capitalizes on is humanity's compassion. Naturally, people will not stand aside and let another slave away with all the work. For this



reason, showing the willingness to go it alone means that you will soon pull them to join you.

## **Religious Leadership**

So, religious leaders are some of the most upright and most straightforward people on earth? Think again. How else do you get people to believe, sometimes almost fanatically, based only on faith? Believe me when I tell you that serious manipulation and brainwashing goes on within the hallowed halls of worship. Although this is a largely controversial topic, this section will be based on purely objective observations of the teachings of religion and how it is that they command and maintain such a huge following. The main goal here is to show how some religious teachings, beliefs or practices are manipulative in nature. Absolutely no judgment is passed as to their validity, practicality, or truth as this is personal.

Most religions in the world have the same general format in terms of what is taught and how followers must behave. This implies that for all of them, there is a generally accepted way of life that ought to be followed. Anyone who goes against this way of life is deemed a deviant. Often, there is a guide or some sort of reference in which are detailed the dos and the don'ts of that particular religion.

For Christians, this guide is the Bible, for Jews, the Talmud and for Muslims, it is the Quran. These references are considered holy and as such, everything contained within their pages deemed inspired and true. No one is allowed to question their validity.

Manipulation comes in the form of rewards and punishments. In Christianity for instance, Heaven is the

ultimate promise for all those who live according to its teachings. And as icing to the cake, God blesses those who abide by him even during their lifetimes. Such a promise alone is enough to move people to toe the Christian line. After all, who doesn't want to go to heaven with a promise of good and everlasting tidings? If this is not enough, there is the promise of hell for all the deviants. This is bound to be an even greater motivation to stick to Christian ideals. An everlasting afterlife of torment and grief is hardly any man's wish. Most religions have a variation of this in their teachings.

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## Chapter 5: The Con



Many people have no idea what the term con stands for. They assume that it represents a convict. In real sense, the word con artist stands for confidence artists. This is because confidence is the main ingredient for a successful scam. In a well-executed scam, the target never realizes in many cases that they have been conned. They just chalk it down to some bad luck and therefore remain potential targets for future scams. It is important to recognize that not even the best among us are immune from such tricks. The con artist preys on some of the fundamental human needs thereby leveling the playing field. This is to say that under the right set of circumstances, everyone, including the brightest among us, can be scammed.

Pulling off a successful con trick requires a mastery of a myriad of manipulation tactics. An experienced con will play on your every emotion to get you to part with your valued possession. You will be surprised at the number of people, probably you included, who believe in their personal immunity to trickery by cons. It is precisely this misplaced confidence in self that sets you up to fail in the first place. If one is aware that he or she is vulnerable to cons, then the person would have his or her guard up most of the time. Keeping their guard up means that such individuals limit the chances of their being taken advantage of by the con artist.

Having introduced the con and how vulnerable we all are to his gimmicks, it is now necessary to pinpoint how the game ties to the art of psychological manipulation. There is an innate need for all humans to believe in something. This need is honed from a very young age when a child is totally dependent on the parent and believes without a doubt that the parent is there for all his needs. This need evolves never wanes as one grows up. Rather, it morphs into another form that is just as strong. It varies from one person to the next, for example, one person may want to believe in the goodness of fellow human beings, others will want to swear to the existence of justice.

The con artist knows this and he crafts his game to fit your need. The first step of any well-executed con game would, therefore, be the establishment of the needs of the target. Having established the needs, the artist will look to present him or herself in such a way as to convince the target that they are the true embodiment of the fulfillment of their needs. This forms the set-up part of the plan where the target is lured in slowly and with skills honed over a long time. Successful execution of this stage means that the target is hooked.

It is clear from these first steps of the con artist's game that it is fully pegged on manipulation. It never includes the use of force since the marks always give willingly having been fully persuaded of the legitimacy of the scam. The artist will look to play with your emotions right from the start with the aim of using them to pull your ropes as a puppeteer does with his puppets. In the following sections, specific con scams have been selected and will be dissected in detail for you to observe just how manipulation works. For most of them, you will notice that the target stands no chance at all.

Consider, for example, that you are a parent with a child who has drug problems. It won't take much for a determined con to establish this and use it to scam you. A way that may be used to establish potential targets regarding this issue would be perhaps to hang out in support groups. If you are well off and your child happens to be attending the support group, it is just a matter of time before you fall under the scammer's radar. Cons sometimes work in groups and therefore, you should be very wary of promising referrals to experts that come out of the blue yet seem to address your very immediate needs.

By attending such groups, the con carefully observes all those attending and sizes them up using simple observable features such as their general demeanor. From this, he would narrow down his targets since he would want to mark only those who will be worth his while. If they are working in groups, one of them will attend the group as a victim for a closer analysis of the potential targets. Having narrowed down his marks, the con will use different ways to establish some form of connection with them. Of course, none of these connection building methods will strike the marks as staged or even remotely pre-planned. They will seem purely coincidental.

It is not a big leap from befriending your child to finding out some details about you. Having established your identity and routines, the second con steps in to manipulate you. You may bump into him one morning as you exit your favorite coffee shop where you 'accidentally' spill some on him. "Sorry, I must have been very preoccupied with my thoughts; I didn't see you coming out." He will be very profuse in his apologies. He pulls out a napkin from his jacket pocket and out along with it falls a card. "Sorry, I am very clumsy today." Naturally, you would also offer your apologies as you bend to help him pick up his card. "Oh! You can keep that, just in case you feel inclined to send me money for the dry cleaners." He jokes as he extends a hand to greet you. "Dr. Jeffrey Hope, Psychologist and self-help expert." He is just what you need! The hook is tossed.

## **The Three Card Monte**

The Three Card Monte is one of the oldest scams around. The scammer requires just a few minutes of your time to clean you off, of course depending on your complacency. The manipulative tool used for the game is one's greed or the desire to make quick money without working for it. In the game, the target will be set-up into believing there is some simple money to be won by merely doing some little keen observation. The apparent simplicity of the game is the first thing that is bound to capture the attention of the mark (target).

The game involves the use of three cards, one of them being the money card. The money card is often the ace of spades or a queen. The idea is to positively identify the location of the money card after they have been moved around the table a few times. In the game, it is always very simple to trace the movements of every card because their

motions are quite simple and straightforward. You should be very wary at this point not to be sucked into the game because this simplicity is merely part of the ruse to lure unsuspecting targets.

To improve their believability, the cons of running the scam of the Three Card Monte work in packs. It often requires the input of more than three confidence artists to pull it off. However, when the game is set up in a busy location, it may require about six artists. Each one of them knows their roles very well. There is, of course, the main one, whose job is to throw the cards on the table and move them around, accepts bets and rewards the winners. At least one of them will pose as a player (decoy target) and the last one will be the lookout.

It is very difficult to set up a game and land a genuine target as the first player. For this reason, the first few games of a three-card monte game are between the cons themselves. These games are played to encourage onlookers (potential genuine targets), to take part. Often, the decoy target will win a lot putting the notion in the minds of the unsuspecting onlookers that they could also do the same. At his point, there may also be a decoy onlooker who will try his luck and win. In most cases, this 'lucky' onlooker will be enough to make you want to try your luck. In other words, you will have been hooked and your first bet may as well be the first step down a very slippery slope.

The way that the main con drops the cards on the table will suggest a clear pattern although this is hardly the case. From an outsider's point of view, he will appear to drop them sequentially from the bottom card to the top one. The truth of the matter, however, is that the con has the ability to drop either the top card or the bottom one at will. You can be sure that the dropping is the first ruse, if not the main

one. The target will be misled from the beginning and will continue to follow the wrong card all along. When well-executed, not even the decoy targets can accurately tell the location of the money card. They do so with the help of subtle signs from the main con and therefore their apparent 'winning streak' designed to lure others.

If an experienced con who is in on the game cannot accurately tell the location of the money card, what are the odds of an outsider finding it? Obviously, the odds are very small. The few chances that an outsider will find it will be by pure luck. Even when they do, there is yet another trick up the sleeves of the cons. It is the job of the main con to accept bets placed by the players. In many cases, the rule is to accept the largest bet on every location (although he may choose to accept all). This means that even in the off chance that you accurately pick the location of the money card; there is a chance that you may be out-staked. This is precisely what happens. One of the decoy targets will promptly place a bet higher than yours essentially nullifying yours. This is, of course, the bet that will be accepted by the main con. This trickery only shows how far con artists will go to get what they want. In many cases, however, you will occasionally be let to win just to keep you playing long enough to be milked bone dry.

The Three Card Monte is a classic example of how a con employs manipulation tactics to fleece their targets. The con knows that since money is very important, it is bound to rank high on the list of needs for most people. Having identified the need, he presents himself as the perfect vehicle to fulfill it without the need of breaking a sweat. He presents you with choreographed 'evidence' to prove its validity, and by so doing, he lures you in. You are set-up from the word go and they have a foolproof plan to keep



their money even for the few instances when you become lucky.

## **The Spanish Prisoner**

This is another common con trick that has many variations to it. Its wide application is demonstrated by how easily it morphs and adapts to changes in technology. Many people have fallen prey to the trick in one of its many variations. Like the Three Card Monte, the Spanish prisoner trick looks to benefit from people's greed to make quick and easy bucks. Also, it preys on some people's innate need to trust fellow human beings. The Spanish prisoner also takes advantage of people's good nature to manipulate and steal from them.

In the trick, the con identifies his target based on all the things stated to be the determiners of the success of the trick. For instance, some of the most appealing targets would be those that are in need of money. This first qualification of targeting is a very wide net that will capture almost anybody. Very few people will pass up the opportunity of making some good money for something that seems so simple. There are people who always want to believe in the goodness of humanity. Such people are trusting of others and reserve their judgment of others until when they have facts. Until then, they prefer to give their fellow human beings the benefit of the doubt. Well, one chance is all a conman needs. The third quality is people with high sensitivity. These are people who are sympathetic to others and who will go out of their way to help others who are in need.

Having identified the perfect target, the con makes his move. He approaches the target and strikes up a casual

conversation aimed at making acquaintance. Assuming that you are the intended target, you can expect that he would have taken his time to study you. He would know your likes, hobbies and everything else that may be required to befriend you. The more thorough ones will go as far as finding out about some of your relatives or friends so that they hit closer home when they approach. For instance, you are likely to be more interested during your conversation, he happens to know your brother Michael since they went to school together. "So how is Mike nowadays? I bet he went professional. The guy was the best quarterback I ever saw." He might add knowing that you lost your brother a few years after college. This statement is meant to disarm you. If executed properly, your brain will be immediately manipulated into thinking that you are talking with a familiar person as opposed to a complete stranger. He would have succeeded in making you lower your guard down and even more importantly, caused you to trust him a little more. After all, he knows Michael, even calls him Mike. He seems genuinely sad when you inform him that your brother, his friend, Mike passed away shortly after college. It is everything he can do to hold back the tears from running down his face.

The Spanish prisoner requires a great deal of patience. Building trust in the target is the key to its successful execution. After a few 'run-ins' and casual conversations with him, you begin to get comfortable around him. By now, you have heard about his work abroad and how he came back home after some unpleasant experience with some very bad guys. "The world would be a much better place if all people were genuine like you." He will say after narrating his sad experience. You feel sad for him but that is all you can do to help. Having become friends, you begin sharing more things since you now trust him and he trusts you. All

this time he has proven to be a genuine friend, offering to take your pet dog to the vet for his shots and does just that. That is just a single instance where he has been of assistance to you.

When he is confident that he has earned your trust, he trusts you with a secret, one that is bound to be very lucrative if immediate action is taken. He tells you that while he was working abroad, he became very close with his boss, a very wealthy and generous man who took him under his wing when he had nothing. After a few well-fabricated stories of how his boss might just as well be Jesus or Mohamed the prophet, he moves in for the kill. You will find out that his former boss was arrested and imprisoned by the same people who caused him trouble when he was abroad. He tells you that for the security of the prisoner, his identity remains hidden. He goes on to tell you that his former boss is looking for a way out of prison and a place to stay in exile, which happens to be your country.

He has been tasked with seeing to it that everything falls in place and he has even identified an ideal location for his wealthy boss to reside when he jets in. The only problem is that some money is required to bribe a few officials here and there to secure his release. He swears that as soon as his boss is released, it would be home-free and he would pay back very generously for any help extended. Rest assured that a conman would know full well that his target is well capable of footing the asking price for a Spanish prisoner heist; otherwise, he would not be targeted in the first place.

From this example, it is clear that every step is a calculated move. From the completely 'coincidental' meeting to the 'casual' conversations you had. They were all part of setting

the stage. The con patiently builds trust while all the while; he is keen to compliment the target on some of their good qualities such as generosity and a good heart. You wouldn't want to prove him wrong after this sincerely accurate observation about you. The hook is tossed and you are baited.

## **The Pickpocket**

Although pickpockets are essentially thieves, they vary from the rest due to the skills required to execute a flawless pickpocket stunt. Other types of theft may require the use of brute force or speed to access the targeted items. However, with pickpocketing, proper perception, and manipulation of the subjects feature a great deal. Since pickpockets carry out their trades from close quarters, they need to divert the attention of potential marks before they make their moves. It is very essential that the said diversion of attention be done well as the success of the mission is dependent on it. For example, if the potential target is only momentarily distracted and resumes his normal attention before the stunt is complete, the pickpocket risks a lot more than the failure of the mission.

It is precisely for this reason that some pickpockets work in pairs or even more in other situations. They split their tasks so that when one is focused on distracting the mark, the other is busy stealing the targeted item such as watch, wallet, phone, cash, and etcetera. The executioner is often so fast lest the target regains his or her consciousness before the targeted item is acquired. A common method of distraction used, for example when the target items are watches, wallets, or phones, is to bump into the mark. The bumping, of course, will be done on the opposite side from the location of the targeted item. This shifts the target's

attention in this direction allowing the other con to snatch the targeted item.

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# Chapter 6: Specific Ways of Mind Control



This chapter aims at looking at some of the specific ways that are used to control the minds of others. Specifically, the section will address hypnosis, deception, persuasion, and brainwashing as mind control techniques.

## **Brainwashing**

Brainwashing has been mentioned earlier under the section on manipulation in leadership. Here, we will explore the tactic deeper not only with the aim of demystifying it, but also to qualify it as a manipulation tactic. As the name suggests brainwashing involves ways of making people denounce or forget their beliefs and replace these with new

ones. From this definition alone, it is clear that it is a very strong form of manipulation. Like all the other forms of manipulation, brainwashing has both positive and negative sides. The positive, for example, maybe as a result of the necessity for survival such as when you relocate to a new environment. Over time, the way of life of your new acquaintances will rub off on you as you struggle to fit in.

Of interest to us in this section, however, are two forms of brainwashing. The first one has already been discussed and it involves the brainwashing of masses through media. The second one is forced and is often done at a personal level since it requires a high level of seclusion for success. The former form of brainwashing requires a medium that is accessible by most people such as the radio or any other form of mass media. To successfully execute it, the audiences of such media are limited in their choices so that they have no other choice of media. This way, they have to listen or watch any brainwashing programs that are aired. Another feature is the repetitive play of related programs. The human mind is far more malleable than most people care to think. If it is taught something repeatedly for so long it begins to internalize the teachings, taking them as truths. After all, truths are relative.

The second, more forceful form of brainwashing takes advantage of one's emotional vulnerability to plant new thoughts and ideas in the mind of someone. The process involves putting one in complete seclusion from the world, then using different tactics to break them down both emotionally. To achieve the required state of emotional breakdown for brainwashing to occur, physical abuse of the subjects is often resorted to. This involves actions such as the denial of sleep, starvation, invasion of personal space, beatings, among others. The target will be exposed to such

horrible conditions for as long as it takes to make them arrive at a point where they give up in life. While being emotionally broken down, they are constantly reminded that they are wrong about everything and that they are worthless. Sooner or later, the subjects come to believe this and find that they have nothing more to live for.

This is when the next stage of brainwashing is initiated. The subject, having given up on life, is offered a way out. Naturally, under the conditions, the person will cling to anything and will, therefore, be receptive to anything that he is told. While the new ideals are being imparted, the subject will be positively reinforced for showing initiative and for applying them. This is a move that is aimed at permanence. The isolation is necessary so that the 'molding process' is not affected by the external environment or other people.

## **Hypnosis**

Hypnosis is a voluntary association between the hypnotist and the hypnotized where the former 'leads' the latter into new realities through suggestions that are thought manipulative. Hypnosis has many applications away from the entertainment purposes that many people are familiar with. A fast-developing application of hypnosis is for medical purposes. A hypnotist can 'lead' a patient in pain to realities where they are cured of their pain and sure enough, the healing manifests physically. This manipulation is perhaps related to the art of placebo treatment where patients have been observed to heal despite being treated with drugs that are not active.

It is not the positive uses such as the therapeutic applications of hypnosis that we are concerned with. Our concern is when the hypnotist begins to manipulate the



target for his or her own good. At some point, the hypnotist can control the subject even against their will and this is where the line has to be drawn. To understand how this may be arrived at, it is necessary to explain precisely how hypnosis works. The hypnotist does not induce the state on a person but rather guides them slowly towards it. This means that it is ultimately upon you and not the hypnotist if or not you will get hypnotized.

How this works is that the hypnotist will guide you through suggestions to achieve an altered mental state where you will become open to suggestions and control. At this altered state, the hypnotist can suggest, for instance, that you forget that you are in pain. When you forget, the pain actually ceases to manifest physically. Given such power over you, it means that the hypnotist may suggest anything and you will do it. At this point in hypnosis, you basically become the hypnotist's puppet who will do or move as instructed.

Research shows that apart from enabling one to acquire an altered mental state, hypnosis can also be used to alter peoples' thoughts on various issues. This is precisely where hypnotic manipulation sets in. The moment another person tries to influence your thoughts or perceptions about something, this is deemed as manipulation. It is even more so the case when the influenced person is put in a vulnerable position, which for our case is hypnosis.

## **Persuasion**

Persuasion may not strike many people as a mind-control technique. This is because the textbook definition of the term means that one person convinces the other one to do something. However, a significant amount of manipulation can be achieved through persuasion as will be shown in this

section. Persuasion can be achieved in several different ways. The first and most common one is through reasoning with your target. Take for instance, that you get in an argument with another person, a fellow traveler, about which route to take. Each one of you suggests a different route for different reasons and one has to convince the other if the journey is to continue. By employing persuasion through reasoning, you may bring up points such as; “this road is far shorter than the one you are suggesting, taking it will save us a lot of money in fuel.” Or “your road is quite rough and will make for a very bumpy ride.” By giving compelling reasons why your option is the desirable one, you look to manipulate your companion.

Another way of persuasion is through charm. Consider a situation where you are attracted to a lady and would like to take her out on a date. Your request to do that is turned down the first time. What do you do? You employ persuasive skills by ‘upping your game’ and charming her into submission. If she is a regular acquaintance of yours, for example, you could decide to be extra friendly and warm to her. If your charming succeeds in landing you your date, you will have persuaded your target through charm .

Persuasion can also be achieved through persistence. This is a common tactic where you get what you want by tiring someone into submission. Parents are often the victims of this form of persuasion from their children. A child will pester a parent about a new toy on sale for days on end without yielding. Finally, the parent grows tired of all the pestering and decides to buy the toy only to shut the kid up before he or she goes mad. Believe it or not, the child will have persuaded the parent through unending persistence to give in to their requests. This also qualifies as manipulation.

The other form of persuasion is more diabolical in nature. This is one that only works when you have something against your target. It has been known to work very well since the persuader is always the one with all the cards and therefore calls the shots. A common form of this kind of persuasion is by threatening to expose one's infidelity to the public if they don't comply with your demands. The common term for such is blackmail. Through blackmail, you can get someone to do your bidding in exchange for your discretion. This, therefore, qualifies it as a form of manipulation or mind-control .

A huge amount of all human interactions involve persuasion. So prevalent is this mind-control technique that most people are seldom aware of its existence, let alone appreciate its gravity. When you try to buy something from a business person, each one of you is trying to persuade the other one. The businessman may be trying to persuade you that a particular item is a top quality and you may be trying to get him to lower the price. When you talk about politics with your friend or colleague, you may be trying to persuade him or her to view things from your perspective. Defense attorneys are always trying to persuade the jury of their clients' innocence while prosecutors try to persuade them of the opposite. From these few examples, it is clear that persuasion makes a significant portion of our day to day lives.

## **Deception**

Deception also qualifies as a manipulation tactic. This is where a person tells lies to another person with the aim of causing them to alter their perceptions or actions. In making any decisions based on the deceit, the person who is deceived will not have accurate information to go with. This means that the deceiver holds the power to skew their

perceptions or decisions anyhow they wish. Deception manifests in several different ways just like the other mind-control techniques that have been discussed. The first one is through mudslinging and slander which was covered under manipulation in leadership. This is a form of deceit used to sway the minds of the electorate regarding various candidates for different elective positions.

The second type of deceit is sleight of hand which was covered under manipulation in the Three Card Monte. This was deceit for the main purpose of stealing from the victim. Most manipulation tactics that have been discussed this deeply and have some level of deceit in them. This is because often, to successfully manipulate someone, you have to keep your real intentions hidden irrespective of who you are dealing with. It doesn't matter if you are dealing with your best friend or your spouse; any form of manipulation is deceit and is a recipe for chaos if discovered.

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## **Chapter 7: How to Spot a Manipulator**

Having discussed the various ways in which people manipulate others, it is only fair to educate you on how to be more vigilant next time. As has been shown thus far, emotions are what manipulators target. We all have emotions albeit in varying degrees and for this reason, we are all exposed. Although none of us is immune to manipulations, there is certainly something we can do to ensure that we don't fall for them every time someone tries to manipulate us. This next section will highlight some of the ways that can be helpful in spotting and, hopefully evading a manipulator.

Maybe it is your loving spouse who you apparently can't ever please or your child who so yearns for that bicycle he's been pestering you about for so long, perhaps it is your local coffee vendor or your or a total stranger who vends his merchandise by the roadside, maybe it is your school principal or your local pastor, possibly your best friend or your arch-nemesis, it is necessary to beware of your associations lest you fall for manipulations. However, it is important to note that all forms of manipulations are negative. As such, they are not all to be shunned. An example of a positive manipulation tactic is such as when a parent promises their child something for good grades at school.

It is important though to be aware of other people's intentions and be the final judge of whether or not we want to proceed with a particular course of action. If, for instance,

you are clear that you are being manipulated and nevertheless are comfortable with it, then, by all means, allow it to go on. The advantage of this is that the manipulation will go on under your own terms and you can opt-out any moment you want. The problem, however, is that this may not be considered as manipulation. Many people may argue that the moment the target is conscious of the tricks but allows them to go on anyway; it ceases to be manipulation seeing as though they will have a lot more control over the situation.

As you must have gathered by now, manipulation preys on people's emotions. As such, there are certain characteristics that are more likely to be present in a manipulator. This is not to say that these characteristics are sure pointers to such people. Rather, they are general and therefore play with the law of averages.

When you see one or more of these characteristics in a person whom you are associated with, be very careful. Note that the more of these traits that manifest in a person; the more likely that you are dealing with a manipulator. However, the opposite is also quite possible since you may find a person with all these characteristics and yet is not involved in any manipulation. This next section will outline and explain the said traits with relevant examples where possible.

Afterward, everything that has been addressed to this point will be linked to the said traits in an effort to find a common pattern. Three of the main traits that will be discussed are the dark triad, a mixture of which is deemed to bring out the best environment for the development of the most potent manipulators. These are; psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism. The other traits that will be discussed

such as charisma and nonchalance are more character observations than personal traits. They are nonetheless also strong pointers to manipulators.

## **Traits of Manipulators**

### **The Psychopath**

The word psychopath is a descriptive term for a person who shows a complete lack of empathy towards other people or animals. Such a person will go through life in a manner that is completely void of feelings. A psychopath will, for this reason, find it very difficult to form any genuine attachments with other people. This is because deep attachments require emotions that are never a strong suit for a clinical psychopath. For them, the main motivation for striking acquaintances with others would be purely for convenience purposes. This is to say that people with psychopathic tendencies are likely to initiate friendships, acquaintances, or relationships with others only when they have something to gain from such arrangements.

The initial description of a psychopath is likely to mislead people into thinking that whenever a person is so deeply involved with others, there is no chance of them being psychopaths. This could not be further from the truth. As a matter of fact, psychopaths can be some of the best actors that we have around. They are able to get into seemingly very committed relationships and pull them off quite successfully. Psychopaths masquerade among us as devoted husbands, loving fathers, obedient children, loving siblings, loyal friends, among other very desirable characters. On the flip side, they also exist as the cold-blooded, vicious and heartless characters who many people take them to be.

Often in such situations, their psychopathic tendencies are suppressed but they exist nonetheless.

There are certain factors that are used to determine whether or not a person is psychopathic. These are; lack of responsibility, incapable of remorse or guilt, tendency to be promiscuous, charisma, superficially charming, among others. It is clear that all these determinants suggest the capacity and dispensation to manipulate others. A lack of responsibility (for both self and others), for instance, shows that a psychopath doesn't in the least bit mind the repercussions of their actions. The incapacity to show remorse shows that they don't care about the feelings of those people that they hurt or manipulate for their personal gains. The tendency for promiscuity suggests that psychopaths will go to any lengths to satisfy their own urges, however dark they may be. They will manipulate anyone anyhow if that is what it takes to achieve this satisfaction. Finally, the superficial charm is the perfect recipe to build the necessary trust required for manipulation.

The absence of remorse, guilt, or emotions means that psychopaths can be the most objective people you can find. Not only are they quick to make up their minds, but they are also more likely to stick to a plan once it is settled upon. These qualities give them the potential to be some of the most powerful manipulators around. This is because a lack of empathy means that they will settle for the best targets irrespective of how vulnerable they are. Where most people might have ethical dilemmas, psychopaths will sail through quite easily. A good example is if the perfect mark for your guile manipulation is a helpless old lady. The psychopath will settle upon the mark without as much as a second thought where most other people will rethink their options .



Research shows that many con artists have a considerable amount of psychopathic tendencies. Psychopathy is regarded as one of the qualities that make for a successful con. This is because, for proper manipulation of their targets, cons must not become too attached to their marks lest they start getting concerned about them. If this happens, they may spare them some of the heartless manipulative tactics, therefore, risking their whole plan. In this situation, a good conman will be able to look you in the eye and promise you heaven as he ushers you through the fiery gates of hell.

Having described the psychopath, it is now clear how you can spot someone who portrays such tendencies. If you are acquainted with someone, for example, who strikes you as heartless or inconsiderate, think twice about your associations. If your best friend seldom regrets his or her actions however bad they may be, you may be dealing with a psychopath who will manipulate you the first chance they get. If your spouse is so good at superficial charm and face value but falls short when it comes to matters that require real commitment, rethink your engagement with such a person.

### **The Narcissist**

When a person is termed as a narcissist, it means that the person is so self-centered as to blatantly ignore the feelings or the wellbeing of others around them. It is a common human trait to put one's feelings, needs and emotions above those of others. However, narcissists take this self-love to a whole new level. They completely disregard other people around them and expect to be exalted and praised by others. This self-centeredness makes narcissists the objects of ridicule and scorn from others. Nobody loves

people who blow their own horns while stepping on others to reach their target destinations.

Given their self-centered natures and their insatiable urges for approval from others, narcissists are very competitive people. More often than not, they are willing to do whatever it takes to accomplish their goals even if it means brushing others the wrong way. It, therefore, goes without saying that a narcissist won't hesitate to use others to further their selfish agenda. What is more, they would do so without showing an iota of remorse for doing so especially when they get the results, they wanted in the first place .

There are certain characteristics that predispose people with narcissistic tendencies towards the manipulation of their fellow human beings. These include but are not limited to; a tendency to live lavishly, a selfish sense of entitlement, larger than life self-worth, total disregard for others, and overly competitive. A closer consideration of these narcissistic traits shows that people who possess them are more likely to manipulate others. The first one, for instance, is a tendency to live lavishly. In order to afford an extravagant lifestyle, one must first have the means to afford it. This fact suggests that the person must be a great achiever and a very ambitious person. Honest hard work alone might afford one such a lifestyle but hardly so. Even if an honest hard worker could afford it chances are that he or she would not live extravagantly. That leaves us with the other group of individuals, the narcissistic ones. This group of people will go to any lengths including malicious manipulation to maintain their status.

In the world today, news abound of corrupt individuals who despite having enough wealth to last them ten lifetimes, still go on stealing and amassing even more wealth. In many

cases, the people being stolen from are very poor and often have no means of knowing, let alone defending themselves against such evil people. It is obvious that such thieves lack even the slightest shred of humanity within them and they are overly entitled. This is despite the fact that what they seek is totally unnecessary for them yet could mean the world for others. These people are often the worst manipulators. They may cheat and lie to protect their tarnished images by making small donations here and there to try and mask their greed. Often, such donations may double up as a ploy to achieve something bigger, say a political seat or something else.

Have you ever met that person who seems to think that the essence of life is coming out on top of every situation? To them, anything and everything is a competition. How big of a house do you own? How much money do you make? Which schools do your children attend? What car do you drive? How big was the party you hosted? How many approvals did you get? (Never mind that you both failed in this endeavor, he will be happy just to know that he came ahead of you). This is a classic narcissist definition. It is obvious that in life, we cannot always get what we want whenever we want. There will be moments of triumphs dotted with disappointments. The trick lies in learning to accept them and moving on. Being so competitive, this trick is often lost to narcissists. They are bound to be disappointed a lot considering that there will always be people better than them in different aspects. To feed their evil urge of outshining everyone, narcissists will manipulate and use others, provided that they gain something from it.

It is simple to spot narcissistic tendencies in a person. Here, watch out for people who live larger than life and like to rub it in the faces of others, are overly and sometimes

unnecessarily competitive, don't care for the welfare of others, and are very self-entitled. If you spot one or more of these tendencies in a person, it is safe to assume that you are dealing with a narcissist. Chances are that the person will not hesitate to manipulate you if he or she gets a good chance of doing so. It is advisable to proceed with caution when you come across such an individual.

### **The Machiavellian**

The Oxford dictionary defines a Machiavellian as a person who would 'try to achieve their goals by cunning, scheming, and unscrupulous methods.' The term originates from Nicolo Machiavelli's description of how effective leadership should be. In his description, Machiavelli argued that an efficient prince should use fear, deceit, cunning, ruthlessness and duplicity if he was to properly govern his subjects. For the purposes of our discussion, it is clear that a person with Machiavellian traits fits our idea of the manipulator. The very definition of the term qualifies him as so. A Machiavellian is a pathological and impulsive liar who would lie to you about anything and everything.

Like the other two dark-triad traits already discussed, there are signs to look out for if you want to determine whether or not a person is Machiavellian. The first and most obvious from the definition given is if the person is an impulsive liar. This makes for one of the main qualities required out to carry out a manipulative scheme. This is because, in order to effectively manipulate someone into doing something, the person being targeted must not suspect a thing. One of the manipulator's main goals must, therefore, be to hide his true motives. As such, lying forms a very essential part of the manipulation. It is important to know that lying doesn't just come naturally for everyone. Whereas others may be perfectly comfortable with deceiving others even regarding

very important things, others will find it very hard to lie about the smallest and irrelevant pieces of information. However, deceit is a learned trait and can develop over time. For someone to be classified as a Machiavellian, he or she must have honed the art of lying convincingly over a long time.

A close consideration of deceit reveals that at its most basic form, it is a form of manipulation. After all, why do people lie? Just for the fun of it? I doubt it. Lying is done to mislead people or to shield them from the truth. Either way, it still qualifies as a manipulation. To explain, consider both uses of lies. If it is used to mislead people, the culprit is manipulated into believing that something is true when it is not or that something is false when in fact it is true. The agenda for this first use may be to drive the deceiver's personal agenda or to harm the unsuspecting victim. A well-executed lie and a well-crafted manipulation tactic, in this sense, are one and the same. The other stated use of lying to shield people from the truth is also a form of manipulation. Take for example when after the death of a loved one, some people close to the deceased may be deceived so as to be eased into such tragic news. The idea behind such lies is so as to avert other undesired reactions or outcomes and therefore counts as a manipulation tactic.

Another common character of Machiavellianism is aggression. Machiavellian people may be aggressive as a result of trying to get their lies to stick. At one point or another, we all have come across those people who tend to get aggressive, loud or even violent for no good reason. They behave in this manner especially when they are doubted in any manner or when you express your reservations about what they say. With the aim of preventing you from following this course of action, such

individuals fly off the handle and react in various unpredictable ways. Your attention ends up shifting from the main point (their lies) to their actions which have sharply changed for no apparent reason.

Like was the case with the other dark-triad traits, it is clear that Machiavellianism is a strong indicator of the propensity towards psychological manipulation. Likewise, it is very easy to spot someone with this tendency. As stated, the main indication for a Machiavellian person is the tendency to lie which is higher than that of the average person. In addition, they lie with such confidence that it is so easy to believe them. If you have a friend who falls under this category, beware because chances are that you are being taken for a ride. Another pointer is aggression, particularly designed to avert attention or to change an uncomfortable topic. These are the telltale signs of a Machiavellian and it is advisable to proceed with caution when you observe them in someone.

### **The Nonchalant Person**

Nonchalance is indifference to situations, occurrences, consequences or people. From the face value, nonchalance hardly seems like a character that you might find in a manipulative person. It is one nonetheless, and here is an example of why. Melvin is a collector and more recently a dealer of vintage vehicles. In his compound at any one time, you will find the upwards of ten vintage cars at any given time. However, he is not one to market his vehicles as the other car dealers do, which also serves his purpose since his main passion is collecting as opposed to selling the vehicles. He spends several hours each day polishing each and every one of them and tuning then fine-tuning them to ensure that they are in peak shape.

He developed an interest in turning his passion to a profit one day after a neighbor who had been bothering him with a request to purchase one of his vehicles for a long time made one final offer. The car that Mr. Shaw was interested in was a classic yellow 1965 Mustang. One morning as Melvin was going about his business of cleaning his cars; Mr. Shaw came and told him that he would pay one hundred grand for the vehicle. At first, Melvin thought that he hadn't heard his neighbor well. "Pardon me?" He asked. "One hundred thousand dollars. Will you take it?" The offer was made once more. Of course, he would take it. Mr. Shaw had more than doubled his highest offer yet and a hundred grand was close to five times the price that Melvin had paid for it.

The first few times that Mr. Shaw had offered to take the mustang out of Melvin's hands, he had been met with genuine indifference however much he insisted. Melvin was simply not ready to part with his car. This nonchalance on Melvin's part pushed his neighbor to offer an obscene amount for the car he so wanted to own. His second sale was also so lucrative since he showed no inclination to sell in the first place. The client kept upping their offer until finally; he couldn't resist it any longer. Of course, such an approach to business will not work all the time. Sometimes, it will backfire but Melvin was well prepared for this. After all, when he doesn't make a lucrative sale, he fulfills his other passion of collecting.

To avoid such extortionist manipulations, it is advisable to exercise patience and have clarity of mind when in such situations. In our example, for instance, Mr. Shaw could have scoured the internet for similar vintage cars at fairer prices. It would be possible to find one since after all; Melvin bought his at a fair price of twenty thousand dollars. Another option would have been to engage him in a bargain rather than offer a big amount once. Had he systematically

gone up from his last offer, there is a fat chance that he would have landed the vehicle at a much lower price. This way, he would have saved himself thousands of dollars .

The example above takes nonchalance as an 'act' of manipulation. However, genuine nonchalance can also be a powerful manipulative tool. This is especially since it implies that the person genuinely couldn't care less about the outcome of a particular situation. Take two roommates for instance. If one simply doesn't care whether or not the room is tidy, it becomes incumbent on the other one to do all the cleaning. In this manner, nonchalance allows one to take advantage of the other and therefore qualifies as a manipulation indicator. It is clear how one can get out of such a situation.

### **The Charismatic**

We all have come across those people whose mere existence is larger than life. They talk big and their messages are always hopeful about the future. Charismatic individuals have many followers in their wake who take every word that comes out of their mouths as gospel. They ooze confidence in everything that they do and are often regarded as visionary and progressive people .

To save time that may be required to analyze every situation and every person in-depth, humans have evolved over time to judge things or people dependably using their face values. For instance, consider that you are lost in a city and are looking for someone to ask for directions. There are two people from which you can get your directions. The first person is a tattooed biker with a long scar running the length of his face. He is leaning on a lamp post with his bike by the side and he has a cigarette stuck between his lips. The second person is a security guard leisurely dozing off in



his chair outside a store. Which of the two would you pick to ask for directions? A lot of people would go with the security guard even though you might have to inconvenience him by waking him up from his leisurely nap.

For charm and charisma, it is more of the same thing although at an even larger scale. People with charisma often rise to the zeniths of their chosen career paths without trying as much as the average person would do. It is for this reason that it is common to charismatic people at the helms of various institutions, organizations, and governments. Often for such individuals, their mere presence is enough to sway crowds however they wish. This is because they inspire and command respect and most people have the propensity to trust them. Charisma is not necessarily a bad thing. However, it is when people take advantage of their magnetism that it becomes a problem. Using superficial charm and empty promises to advance one's personal agendas is just wrong.

It is important to note that manipulators don't often display the discussed characteristics in singularity. In many cases, you will find that a person exhibits a multiple of these traits at a go. It goes without saying that the more such traits you observe in a person, the higher the chances that you are dealing with a manipulator. This next section will try to break down some of the topics that have been discussed deeply in the context of these characteristics. Specifically, it will look to pinpoint where and how a manipulator uses; psychopathic tendencies, Machiavellianism, narcissism, charisma, nonchalance, and others to advance their own selfish agenda through manipulation.

## Chapter 8: How to Cope with Manipulations



### **How to Cope with Manipulation in Relationships *In Marriages***

Given the bonds and vows that bind couples together, it may be a lot difficult to deal with manipulation in marriages compared to influence in other settings or situations. Nevertheless, there are ways to control the same so that someone is not doomed to become a victim for so long. The first type of marital manipulation that was discussed in the first chapter was seduction. A person who uses seduction as a manipulative tool is likely to have a combination of two of the traits discussed. These are charisma and Machiavellianism. Charisma is likely to be present because

the person will bank a lot on his or her superficial charm to draw their partners in. It is the knowledge that they are irresistible to their partners that gives these seductive manipulators the fuel they need to execute their devious ploys. It is clear to see where the other trait, Machiavellianism, comes in. The inclination to lie and the ability to do so convincingly is a very important necessity for the success of seductive manipulation.

The second marital manipulation was the silent treatment. This is when someone emotionally distances themselves from their partners whenever they are not happy with something. Again, this type of manipulation can be linked with some of the traits discussed. The main ones for this are narcissism and nonchalance. A person who behaves in this manner is not only childish; they are also selfish and insensitive to the feelings of others. These are the classic signs of a narcissist. About nonchalance, the person behaves as though they don't care how the relationship goes for as long as you don't bend to their will. Nonchalance is how they get their partners to conform especially in situations where they know that their spouses are emotionally, financially, and physically invested in the relationships.

The other type of manipulation in marriages was inexplicable rage and tantrum-throwing. This type has all the hallmarks for psychopathy. Such people capitalize on fear to get others to do their bidding. In marriages, this is often characterized by various forms and varying degrees of abuse, up to and including physical violence. The fear of such reactions along with the desire for self-preservation will drive someone to conform to the other one against their will.

When you observe these traits and manipulations regularly in a marriage, it is necessary to take appropriate action. In many cases, it may be sufficient to down and have an honest discussion with the perpetrator. Couples need to have candid discussions about their feelings so as to have stronger and more fruitful relationships. Such discussions are particularly useful where the perpetrators are not aware of their actions. It is indeed possible to manipulate others without meaning to. If the offended party doesn't speak up regarding this issue, the manipulative habit will not only continue but will have been strengthened. Not all situations like these are salvageable. This is particularly with the last manipulative tactic of temper tantrums and violence. In such circumstances, it may be advisable to break up with the propagator as there is no telling what he might do next.

### **Parents and Children**

As stated in the first chapter, there is a lot of manipulation that goes on in the familial setting. Parents manipulate their children all the time and vice versa although the reasons for doing so for both groups are often varied. More often than not, manipulation by parents on their children can be regarded as positive. This is because they are almost always done for the benefit of the target.

However, in rare situations, malicious manipulations can occur in this dynamic. For example, there was a mother who was arrested for trafficking cocaine by using her son as an unsuspecting mule. She was successful all the time because the young boy never raised alarm with the airport security as a potential offender and was therefore never subjected to extra scrutiny.

She was discovered only by chance when a neighbor raised suspicions of the activities of the lady as a potential drug

dealer. The police raided her apartment and confirmed the neighbor's suspicion. Her involvement of her son in her illegal affairs only came up for the first time during her trial and sentencing. The boy admitted that he sometimes carried things for her mother only when her purse was full or for safekeeping. "Put this in your pocket baby and don't you let anyone see it or know you have it." She would say, "Some very bad people want to steal it from mommy." At least that was what the lady told her son whenever she wanted to use him like a mule.

Like was the case in this example, it is very difficult to pinpoint when our loved ones are manipulating us for their own good. This is because we are blinded by the love and trust that we have for them so that even when it is clear for all others to see the guile, we still live in denial of the evident truth. Children are more vulnerable when it comes to this issue because they are still immature in all senses; emotionally, mentally and physically. It is precisely for this reason that they will almost always fall for manipulation when it comes to older people, especially their parents.

When it comes to children manipulating their parents, it is a different thing altogether. You may assume that this type of manipulation does not occur very frequently for the reason that children are often none the wiser than their parents but you will be wrong. Parents will fall for their children's manipulations purely out of love and a strong urge to protect them. It is necessary that parents become aware that if they fall for such manipulations all the time, they may well be aiding at derailing their children. They must be able to exercise tough love whenever necessary. A good way is such as by issuing punishments whenever their children try to be manipulatively defiant or deviant. Such moves will

deter any similar deviant future activities by minors towards their parents .

### **How to Deal with Manipulative Friends**

Is your best friend manipulating you? Do you have that friend in your life that you find very hard to say no to? Or do you have one that seems to require your help at every turn? You ought to learn to tell which of your friends are genuine and which of them are taking you for a ride by using you for their own selfish gains. You must be able to see which gifts from your friends are actually gestures of their goodwill and which ones are meant to soften you before solicitation. To be able to do this, you should learn to say no to some favors especially those that have strings attached to them. By gauging the reactions of your friend after you turn down their gift, you will be in a position to know whether what you turned down was a genuine gift or otherwise.

On the issue about a friend in need, there are only so many times you can help out a friend before you realize that you are being taken advantage of. Look out for that friend who is always in need of your help and isn't afraid of admitting how helpful and nice you are to them. As was explained, these compliments are meant to take advantage of your emotions. Naturally, after such a compliment, you would want to continue being a nice and helpful person. To deal with such people, you need to set boundaries by coming out straight and telling them what you think. Alternatively, since most of such people are lazy by nature, you could give them a taste of their own medicine. A good way of doing this would be to put in a request of your own every time they come to you for help. This way, they end up working when this is clearly not their aim. Sooner rather than later, such a friend will leave you for a more acquiescing and more need-less target. You will have beaten him or her in their own game.

About the good snake, you may want to pay more attention to what they say or do whenever they are in your company. The good snake is bound to try their tactics on almost anybody and therefore if you spend a considerable amount of time with them, there is a good chance that they will try it with you. Look out for those friends who like badmouthing others and or spreading rumors about them. If today you are the recipient of the rumors, rest assured that tomorrow you will be the subject. Put a lot of consideration into how you react to their words or how you let the same affect your perceptions. It would be of help if after determining that your friend is 'a good snake', you begin to show disinterest or indifference to his or her stories. This way, you will slowly detach from their grip and they would leave you in search of new unsuspecting marks.

To deal with a friend who is a deflector, you have to have the same resilience as theirs when it comes to putting across your point. This means that you should apply the same—if not more—enthusiasm as they do in making your accusations. You must, however, take precautions that you are very sure about them lest you begin accusing a genuinely innocent person. Once you are sure about your accusations, stand your ground in making your claims and provide the necessary evidence whenever possible. Never accept responsibility for something that you did not do. And do not under any circumstance give in to their ploys to change the subject when they feel cornered. Rather, forge forward and let them know very clearly that with you, any attempt on their side at deflection is tantamount to a losing battle. By so doing, you will shield yourself from manipulation by deflection .

## **How to Cope with Manipulation in Business**

This is perhaps the most exploitative form of manipulation there is. Manipulation in business means that one person, the target, stands to lose money at the very least. It is precisely for this reason why everyone needs to be vigilant regarding the different manipulative tactics that businesspeople employ. The following section will look into how to overcome or avoid business manipulations in the order in which they were discussed in the second chapter.

Regarding persuasive advertising, there are a lot of things that one could do to shield themselves from unscrupulous business people. The first and most obvious one is to rely on your own experiences about products or services. If, for instance, you have been using a particular brand of a product and are satisfied with its performance, then, by all means, keep on using it. Don't let yourself be lured by the attractive business lingo that will promise you even better performance of a product you are yet to try. This is to say that you should always trust your opinions on items that you have had the opportunity to try as opposed to trying new ones thanks to all the lip-service that the new products get.

It is clear that this plan of action has its flaws. First is that it is impossible for one to have a preferred brand for everything that he or she may desire. The other flaw is that with the suggested rigidity, you may miss out on trying newer products which may actually represent real improvements from those you are used to. As such, it is impossible to completely stay clear from trying out new products. The question remains the same, however. How to do so without falling prey to underhand business tactics and manipulations? There are a number of ways that you may do this.



The first one concerns the issue of unclear or ambiguous adverts on products. Always endeavor to find out with clarity what is contained in the adverts. For instance, when you come across a product that promises an extended warranty, without stating just how long, it will be in your best interest to inquire about the specifics of the offer. Many times, you will find that the period is written in smaller fonts so as not to attract the attention of potential clients. This is because the specifics of such offers are never quite as good in detail. When you come across an item that beckons for you to purchase it 'while stocks last', take a look around and see how many of these fast-moving items there are. You just might be shocked. Better, yet, never be in a rush to buy such items. Go to the next store and check to see whether the painted picture is accurate. After all, the chances of them running out the minute you set your foot out of the store are next to nil.

Regarding pricing, it is clear that the type of manipulation described in the second chapter targets only those who don't do their homework or are too forward regarding their wants. For example, if you wish to purchase a vehicle from a car dealer, don't look too excited over the particular model you want to buy. If you do, you will be giving the car dealer ammo with which to destroy you during negotiations. This is because having known the vehicle you are interested in, he would endeavor to upsell it much more than he would have done without the unnecessary excitement on your part.

In such a situation, it would be prudent to ask questions about a number of different vehicles while airing nonchalance. This way, you are likely to get a quote that is not overly exaggerated for your desired vehicle. Also, it is advisable that you get different quotes from different dealers regarding the same model for comparison purposes.

This idea is not only applicable to vehicles, but also to anything that is of significant value to you.

On free samples, only take them when you have a genuine interest in purchasing the item. Remember that you will be more inclined to buy once you have taken a free sample regardless of whether you like it or not. This is because it will seem a bit rude if you walk up to a free sample stand, take your sample, then give negative feedback, let alone walking away. For the fear of hurting the feelings of an obvious hard worker, you are more likely to reserve your feelings and make the purchase after taking a free sample. The trick, therefore, lies in refraining from taking some if you don't want to get yourself in an awkward position where you are forced to purchase something against your will.

When it comes to avoiding manipulation in business, there is no foolproof plan of doing so. This is because the tactics evolve with time and technology. The trick is to exercise patience and to heed to the advice that "When the deal is too good, think twice." It might do you good to take a step back and consider, for instance, why you have to buy the new hot stereo system 'while stocks last' when the one you have worked just perfectly. If you value your money or possessions, do your homework well and don't be an open book for everyone to read in your dealings. A little mystery will go a long way in shielding you from the bloodthirsty sharks of the business world.

## **How to Deal with Manipulative Empaths**

Given our obvious emotional vulnerability to empaths, it is quite difficult to know when we are being emotionally controlled by an empath, let alone control it. The best service you can do to yourself regarding this is to cultivate

and exercise a strong emotional maturity and self-control. This way, even though we cannot prevent empaths from perceiving our emotions, we certainly will prevent them from using these emotions to manipulate us as they wish .

## **How to Cope with Manipulation in Leadership**

Is your favorite leader genuine or is he a wolf in sheep's skin? Does he live up to your expectations regarding his past promises? Such questions are avoidable if we can avoid being manipulated by such individuals during campaign periods. As you must have noted, there are several forms of leadership and some manipulation is necessary, and even encouraged in some leadership situations. It is, however, the negative type of leadership manipulation that is the problem and must be avoided at all costs. Highlighted below are some of the ways of doing so.

To deal with iron fist rulers, the best thing is to resist their ascension to power with everything that you have. However, this might not be enough to stop such determined individuals. Given their violent natures and very little regards for human life, it may be advisable to lay low on this one. This move is better for it is the one that will guarantee your self-preservation. Be sure that laying low here does not mean utter conformity. For instance, it would be good if you are able to identify the different means that such regimes use for mass brainwashing and avoid the same. As stated, they will often target mass brainwashing through the media as a result of its far outreach. Having recognized this, it would be better if you kept your exposure to such a minimum. This way, you will maintain your integrity by shielding yourself from brainwashing.

Away from manipulation by tyrants, there is a more common form of manipulation in leadership. This is political manipulation. There is a reason why politics is commonly referred to as being a dirty game. It is because politicians will pull all the stops in order for them to get what they want. Manipulation of other people is often the key to the game. Be it fellow politicians turned rivals of the electorate, such aspiring leaders will say or do virtually anything if it guarantees them survival in the political arena. Their lies make it very difficult for people to make informed choices regarding their preferences on their own representation. It is for this reason why it is very important to be able to tell apart the lying manipulators from the few honorable ones.

You should beware of political campaigns and the messages spewed during such and other rallies. It is advisable to size up your politicians and gauge them for honesty before you believe another word that they speak. There are various ways you can use to gauge such individuals. The first and most obvious is to rely on history. By going back to what the same politician said in the past and judging these words by past occurrences, you will be able to pick out the liars from the upright politicians. For instance, if someone has a history of making empty promises of going back on his promises after achieving their immediate goals, chances are, such people will repeat the same actions and are therefore not to be trusted. It will be best to refrain from listening to such candidates or if unavoidable, take their words for what they are, just words, and because that is all their words are.

Also on the same issue of campaigns, one should cultivate a rational mind. As stated, exaggeration is used a lot as a tool for manipulation. Taking a step back and taking time to consider all the facts with a clear mind is all it takes to know

when a politician is exaggerating. More often than you may believe, a politician will exaggerate his or her commitment towards service that they will vow to address certain issues that may be out of their preview in the first place. When you detect such a lie, if possible, point out the discrepancies of such promises to publicly protect others from being manipulated. This is because personal refrain won't do anyone any good seeing as though without exposure, you may as well cast their winning votes yourself. When people here such hyped promises, they consider themselves lucky for having a politician sent from heaven. Little do such people know that they are being manipulated in the first place?

Never believe any propaganda from a politician when you cannot verify it. This is because neither honesty nor decency is known to be their strong suits. Mudslinging and slander is just the way of business in the political game. The victims are not just the objects of such slander, but those who are misled as well. This is because manipulation of masses through slander sways public opinion regarding various candidates and therefore has the capacity of robbing people an otherwise perfect leader for a sly manipulator. Always endeavor to find out the truth of the matter regarding such issues. One way is by relying on credible news outlets that have been established as such as opposed to listening to the numerous rumor-mongers who masquerade as such.

Regarding the issue of luring campaign financiers, it is clear how such manipulations can lead to a disservice to the public. A perfect example is when the politician, after a successful campaign, has to repay back the financiers. Such paybacks are often at a great expense for the public. For instance, one may be required to influence the awarding of

government tenders towards their benefactors. In many cases, such people have a poor delivery track record or obscenely inflate their prices and as such, contracting them for anything will be equivalent to flushing public money down the drain.

To deal with this requires tightening of campaign policies to prevent such manipulations. A good example of such tightening is by putting a roof in the amounts that a single donor can give to a particular candidate. Another one is by limiting the powers of individuals so that no one person has the capacity to make huge decisions that may allow them to make good on their promises. Such moves will go a long way in discouraging such manipulations at public expense in the future .

## **How to Deal with the Manipulative Con**

There is a saying that 'a sucker is born every minute and for each one, there is someone ready to take advantage of them'. Whereas the accuracy of this statement may be put under contention, one thing about it cannot be contested. This is the fact that there are so many people who fall for the tricks of others as though they have no capacity to think at all. The sad truth of the matter, however, is that we are all suckers given the right timing and the right instruments. A proper conman will have a fully qualified accountant eating out of his palm regarding issues to do with accounting and the latter will be none the wiser that they are being taken for a ride.

If you put your guard down, be sure that somebody somewhere won't hesitate to take advantage of you. To shield yourself from potential scammers, it is important to know how they operate. As stated before, such confidence people play with people's emotions and take advantage of

your innermost urges by presenting themselves as perfect vehicles for their fulfillment. Knowing this will make it a lot easier to identify and evade the traps of an evil schemer who is out to manipulate you out of your possessions .

The first thing that you need to do is never to make important decisions or commitments when you are emotionally vulnerable. Of course, the problem here would be the identification of your emotionally vulnerable moments. It is often difficult for people to concede to others and themselves that they need help whenever they are struggling inside. They put on a strong face and soldier on determined to face whatever troubles they have alone. This inability to confess to yourself of your troubles means that you will likely have a problem in identifying your emotionally vulnerable moments. Rest assured that an experienced con will see through all your pretenses and sooner rather than later you will become his intended target.

It is important to note at this point that it is not only when you are emotionally low that you are a potential target for confidence artists. The opposite is also true and has been used with just as much if not more success on several occasions in the past. In moments of elation and euphoria, you are just as likely to make irrational decisions as in moments of depression. If you don't want to be manipulated or taken advantage of, learn to recognize these moments and refrain from making important decisions then. As has been stated, for some people, the first step towards this may be the acceptance of one's situation. We must accept the fact that emotional upheavals are common to all and their occurrences are by no means a pointer of weakness.

Moments of emotional confusion are the most attractive to cons. This is because, during these moments, you are more

likely to be receptive to their manipulative advances. An example of an emotional confusion moment is the period of emotional fluctuations such as when some terrible news comes in the wake of very good news. At that moment, you will become both happy and sad. Another example is when great relief immediately follows a moment of fright or panic. At that very moment, before your emotions settle, you will be emotionally confused. Research shows that people often portray signs of incapacity to process thoughts during these moments and are more likely to acquiesce to any requests made.

Another way to avoid falling into tricks of cons is by exercising patience. Never allow yourself to be rushed into any decisions against your will or better judgment for this is how cons operate. A con will present his case in the most attractive way while all the time hinting at the importance of urgency for the success of more profits. This suggested urgency is meant to stop people from thinking twice about and possibly second-guessing their idea so this is precisely what you should do. It is even more important to be patient when you think that the deal is too good to be true because it probably is. You can expect that a determined con will have done his or her assignment regarding your most pressing needs and will approach you with precisely what you need at that particular time.

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# Conclusion



Thank you for making it through to the end! I hope it was informative and able to provide you with all of the tools you need to achieve your goals whatever they may be. This book may be used along with any others that have been written on the topic. The scope of this book alone is a pointer to the prevalence of psychological manipulation in today's society. The information contained herein would serve you much better if you do further research on the topics covered so as to expand your knowledge base .

The next step is to apply the information gathered in real life. Take a step back and try to really understand why people do what they do. Always ask yourself what the other

person's true motives are. This should give you the answer on whether or not you trust him or whether or not you want to be involved with them. Make the world your classroom and the people you interact with on different levels as your books. By so doing, you will succeed in making manipulators very difficult to get to you .

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