

THE BEHAVIORAL SPIRAL

**BY DOCTOR DANIEL
LAURENT**

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF ORIGINAL FRENCH TEXT BY
DIANA BOUREL**

INTRODUCTION

Friendship is too precious to take risks with, however slight. The same could be said for any relationship, and yet...

As far back as kindergarten, the only co-ed class offered during my school years, I was already aware of how difficult it was to have honest relationships.

A newborn child's natural egocentricity spontaneously prompts him to think that there is no difference between him and the rest of the world. Both are one. The fusion is absolute. Because of this assumption, he takes everything for granted, as his proper due. It's an assumption that will follow him to kindergarten, throughout his education, his career, and eventually, into married life. This paradigm provides little room for sharing.

It is said that the age of seven is the age of reason, the age at which a distinction can be made between good and evil. Personally, I would have preferred to learn to know myself better and to be able to make distinctions between true friends and the rest of the world, those who want nothing to do with you or worse still, are out to take advantage.

I expected a lot from my parents. Despite my healthy upbringing and the love they gave me, they left me in the dark about the essential things in life. The fundamental questions remained unanswered. What should I do? And with whom? What cause should I stand behind, or what club should I join?

In the movies I watched as a child, it all seemed so easy. The good guys were nice, gentlemanly, and clean. If they were a little naive at times, it was usually just long enough for their heroism or virtue to emerge. The bad guys had a different dress code. They were dirty and crude. They had bad manners. Overall, they made for generally bad company. This clear-cut division of good and bad, right and wrong was always substantiated in the comic strips, a place where I would seek refuge in simple and beautiful sentiments so far removed from the complications of the real-life world and the relationships in them.

As a teenager, the choices became more varied and complex. It wasn't just a matter of choosing friends, but rather sorting them out, by degree and by sex. In this sense, I was like a boat without a rudder, without sails or navigational devices, sailing

headlong in a storm. Unfortunately, my elders forgot to warn or prepare me for the bad weather.

Throughout my life, first as a child then an adult, as a student or later, as a member of the work force, do you think it was any different? I lacked a logical, decision-making method that would enable me to choose the job, the partner, or the friend that was right for me. I had little to go on but intuition, or the feeling in my gut. On more than one occasion, that's how I ended up placing my trust in people I would have done better to avoid, or overlooking others that would have undoubtedly proved to be trustworthy and kindred souls.

For me, making good choices and trusting others lay somewhere between throwing the dice and Russian Roulette. I hoped that the heavens would be clement. Sometimes, they were.

Time passed. It was when I started my own family and became 'head of household' that I was struck by the awesome realization that I had never been trained to be either father or caretaker. The obvious temptation was to draw on my own upbringing and simply do with my children as my parents had done with me. Not surprisingly, parents feel alienated when they undertake childraising. Understandably so. Without recourse to an educational system that allows children to develop in a harmonious and natural way, it is difficult to really talk about education. I was stumped, and the question that presided was this: How could I best teach my children to be masters of their own destiny, to be at the helm of their own ship, and not some puppet being yanked and pulled by life's circumstances?

I have told you a little bit about myself. What about you? Did you have any better luck? Did you learn how to know yourself, how to discern others, to understand their behavior, and to choose adequate partners and friends?

My experience as a psychologist has convinced me that I am hardly an exception. This is a sad commentary, and one that is not likely to change, unless....

Tell me, if you had the chance to learn a simple, easy and effective way of understanding your behavior as well as that of others, wouldn't you want to learn it?

That's what I have the pleasure of sharing with you in this book. But don't take my word for it. Read the book, put it to

the test in your own life and only accept as truth what you have verified and checked out for yourself.

WARNING

This is not a book for intellectuals looking for a new philosophy to espouse.

On the contrary, it's a simple tool that will help you to evaluate behavior, your own and others', in order to know what to reasonably expect and how to act.

I dedicate this book to young people in the hopes that it will act as a guide for navigating them through their lives. I've done my best to keep this book simple and accessible, so that whatever your age or life experience, it will be useful. This is not a manual to be used for manipulating others but one that can spawn self-awareness and growth. What I am about to explain can only work if you are sincere. "Oh, no", you may groan. "Is he moralizing already?"

Well, yes. And I'd just as soon do it now and get it out of the way than to have to backtrack. In my opinion, we should respect one another and consider one another as whole human beings. People are human beings, not puppets on a string with preconceived labels. In the hands of an artist, a hammer will become an instrument of creation. That same hammer in the hands of murderer could become a lethal weapon. In like manner, this book is a tool that, fortunately or unfortunately, can be used by everyone, including those whose sole intention it is to dominate people.

My wish is simply to make each reader aware of his or her responsibility when applying the principles of this book.

Chapter 1

The Behavior Spiral

Three areas of behavior

In order to understand ourselves and the world we live in, we are obliged to give structure and meaning to our lives. That's why certain psychologists have created a classification system for behavior reality. Their classifications may seem arbitrarily drawn, and why not? Isn't the most important thing to create a practical and effective tool? Like them, I propose three major areas of behavior, each comprised of sub-divisions, that will be covered in-depth.

Perhaps you're asking yourself what a behavior is.

Let's keep it simple. A behavior is a mode of being, an ensemble of physical and felt reactions (comprising both sentiment and emotion). It might be described as an energy mass.

I'd like to make a distinction between sentiment and emotion. When we speak of emotion, we are speaking about a felt reaction that is inappropriate to a given situation. This is the opposite of a sentiment, which is always appropriate to the felt experience.

Let's take an example. My cat dies. I feel sad. I have lost a pet that was important to me. The sentiment of sadness is understandable. It's normal. But, I get over it, and I get on with my life. If I am overwhelmed by the loss, and sob for days, weeks or months, if I can no longer appreciate the good things in life and see everything through a cloud of sadness because of an event in my life that was more or less banal, this is inappropriate. I have become so linked with my sadness that that's all that exists. I have become a victim.

Behaviors are diverse, but for the sake of convenience, they can be regrouped into three comprehensive areas:

The first area is that of introversion. Introversion occurs when a person is so wrapped up in himself that he becomes oblivious to the outside world. This is the victim's world, one in which the capacity and chances for happiness shrink. Generally, resignation, grief, guilt and fear dominate in this domain.

The second reactive area is like a combat zone. The dominant behavior in this area is marked by anger, hostility and antagonism.

The third area we will cover is the area of extroversion. In this zone, the individual can interact easily with his entourage and express his feelings. Don't be misled by the word 'extroversion'. An extrovert is not necessarily someone who

speaks loudly and waves his arms about wildly. Many extroverts are calm and quiet. Extroverted people see life as an opportunity to create. Their zone is best defined by attunement, assurance, a true joie de vivre that grants a capacity for happiness and fulfillment.

Each of these three areas have behavioral subdivisions that will be discussed because they are important to identify and understand. Please keep in mind that the objective of this book is to enhance your capacity to observe, not judge, behavior.

Behavior fluctuates in a sequential and ordered fashion, following a spiral pattern. When we're at the top of the spiral, we're happy and creative. This is the zone of extroversion. But let's suppose that for whatever reason, we become unable to deal with the problems and obstacles of daily living. We become aggressive. If once again, we're unable to bounce back, after a while, the antagonism we call upon to help us confront our difficulties will exhaust us to the point that we slide down to the third and lowest part of the spiral, the area of introversion. Once we're stuck in this area, we'll go through feelings of grief, and get locked into a pattern of resignation.

In a general manner, this is how the three areas of behavior are delineated. One thing should be understood: day after day, and even throughout the course of the day, one moment follows the next and no two are alike. Our sentimental state is constantly changing. We'll move up and down the spiral. When we're ascending the spiral, we feel better, when we descend the spiral, we feel worse.

As we go from sentiment to sentiment, the natural, healthy tendency is to climb back up to the top of the spiral, towards satisfaction and fulfillment. When we get stuck in a feeling state, sentiment turns into emotion. Not only will we have a hard time getting out of the emotion, but the natural tendency to ascend is replaced by one of sinking to the bottom of the spiral. Ascending movement is linked to those sentiments that elevate us and inspire life. The descending spiral is an emotional ticket toward introversion and death.

To recap, sentiments, like emotions, are found among the spiral in a specific order. The order of appearance on the one hand is not fortuitous, and on the other hand relates to an observable phenomenon. Take a look at the different key behaviors on the spiral, and note their relationship to the elements as proposed by the Chinese tradition.

EARTH

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-- Fire

ANTAGONISM

Anger

Intransigence

Concealment--Wood

FEAR

Compassion--Water

Atonement

SADNESS

Repentance

RESIGNATION

Prostration---Metal

EARTH

Area of Extroversion

Maximum: Serenity, joy

Medium: Passion, participation

Minimum: Placidity

Area of Aggression

Maximum: Antagonism

Medium: Anger

Minimum: Intransigence, Concealment

Area of introversion

Maximum: Fear, compassion, guilt

Middle: Sadness, Atonement

Minimum: Resignation, prostration

Of course, this spiral is a continuum in which nothing is fixed. Whether the movement on the spiral ascends or descends, the important thing to remember is that there is a sequential order that behavior follows, and it is the same for everybody. Since each behavioral level is accompanied by specific, outward signs, they can be recognized and understood. They can also be used to foresee the outcome of a situation, for better or worse. In fact, when we determine a person's behavioral level, we know what to expect and we can foresee the sentiments or the emotions that will be traversed on the way towards self-realization (ascending spiral) or toward self-defeat (descending spiral).

The Chronic level

Though an individual's behavioral level will vary throughout the course of a day and throughout his life according to the events, worries or aggressions that he will encounter, each person has a tendency to stabilize at a certain level of the spiral. This is called the chronic behavioral level. It will probably be exacerbated under stress or duress. It can be influenced by family or professional settings. It can be influenced by social attitudes and conventions, belief systems and education. In the following chapters, we'll take a look at a few case studies so that we can move beyond the surface, past the traps of mere appearance.

The Median level

Everybody has a chronic behavioral level. Following the law of averages, or the adage that water runs to its own level, so it

is with behavior. In a relationship, the median level is the middle ground, the place of evening out between two people. It is the behavior that will emerge when a higher and lower level meet. Consider the following example. Martin is chronically placid (the minimal level of extroversion). Roger is chronically afraid (the maximum level of introversion). When they're together, after a certain amount of time has elapsed, the chronic level of each one will attract the other until a middle ground has been established. Applying the principle, Martin will go down to the level of anger, and Roger will come up to the level of concealment. If the process runs its course, they'll meet at the intransigence level of the spiral; their middle ground. The shift will be beneficial for Roger because he'll be ascending the spiral. Unfortunately, Martin will be digressing. Once the middle ground has been hit, they'll stabilize. Then, as time goes on, both Martin and Roger will begin to pull each other down, in a sort of double-drowning. The law of least resistance comes into play because it's easier to pull somebody down than to bring someone up, unless you know the principles of the behavioral spiral.

The Yo-yo

A yo-yo is a good image to evoke for visualizing the spiral.

The finger represents our chronic behavioral level. As the string releases, the yo-yo can easily descend until the string is fully extended. Then, as the finger snaps back up, the yo-yo will begin its ascent until it reaches its starting point. In like manner, we begin with our chronic behavioral level, travel down the spiral and, usually, come back up to our chronic behavioral level.

If my chronic behavioral level is joy, my yo-yo string can cover the full behavioral range on its way to full extension or rest. If for any reason I descend all the way down to resignation, I can still come back up to my natural, resting position of joy.

Now imagine that the circumstances of my life have pulled me down, like Martin, to a level of placidity. I can still cover the behavior range between resignation on the bottom and placidity on the top. The only way I'll be able to move past my behavioral limit is to do some personal work, either alone or with the help of someone who is higher on the spiral than myself. I can break past my behavioral level, but the only way to maintain the 'gain' is through sustained intervention. It involves constant, steady work.

If my behavioral level is chronically situated at the fear level, I can easily experiment behaviors which range from fear to resignation, but I'll have trouble experiencing behaviors situated beyond my behavioral ceiling. Those that lie just beyond fear may be accessible, but those that lie at the top of the spiral may be practically unattainable without some pretty intense and constant effort.

We can help someone who is lower, not higher, on the behavioral spiral than we are. Or, in more common terms, you can't give what you haven't got.

Hopefully, you are beginning to understand the importance of identifying your chronic behavioral level as well as those of the people around you.

Once the chronic behavioral level has been established

A famous doctor in ancient China once said that a good diagnosis is the first step in healing. His words are applicable here. If I'm looking for a partner and determine that his or her chronic behavioral level is on the opposite end of the spiral, what kind of relationship do you think this will yield? Harmonious? Effective? Dissonant? If I'm the one on the top, do I really want to spend my time with someone on the bottom? How satisfying will this be for me? Don't I have more important things to do? Let's say that I'm already involved with a person who is stuck on a behavioral level. If I'm at a higher behavioral level, I have a pretty strong motive for helping my partner back up the spiral. And besides, I may have contributed in some way to helping him get stuck in the first place.

The next step

It's easy. Just remember the principle of the median behavioral level. Start with yourself. Just reading this book can be a way of helping you move up the spiral. Refer to it often and measure your progress periodically and honestly. No cheating. You can't help other people up if you're down. Once you've clearly established for yourself where you are, put yourself on your partner's level. It's like a surfer riding a wave. This is how you can help another person come back up, level by level. The lower a person's behavioral level, the more time and energy will be involved. Don't expect everything to balance out immediately. Nevertheless, keep at it and you'll see that the principles of

the behavioral spiral, when properly understood and applied, yield satisfying rewards.

I have used the behavioral spiral as a helpful therapeutic tool in my work as a psychotherapist. As a father, this technique has allowed me to help my children stay on the top of the spiral. I have used it liberally and effectively in all areas of my life. The results have been most rewarding.

Non-judgment

You don't need to know about the behavioral spiral to know that when a person doesn't attract you, there's a problem. Understanding the behavioral spiral may help you explain why the chemicals don't mix, but it probably won't make the relationship any more appealing. Knowing the dynamics of behavior doesn't give you a pretext to judge or criticize others, nor does it mean that you have to turn a blind eye and excuse everyone and everything. When you approach knowledge as an opportunity to widen your understanding and wisdom, it will prevent you from using knowledge as a weapon. Avoid the temptation to stick behavioral labels on people or become smug. It's conceivable that your judgments aren't always accurate or objective. Once again, use the information in this book for your personal growth and development, to help those around you, to choose the people in your life and to discern areas of possible conflict. This is not an invitation to spend your time in self-judgment. Apply this knowledge in your own life with a good dose of humor. It will help you to avoid becoming self-absorbed and will put you back on the path of the ascending spiral.

To resume

Sentiments are natural, felt attitudes that constitute an appropriate response to a situation.

Emotions are unadaptive to situations.

Sentiments, like emotions, are energetic masses that are accompanied by external signs and behaviors.

There are three major areas of the behavior spiral:

At the bottom: Prostration to fear.

It's a behavioral area in which the world is perceived as menacing. The individual withdraws, isolates and becomes introverted.

In the middle: Concealment to antagonism.

This behavioral area revolves around the belief that the world is an enemy, and the individual must fight to defend himself, usually to the point of exhaustion.

At the top: Placidity to joy.

The world is seen as a marvelous playground in which an individual can reach self-fulfillment.

At the top of the ascending spiral, we find those sentiments that represent a harmonious and creative expression of life.

At the bottom, we find those emotions that keep us in a battle zone and removed from self-fulfillment.

There are two movements on the behavioral spiral: ascending (toward life and health), descending (toward regression and sickness).

Whether we're dealing with sentiments or emotions, the sequential order of behavior is immutable.

Above all, it is important to understand that a person can be stuck at the bottom of the spiral despite his or her intelligence, physical strength or education. In like manner, a frustrated person, simple and physically weak can be very high on the behavioral spiral.

Don't confuse education and/or intelligence with feelings and emotions.

Let's move on and develop the diagnostic stage by describing the different levels of the spiral. I'll do this through the use of caricature and exaggerated portraits to illustrate the different behaviors I'm describing. At the end of each section, I'll give you some exercises to do.

Chapter II

A few caricatures and how they manifest

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Antagonism

ANGER

Intransigence

Concealment---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Guilt

SADNESS

Atonement

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

Earth

PROSTRATION

Originally, the word 'prostration' was used to describe a religious posture that consisted of lying down on the floor, face down, after genuflecting. This posture adequately describes the attitude of the behavioral prostrate: he can't get any lower. The word was then used by the medical profession to characterize illnesses that had reached extreme levels of despondency. At this stage of the game, the notion of appropriate behavior dissipates. A prostrate individual is completely despondent and unresponsive. But, aren't there instances that validate this behavioral state as normal?

George, an African student from Rwanda, just found out that his entire village had been decimated. Marauders had invaded and killed everyone present with machetes. The young student, known

for his cheerfulness, was devastated by the news. He threw himself on the ground and for the three hours that followed, he laid prostrate. He finished by resigning himself to the terrible reality, and it was only later that evening that he broke down and sobbed. In that short period, he had already moved up the behavioral spiral.

When I met Father Henry fifteen years ago, he was running a public dispensary in Bogota. He was a man who had dedicated himself to a life of service. He was hard-working and funny, and took even the most exasperating situations in stride. The last time I saw him, Father Henry was on his deathbed, suffering and in agony. The man that I so admired was prostrate, waiting for his death. As I looked into his eyes, I saw that he had accepted his lot, and his death.

Prostration is normal behavior for someone confronting death. It is also normal behavior in other life-threatening circumstances. For a healthy person, though prostration may be a temporary feeling state, it doesn't last and the individual moves quickly to another behavioral level.

Prostration as an emotion

Chronic prostration is a sub-emotion. It's a behavioral dungeon that hovers dangerously near death. During a trip to India, I remember encountering drug addicts who spent their days in a kind of limbo; not quite alive and not yet dead. I have also seen alcoholics descend into such levels of despondency that nothing or no one could reach them anymore.

This is getting depressing. Let's leave the catacombs quickly, unless you have a particular reason--someone you are trying to help--for being there.

How to help

You probably guessed that at this behavior level, communication isn't very effective. To reach out to someone on this level, you'll need to use nonverbal communication, particularly physical touch. Take his hand. Touch his shoulder. Catch his glance. Try recreating a drawbridge to reality through simple, tactile means. By so doing, you'll be able to help an individual

climb back up the spiral, to the level situated just above, resignation, and then you'll understand the power of touch.

RESIGNATION

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Antagonism

ANGER

Intransigence

Concealment---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Guilt

SADNESS

Atonement

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

Mary and Bill

It was a quiet night in the city. Bill was sprawled out on the sofa, a glass of whisky in his hand. His eyes were vacant, a smile edged across his face. He had been raised in the higher ranks of social order, and despite his disheveled appearance, he had a certain bearish charm.

Though intellectually brilliant, he avoided conversation despite Mary's pleas to open up. During the course of that evening, like others before and after, Mary would talk about music, art, current events, literature, education, and the economic situation. Bill's vague, disinterested responses would usually contain themselves to commentaries like, "We're screwed", "It'll never happen" and other equally morose phrases that would discourage even the most enthusiastic person.

After a few more fruitless attempts at conversation, Mary snuck a glance at me and said, "What's wrong with this guy?"

I smiled and said, "He's resigned. He's stuck on an emotional level. He's completely destructive, and there's nothing you can do with someone like that except to wear yourself out completely. Unless you're a charity worker or a nun whose bound by a vow of obedience, the best thing to do is to get as far away from this guy as possible."

Bill's profile is typical of a person whose on the behavioral level of resignation. Bill had inherited the real estate fortune his father had willed to him. He'd spend his evenings with a drink in hand, whiling away his fortune.

The resigned individual is on the bottom of the behavioral spiral. There's just a little ways to go before hitting prostration and then, death.

It's important to recognize the behavioral signals of someone stuck at this level. They're much more common than you might think.

How to recognize a resigned individual

Observe, and listen. This is an individual who knows he's hit bottom and because he believes that he cannot bounce back up, he gives up.

Sylvia, like many other young women, had been laid-off. One day, she told me, "no matter what I do, I won't get ahead, so why bother?" By her attitude, she showed that she had cut herself off from everything. In her passivity, she had isolated herself and had no desire to do anything. I asked her to give her brother, who she was seeing the following day, an important message. I should have known better. She didn't relay the message, and this is typical of the resigned individual whose

sense of responsibility is almost non-existent. Resignation brings on a fatalistic irresponsibility.

She looked serene enough, but Elizabeth would spend her time consulting the tarot cards or the stars. She ignored her husband as much as her three children. Not to mention her own inner self. Like a person truly resigned, she would seek refuge in her daydreams to justify her actions. At this behavioral level, an individual loses his sense of reality and cannot distinguish between right and wrong.

You can easily recognize resigned individuals by their lethargy. They have an abandoned look about them. They refuse to take care of themselves, whether it's eating properly or exercising. Many times, their attraction to drugs and alcohol becomes a slow ticket to suicide. You'll find yourself exhausted if you spend any time with them because they are difficult to help or reach. They present a real menace to their entourage because they could care less about what happens to others. For these people, nothing is real. Life is a wasteland, devoid of any pleasure. To substantiate this belief, they shun anything that could give them joy, love or the slightest hope of a better tomorrow.

The resigned individual occupies a higher position on the behavioral spiral than the prostrate individual, and as such may be harder to recognize. Outward appearances can only thinly, and temporarily, veil his chronic pessimism and morosity.

If you like literature, you'll find a powerful caricature of the resigned person in *The Glass Menagerie*. Laura, has resigned herself to a fantasy world, waiting for the gentleman caller who will never come and cutting herself off from the whole world. She wastes her days away, and though she still clutches at the dwindling chance that her prince may yet come to save her, she is sinking in the quicksands of despair.

To resume

On the bottom of the spiral, you'll find the level of resignation which is slightly above prostration and slightly below the atonement level. It would be a mistake to think that this emotional state is infrequent in the same way that it would be a mistake to think that people who find themselves in this state are destined to stay stuck in this emotional level ad infinitum. There are people who, because of life circumstances,

are hurled into this state but move through it quickly to rise on the spiral.

Exercise

Try remembering the books you've read or films you've seen to see if you can identify the resigned personality. Identify the external signs that reveal their inner state.

What about you? Have you ever found yourself in the state of resignation? Yes?

Maybe you wished at the time for someone who would serve as a springboard to help you climb back up.

How to help?

At this level, there is a perceptual deficit of the outside world and one's surroundings that leads a person to lose touch with reality. Attract his attention and bring him back to reality through daily, mundane things. It's an effective way of bringing a person back to the present and helping him to attain the next, higher level on the spiral.

ATONEMENT

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Antagonism

ANGER

Intransigence

Concealment---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Guilt

SADNESS

Atonement

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

Earth

Atonement as adaptive behavior

As a sentiment, atonement reveals itself as remorse and repentance. It's a state of pain, accompanied by the shame of having acted wrongfully.

Each time a person finds himself confronted by a serious situation, he will have the tendency to fall down into the zone of resignation. The exit hatch is found on the other of atonement and repentance, passage however fleeting. This is a sentiment that is related to awareness. We become aware of our deeds, and feel something about their rightness or wrongness. This level of behavior will not be experienced in the same way by someone who is usually high on the behavioral ladder as it is by someone who is chronically in the lower regions.

A good transition

Miles had invested his life savings in a real estate project in Mexico. One day he found out that it had been a sham and he had been taken to the cleaners. He had lost everything. His fall on the spiral is understandable enough. Miles didn't stay resigned for very long. Quickly enough he regretted his move and became aware that he had gone into the investment without due reflection. He went through a brief period of sadness, and was bitter for the loss he and his family had incurred. The thought of going back into business brought up feelings of fear. He was

angry at the partners who had sold him on a bad business deal. As time passed, Miles began to ask himself, "So, now what?" Once again, he began to take interest in the future, and started thinking about new projects, despite their eventual risks. He chalked up his loss to experience and using the knowledge he had gleaned, went on to create a prosperous new enterprise. Here's the portrait of someone who traveled down and back up the behavioral spiral, the key to success. Miles' story is a best case scenario and highlights a smooth and admirable transition. But, there are intermediate, less brilliant examples to be found as well.

For those that are familiar with the Bible, there are several stories centering around the theme of atonement, like the Prodigal son. Or Cain and Abel. A film called "The Mission" also delivered a poignant example of atonement. One of the protagonists, played by Robert De Niro, is in prison for murder. He learned that his wife was sleeping with his brother and unable to stand the blow, he struck out by killing. One day, he is visited by a missionary, a Jesuit priest, who tries to reach the man who has become almost autistic in his remorse. Understanding the prisoner's guilt and his isolation, the priest offers him a way of atoning for his sin: becoming part of the missionary party that will visit the remote Indian tribes of the Andes. The prisoner agrees, on the condition that he carry all of the supplies up the long and arduous path. His atonement passes through a physical act that lasts for months. Once the party has reached its mountaintop destination, the curious Indians surround the prisoner, dirty and exhausted from his months of hard labor. They throw the provisions he has so diligently carried up the mountain over the cliff. As the atoner watches his hard work "go out the window", he screams out in anguish, breaks down and cries, and, suddenly realizing that he is at last free of his burden, both physical and moral, is seized by an uncontrollable urge to laugh in both joy and relief.

As an emotion.

When repentance becomes an emotion, you have before you an individual who is constantly excusing himself for even existing. He is constantly seeking to be pardoned for his faults, real or imagined. This is the state that lies between resignation and sadness.

The risk of stagnation

It's possible to stay more or less stuck in this emotion. Many of the songs that have become a part of popular culture illustrate this condition admirably. Take a moment to listen to the lyrics of some of the songs you hear. Do you detect an attitude of abject servitude? Use me, abuse me, but whatever you do, don't leave me. If you listen between the lines, here's the message you'll find hidden in these words of woe, "Give me a chance to snap out of my resignation." In truth, no matter what they say, people on this behavioral level would rather wallow in their misery than to change the situation.

The examples are too numerous to cite. Sometimes things work out for the best, but not always.

Peter had been out of work for a long time. With today's drastic examples of downsizing and restructuring, unemployment has become commonplace. Instead of picking himself back up and looking for a new job, Peter resigned himself to his joblessness. He started taking pain killers to numb the pain, then the anti-depressants to ward off anxiety. For a while, they were effective, but the day inevitably came when even the anti-depressant drugs didn't work, and Peter plummeted into a state of full-blown depression. The social workers were able to keep him from slipping into complete apathy, but just barely...

One morning, Peter's social worker informed him that his benefits were going to be cut off. Peter had come to the end of the line and he was up against a wall that wouldn't budge. Up until that moment, Peter had used denial to confront his situation. But as the facts became apparent, he was hurled back into reality, and it was a rude awakening. After he received the news, Peter became lucid, took stock of his situation and then, he broke down in tears. In that instant, he crossed over from a zone of resignation to one of sadness. His tears were washing up his denial, his resignation and as he confronted his sadness square on, he climbed up to the next level of the spiral. Unfortunately, since the social worker was not aware of behavior mechanisms or how the spiral works, she was unable to truly support the change. Without the outside professional help he so badly needed, Peter's road to recovery was cut short.

The Alcoholic

Often, when we move into the zone of sadness, we feel pain more intensely. This is why some people use resignation as a coping

device for anesthetizing themselves so they won't have to deal with their pain. Such is the case with alcoholics and drug users. The problem is not really the substance being abused. That is only a symptom. People turn to these artificial substances to mask the real problem, which is the pain, and to prevent it from surfacing. A real substance abuse cure must take into account the behavioral spiral which can help the substance abuser as much as it can help the people in his life. There are a number of associations, like the 12-step programs, that provide a road map to recovering emotional balance. These programs, though designed for a number of different addictions and problems, use many of the same tools for recovery. They start with bringing the abuser to the recognition that there's a problem. Once this first and important step has been tackled, the programs help him ask for help, seek a power greater than themselves for making a change. Another important phase in recovery is the inventory of actions past and a sincere desire to atone. Making amends is a milestone on the road to recovery. Some people never recover because they abort the process before they've moved through all the steps.

At work

Bernard was a recruiter for a large company. One day he granted a job interview to a job applicant, who, despite his impressive resume, couldn't find employment in his field. The candidate was so desperate that he was ready to take anything that came his way. During the interview, he would undersell himself, belittle his efforts, and constantly excuse himself. Taking into account the man's educational background, Bernard decided to offer the applicant an entry-level position with the company. When he went to get his decision approved, the company VP vetoed the move. He explained that while the educational factor was a consideration, it was not the only one to take into account when bringing someone new into the company. The candidate's emotional immaturity would have made him a poor team player, and his constant self-effacement would have undermined the efforts of his colleagues and the goals of the company.

To resume

Don't leave me, please forgive me, I'm so ashamed. These are some of the taglines used by the person who's stuck on this emotional level. Subservient, submissive, obsequious to the point of being a back-scratcher. These outward manifestations provide a clear indication that an individual has entered the resignation zone. The object is to move out of this level as quickly as possible.

Exercise

Once again, take a look around you. Observe. Remember, the most striking illustrations of the behaviors we're discussing can be found in everyday life, in the movies we watch, the books we read, the songs we hear.

How to help?

If you want to help someone who's hit the resignation zone, the first thing to do is to accept his or her repentance. He needs to confess and he needs to be pardoned. He needs to be heard. By taking on the role of confessor, you can help him turn the page. Having completed his atonement, he can move to the next level of the behavioral spiral.

SADNESS

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Antagonism

ANGER

Intransigence

Concealment---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Guilt

SADNESS

Atonement

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

Earth

SADNESS

What could be more natural than experiencing sadness when we lose someone we love? When my father died, I felt as if my life had come to a sudden standstill. The pain and suffering I felt were so intense that I became physically sick over his death. In the days to follow, I went over the letters and photographs I had saved, and reminisced with family over days gone by, golden days that now seemed so far behind. For the first time in my life, I started thinking about my mortality. I started fearing death. The legal papers I had to fill out after my father's death only made me angry. In executing my father's will, I felt the government was like a buzzard waiting to pick over the remains of the deceased. The years have gone by. I still think about my father, and though his death was a major event in my life, I went on living and eventually found pleasure in my life again. This personal example illustrates a passage through sadness.

Who among us can say he has never been sad, never mourned a love gone sour, longed for a friend or a favorite toy? We have all known loss on one level or another. It's part of life. Try remembering a life event that made you sad. Try recontacting your grief. Do you remember what you felt? By understanding your own feelings, you can more easily understand what someone else may be feeling.

How sadness manifests

Intense grief and sadness have a way of bringing life to a halt. When we're overtaken by grief, nothing seems to matter, not work, not other people, not anything. Try recalling your own

experiences. When you were sad or blue, didn't you have a tendency to withdraw and seek refuge in the past? The good old days. The Beatles' popular song, 'Yesterday', captures the mood perfectly. 'Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away/ Now I need a place to hide away/ Oh I believe in Yesterday...'

What did you experience on a physical level? Did you feel like going out or having fun? Did you feel like taking the world by storm? Or did your face take on anguished look as you sighed your way from one day to the next? What about your body? Did your shoulders droop, your posture slump forward? Did you take care of yourself and pay attention to your appearance or did you let yourself 'go'?

Luckily, grief, however intense, subsides and passes except for those who glue themselves to the feeling and convert a passing state into a chronic behavioral condition.

As an emotion

A few years ago, I gave a seminar to introduce my students to the music of the Berber people. Isabelle, one of the participants, was a 35-year old woman who, at the beginning of the workshop, had managed to gather a crowd of comforters around her. She had let everyone know of her sad tale right from the start. She had married Luke ten years before. He had taken everything from her: her hope, her youth, her goals, and above all, the dream she had once had about becoming a musician. As she told her story, she would ring her hands, her downcast face was riddled with anguish and her siseveled appearance revealed her self-negligence. She campaigned for sympathy so tirelessly that little by little, the participants who initially sought to console her began to avoid her. Her litany of complaints quickly became old and it was clear that what she wanted was some heavy sympathy. The person who finds himself stuck in this behavioral zone isn't looking for an out but rather for an attentive audience from whom to solicit his voracious need for self-pity.

Larry was a collector. He had an arsenal of sad films, sad books and poems that would depress anyone. Though he wasn't one to talk about his emotions, his constant morosity and melancholy were a real burden for his entourage. When he met Nicole, a bleeding heart who reveled in 'Sad Sack' stories, I knew I was in for a real show. They ended up marrying one another and had, as you might have guessed, a perfectly miserable life. Misery loves company and catastrophe attracts catastrophe like honey attracts bees. Little wonder.

Do you want to see people who have sunk into the throes of chronic sadness? Go out to eat on any Sunday. You'll see plenty of gloomy, inexpressive faces staring vacantly into space, waiting for the next shuttle to take them from sadness to resignation.

Many elderly people who spend a lot of time alone turn toward their memories for solace. Their children have long since gone, their friends are retired, deceased, or ill.

OK! Enough with the violins. Put away your box of Kleenex. I don't want to lose you. And don't think that all collectors, antique merchants or elderly people are pitiful, sad and lonely souls.

Group dynamics

When sad people find each other, they're truly a sight to behold. They solicit pity, demand your charity, but offer nothing in return. They try blackmailing you into a sense of guilt. Attempts to help them won't amount to much because deep down, they don't want to change. They'll eat the fish you give them but have no intention whatsoever of learning how to fish for themselves. When you deal with a neighborhood, subdivision or area of people that hover between chronic sadness and resignation, you can be sure that despite the most sustained efforts of social workers and caretakers, the outward signs of collective mystery will doggedly remain. It's possible to be poor and happy. It's possible to be poor and take pride in your surroundings. It's possible, but not in this zone.

Chronic sickness

Have you ever noticed how certain people seem to live for their illness? It's a tidy justification for self-pity and an alibi that almost guarantees them that they'll be the center of attention.

Mindy had just consulted yet another doctor for her aches and pains. Why, after such fervent doctor-hopping, was she consulting one more? The answer is simple. Unconsciously, she had no intention of getting better. What would she have to talk about if she was healthy? She might even have to get a life, a job, or become creative.

One thing is certain, people who live in disillusionment, firmly entrenched in sadness, attract sickness. They'll beg for your advice but will rarely apply it. When they do, it will be in half-hearted measures to temporarily muffle the pain. Remember, a chronically sad person doesn't want to leave the trenches. It is company they're looking for, and a sympathetic ear.

To resume

Sadness, chagrin, introversion, complaining, agony, affliction, distress, pain, melancholy, bitterness, depression, grief, desperation, misfortune, misery, unhappiness: A steady diet of any of the above will guarantee dark circles under the eyes. Proceed at your own risk.

Exercise

Just for fun, the next time you find yourself at the dentist's office, grab one of the magazines in the waiting room. It doesn't matter if the magazine is an old issue. Try counting the number of articles that are centered around sadness, hopelessness, and despair, however muted. You'll be surprised. Once you've finished this exercise, prepare yourself for your appointment by thinking of something uplifting and happy. It'll make your appointment go much more smoothly.

How to help

Do you feel like the words "St. Bernard" or "Salvation Army" are written on your forehead? Are people constantly dumping on you? If so, listen up. The next time someone wants to unload life's miseries on you, be polite, listen, empathize. But whatever you do, don't tell a person in this state, "Everything will work out just fine, you'll see. The sun is shining, the sky is blue and tomorrow is another day." Instead of consoling and comforting a sad person, this will invalidate his feelings and push him into the resignation zone. Try changing the subject discreetly by bringing up everyday events, or talking about daily matters that will shift their focus and propel them to the next behavioral level.

EXPIATION

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Antagonism

ANGER

Intransigence

Concealment---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

EXPIATION

Sadness

Atonement

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

Earth

EXPIATION

In ancient times, expiation was a religious ceremony that was created to seek forgiveness from the gods that had been offended.

As an adaptive behavior

Under what conditions is expiation, or penance, an adaptive, appropriate behavior?

Quite simply, when a person is climbing up the spiral after having fallen, he must transit this harmless behavioral state.

It's the case of the alcoholic who goes from repentance to sadness, then from sadness to repentance. He's ready to admit his mistakes and make amends. This state is beneficial so long as it is temporary. Once penance has been completed, a person is free to move to a higher, more satisfying area. The process should be brought to a close not only for the individual concerned, but for the sake of his entourage.

As an emotion

Expiation, when prolonged, can produce a repentant victim. There are those who thrive on this. It's a feeling state just a step above sadness. The difference between the two might be a greater capacity on behalf of the penitent person to undertake action.

Winning good favor

Melanie was an adorable grandmother. When she would visit her son and daughter-in-law, she would bend over backwards to be helpful. She'd scout around for chores to do, and the dirtier the work, the better. She always made it a point to call attention to her actions. "Would you like me to clean?" "Would you like me to sweep?" "How about if I peel the vegetables, wash the windows then shampoo the rugs?"

Though she would go about her tasks with a relative amount of efficiency, Melanie's visits were not without emotional repercussions for her son and his wife. Her son, chronically high on the spiral, would suddenly find himself angry and his wife would feel exhausted after her mother-in-law left. Individuals stuck in expiation can bring others down. What typically happens in the midst of the is behavioral type is that the law of the median behavioral level goes into effect. Individuals at the top or higher areas of the spiral will be pulled down by individuals on the bottom or lower levels until a median level has been established.

Why the guilt and the constant need to "do good"? Is it because Melanie didn't forgive herself for having opposed her son's marriage? Then why did she act the same way with her other son and daughter-in-law whose union she had blessed? Sometimes the need to be forgiven, expiated, does not always come from a committed fault. It's a feeling state that pervades everything, with no obvious reason or cause.

A person who spends his time repenting can be disruptive to the lives of those around him. His presence is exhausting, and his kindness is deadly. Maybe, you are protesting. After all, is it

so terrible to want to be helpful or useful? Doesn't this kind of person deserve respect and kindness?

I am not saying that kindness is something to be avoided, I am merely drawing a distinction. Someone who is on the upper part of the spiral also desires to be helpful, but the motive is different. It is a show of respect for the other person, and also a means of exchange, a give and take movement that is natural between two people. A repentant person doesn't permit the exchange. They want to render their services without asking anything in return so that they can find themselves in a position of strength. You owe them something and therefore become dependent. Behind this behavior, there is a fear of rejection. If you don't need me, you might reject me then I'll be unhappy and lonely.

Expiation in a relationship

Deep down inside, Fran was afraid of losing her husband. She was so afraid of not being good enough, afraid that he would criticize or reject her, that she would bend over backwards to 'keep' him. She would spend her time cooking meals for him, polishing his shoes, and doting over him in a servile manner. Deep down inside, her husband wanted to branch out, to broaden his

horizons, but he didn't. Sensing his wife's insecurity, he didn't want to hurt her. How could he, when she was so nice and so good to him? When Fran's husband came to see me for a consultation, he was floundering in the throes of depression.

Knowing his wife was planning to ask him for a divorce, Jonathan rushed out and bought her a magnificent ring. Here is another shining example of expiation. The repentant person tries staving off or controlling the action of others by offering gifts. Their gifts are not expressions of spontaneity, but rather, contemplated acts. Their gifts have strings attached.

Raising children

A child who has parents at this emotional level is faced with a toughie that may lead to despondency. Cory's mother took care of everything. At the age of 12, he had no responsibilities, however minor. She made his bed, cleaned up his room, picked up after him. He went to bed when he wanted to, watched whatever he wanted on TV whenever he wanted for as long as he wanted to. His mother's message was this, 'Don't you lift a finger, honey, I'll do it for you!'

Cory's mother was perplexed that her son still wet his bed. Sometimes, he'd even get nasty. It was his way of saying, 'Get off my back!'

Cathy is 17 and wants to see the world. She wants adventure. She wants to taste life. Her father quickly promised to buy her a car if only she'd put off her travel plans for a while. He assured her that if she wanted to take up her travel plans later, she would be perfectly free to do so. Ah, the booby trap. The illusion of choice at some future point is the promise, but the freedom to make the choice is precisely what is bartered away. There are parents who spend their time buying their children. They'll never let go.

What's the result? A one-way ticket to resignation with an optional layover in the land of drugs or painkillers.

The question crops up again and again: shouldn't parents help their children? Is there something wrong with this? Isn't that what a parent is supposed to, help his child and give him what he can?

Of course, but on one condition: that this takes into account the choice of the child and represents a genuine exchange between two people, one that provides each one the opportunity and responsibility to give and receive. Happiness is a two-way street. It's an exchange. When you imbalance that flow, the will to live suffers.

At work

Beware of the person that offers to work for 'free'. He's either a fraud or a repentor, a professional victim. The stories of the underlying cost of the infamous 'free lunch' abound. You might think that the latter is harmless enough, but not so fast. The victim stuck in his repentance mode doesn't take reality into account, yours or anybody else's. Sooner or later, he'll ruin your business. Jerry worked in a garage. He wanted so badly to be liked by his customers that he gave away a lot of freebies. It cost the owner a fortune. If you have an employee stuck in this mode, nip the behavior in the bud before it's too late.

We're all guilty

As you're well aware, the human race has never ceased to kill, assassinate, massacre, violate, pilfer and plunder. Only a chronically guilty person would try taking on the world's ills.

Everyday in the newspapers we can read a panoply of articles written to make us feel guilty and push us into sheepishly atoning for our sins for the next seven generations to come. Between the charities that fraudulently solicit our pocketbooks (if you need proof of this statement, just read the newspapers) and those that imprison the destitute in an insidious circle of hopelessness, how many charitable institutions are really beneficial?

Just as there is the Order of Malta, media-shy but highly effective, there are other organizations and associations who , under the guise of altruism and noble sentiments, will offer starving populations imported rice and milk at prices lower than they can be had locally. It has all the makings of a 'good guy' act, but it halts local production, which in turn will impoverish the local community even further and drive it into an even greater economic dependency. Expiation doesn't always mean assistance.

Peace at any price!

In expiation, there is an underlying fear that whispers in the background, 'Peace at any price'. It leads us to believe that by plea-bargaining, making concessions, abandoning our better judgement or paying the price, we won't be inconvenienced any more. (History yields a rich lesson of this belief through Hitler's regime). When a parent thinks he can buy the love and affection of his child by giving into his every whim, he's sadly mistaken and will never have a moment of peace, not even when the child grows up and becomes an adult. When a manager caves in to the threatening factional demands at the expense of his other employees, not only does he put the interest of the whole at stake, he puts his whole business on the line. Even if he gives in, whatever peace he's bought is only temporary. (There are, of course, perfectly legitimate gripes.)

The story of the fall of the Roman Empire is another historical example with modern implications. The decadent Roman emperors paid barbarian warriors off so that they wouldn't invade Roman territory. This worked for a while. Predictably, the Barbarians eventually demanded land in exchange for nothing. Then, they demanded citizenship. The young daughters of rich families, along with their impressive dowries, were married off to Barbarians until the Roman empire finally collapsed, giving way to a long period of Barbarian reign. Don't think that expiation, because we can find traces of it throughout history, remains a thing of the past. It's very much alive and well, as witnessed by our contemporary reality.

To Resume

Submission, pardon, atonement--these are the aspects of a pseudo-kindness and a willingness to please at all costs that hide some dangerous attitudes unless they are only transitory phases of a person making his way back on the spiral.

Look around you. Read the newspaper, watch the TV. I'm sure that you'll be able to identify this emotion easily. The difference is, this time you won't fall in it's trap and hopefully, you'll know better than to pay for it.

What can be done to help?

Begin by accepting the offer of the repentor so that you can put yourself on the same level. Then, offer him your compassion. Already, he'll have climbed another step on the spiral. Whatever you do, don't stay in this level too long. Not only will it tire you, it will impoverish you as well.

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Opposition

ANGER

Intransigence

Dissimulation---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Expiation

SADNESS

Repentance

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

Earth

COMPASSION

This sentiment is similar to expiation, and the line of distinction between the two often blurs.

As a sentiment

Compassion is the ability to empathize with and comfort someone who finds himself in the zone of sadness on the behavioral spiral . Compassion is that quality that lends a hand, and points the way all the while maintaining boundaries. This implies having the character and conviction to help someone up without falling into the same trap. If someone were drowning, compassion could be likened to a lifeline. This is different from someone who, in trying to help a drowning victim, gets pulled down as well. The result is a double-drowning. Compassion doesn't falter in the face of sadness, can provide criticism and a swift kick in the rear, when needed, to motivate someone who's having a rough time.

As an emotion

When compassion deviates into an emotion, it ceases to be an admirable quality and turns into fusional , codependent behavior in which people lock each other into a pattern of unhappiness and failure. Let's look at an example.

Jamey was a disruptive child with a short attention span. Nevertheless, when he took interest in something, he could apply himself. Such was the case with his horseback riding lessons. During his first lesson, he fell off the horse, and predictably, was a little shaken up. He started crying, more out of surprise than anything. The seasoned instructor, used to first-time spills, went over to the child, checked to make sure he hadn't hurt himself and helped him to get back up. At about that time, good old Aunt Martha came rushing to the rescue. Visibly, she was more startled than her young nephew, and even more shaken up by the fall than he was. "You can try again some other time," she insisted, pity lacing her voice. Had she succeeded in

convincing the instructor that poor little Jamey was not able to get back on the horse, her nephew might have never become the accomplished rider he is today.

Carla was failing math. The semester before, she knew that she was slipping behind. Confirmation came through the poor SAT scores she received. She felt discouraged and complained to her boyfriend, Steven, that she would never pass her semester exams. "Relax," he said, "it's no big deal. Go out and you'll forget all about it. Besides, last year, the same thing happened to me." Steven wanted so badly to console his girlfriend that instead of helping her find ways to improve her math performance, he pushed her even further toward depression and failure. As an emotion, compassion can become a perverse show of friendship that provides no possibility for improvement because it allows no room for criticism. Given the same situation, someone situated at the top of the behavioral spiral would undoubtedly have been a sympathetic listener, but instead of commiserating with Carla or pulling out comparative failures, would probably have suggested that she identify the reasons for her poor performance in math. After analyzing the situation, he might suggest some positive, constructive steps, like private tutoring that Carla could take to improve her grades. Instead of encouraging her to slack off even more, he would certainly have encouraged her to work harder so that she could attain her goals. Instead of offering Carla real support, Steven was affirming Carla's belief that she was incapable of succeeding and therefore to be pitied.

The compassionate consoler is always feeding off the suffering of those around him. He feels useful and purposeful so long as he's around resignation, sadness and guilt. By helping others, he creates a way of ignoring his own issues and the problems he has setting boundaries for himself, whether it's by disagreeing or simply saying "No".

The evening was taking a turn for the worse. Even though Jerry hadn't been drinking, he spent his time making snide remarks, barbed comments and sarcastic asides. By the time dessert was served, Michael had had enough. He told Jerry, in no uncertain terms, to shut up. Jerry was shocked. He looked around the table, waiting for someone to rise to his defense, and finding no support, burst into tears. It was then that Wendy, as if on cue, came rushing to the rescue. No one had notice this self-effacing woman until then. Like a St. Bernard dog, she rushed over to Jerry, put a comforting arm around his shoulder, and began to soothe him by "interpreting" what Michael really meant to say. "Besides, you really livened the party up and I

understood exactly what you were getting at... That's the typical profile of the professional consoler. These people live on suffering. Unfortunately, they're unable, when the moment of truth comes, to take a personal stand. They're always on red alert, rushing off to the first catastrophe, ready to help. These do-gooders are not acting out of kindness, but rather an obsessive need to be liked and accepted at any cost.

JP's friend was a heavy drug user who had been shooting drugs with needles for sometime. JP, wanting to prove how understanding and compassionate he was, would go out and buy his friend needles. He might even have gone so far as to shoot drugs himself, just to prove how much he understood.

Mark's mom always covered up for him. Whenever her son would play hooky at school, she would make light of the incident and write her son phony excuse notes so that her husband wouldn't find out about the truancy.

Compassion as an emotion is the behavior you'll find in anybody who wants to gloss over the failure of others with an endless series of justifications that will support the belief system that they're incapable of change.

Pressure groups

Wherever you find social outcasts, misfits, criminals, and drug abusers, you'll find institutions teeming with professional counselors that will be drawn to them. They literally jump on the misfortune of others and stick like glue. Their judgment is poor, and they're often deceived. So, they'll fall back on the behavioral spiral to the level of expiation and guilt.

Tricksters know how to take full advantage (they're higher up on the spiral) and they do so for two ideological reasons. A university student, in an editorial comment he submitted to a local newspaper, criticized the overuse of a word that has become a tagword: exclusion. He explained that in any democratic society, the principles of private property and law automatically create exclusion. By definition, ownership entails possession. Mine and yours. Many of the social conventions and institutions are also based on exclusivity; institutions as common as Western marriages that, by law, rule out polygamy.

In an organized, hierarchical social structure, everybody is excluded from one thing or another. This makes people unhappy. True, we could push for social reforms that take everybody toward the bottom of the spiral and organize another social

structure based on compassion and expiation. For those societies and governments that have experimented with this type of system, it has been a source of social unrest and instability.

The media provides us with countless examples of contemporary heroes. Unfortunately, the individuals that most often merit this distinction are precisely those that go unsung.

What Gandhi understood

When Gandhi fasted, he let everyone know about it. His whole attitude was geared to provoking a sentiment of collective pity. Once he had gained pity, it was easier to create pressure groups that would siphon out guilt, remorse and expiation. If fasts and hunger strikes don't draw the media attention their perpetrators require, how could they elicit the guilt and expiation they're banking on? Read the newspaper and see for yourself.

At work

If you want to confide professional responsibilities to individuals stuck at this behavioral level, you're taking a big risk. They'll be so afraid to hurt somebody else's feelings, so inclined to excuse everyone, that they could bring your business to ruin. A true manager knows when he must pardon, show leniency or understanding, and lend assistance. He'll do it quietly and efficiently.

In a relationship

Jeannie was on her third marriage. Her first two husbands had left her. She married her third husband, a severely handicapped man because she felt sorry for him. Her marriage was not based on love but on compassion. The outcome? Take a guess.

Upbringing and education

Chronically compassionate parents make the worst educators because they refuse to teach their children discipline. Under the pretext of instilling harmony and respect, they let things 'ëgo' because they're afraid they'll lose their children's love. These parents succumb to the whims of their children. Unfortunately, they'll pay for their laxness in heartache. Here's an example.

Marcia had just broken her toy and was crying. Her chronically compassionate mom promised to buy her another one if only she'd stop crying. One day, she asked my wife and I to babysit. As

soon as her mother left, Marcia broke her new toy. As usual, Marcia began crying and waited to see our response. Of course, she expected us to react like her mother, that is, to come rushing to her side, to console her and then go to the store to buy yet another toy. To her surprise, my wife gently approached Marcia, looked at her calmly and said, "Look, Marcia, that's too bad. You broke your new toy. Maybe next time you'll be more careful!" Stunned, the girl stopped crying for a moment. Just before she started in on her second temper tantrum, my wife quickly took her hand, led her to the kitchen and said, "Now, let's see what you could do around the kitchen to help me so that you can earn another one. How about if you set the table?"

Marcia's mom, under the guise of kindness, was shirking her responsibility toward her daughter. She was not teaching her to become responsible for her actions. Compare this behavior to someone higher on the behavioral spiral, who will strive to help another person grow and become more independent. Help is a gift when it's offered responsibly and conscientiously.

You've probably seen some obnoxious and whiny children at the supermarket checkout lines, where clever merchandising counters sell impulse-buy items like candies, magazines and gadgets. These kids are the ones who throw tantrums and have fits to get what they want from their parents. These are the behaviors, when they go unchecked, that give rise to immature, irresponsible adults who expect that everything should be given to them. Instant gratification. They'll have the same attitude with their bosses, their partners, their children or their government. Behind every immature, petulant adult, there is a caretaker or an institution in their lives, at one time or another, that was stuck in the compassion behavioral mode.

To resume

The essential difference between the sentiment of compassion and the emotion of compassion is the bottom line. Charitable acts, volunteer work, kind words or acts should be judged on the basis of their results. There's a saying that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Check the motivation of the helping hand or rescuer to decide whether a kind act was, in fact, truly kind.

Exercise

This is getting harder, because now I am asking you to start observing the people that are close to you. Are your relationships laced with compassion or direct sympathy? If they revolve around compassion, be attentive and stay aware. Get scared. It will jolt you into the next level of behavior and once you've made the switch, your friends will soon follow suit.

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Antagonism

ANGER

Intransigence

Concealment (Dissimulation) ---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Guilt

SADNESS

Atonement

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

Earth

FEAR

Fear is the awareness of danger, either real or imagined. The sentiment of fear is an appropriate response to real danger. The emotion of fear is a response to imagined danger. The difference is one worth keeping in mind.

As a sentiment

Joe had chosen his field of work because of his love for adventure. As a member of the Army's medical corps, he had asked to be transferred to the front lines, where he felt he was most needed. The sun had not yet risen. Aboard the helicopter that was surveiling the zone in Africa where rebel troops were holding civilian hostages, the air was thick with tension. Danger was both real and present. This was a life-threatening situation that involved the lives of many people. Joe had to control the fear welling up in him. That control is what we call courage.

George just found out that surgery was unavoidable. Even if the doctors and medical team assured him that everything would be fine and that there was no reason for concern, George couldn't help feeling a tightening sensation in his throat. He was afraid. Before going into surgery, he put all of his papers in order and prepared himself mentally for the battle before him. He was fighting for his health, and for his life.

There is nothing abnormal or shameful about fear. As a sentiment, it is simply a step toward the superior part of the spiral.

As an emotion

Sarah's exam was just three days away, but she had started panicking a whole month before. "I'm never going to pass", she would repeat constantly to those around her. To help her daughter deal with her anxiety, her mother started giving her anxiety-reducing drugs. Just to take her mind off things, you understand. On the first day of the exam, Sarah began to have an anxiety attack. The pressure in her chest was so tremendous she thought she was going to have a bout of asthma. Once exams were over, before the grades had been posted, her condition remained the same. When exam grades were finally posted, Sarah was so gripped with fear that she asked a friend to check the results for her. Sarah didn't improve until she found out that she had passed with an honorable mention. All's well that ends well? Yes, until the next exam rolls around. This is the life of someone stuck in a chronic condition of fear.

Behind all timid and highly emotional people, you'll find deeply hidden, but very powerful fears.

I love my aunt Lucy, but taking trips with her is a nightmare. She is the epitome of the backseat driver, constantly hammering

out directives: "Don't go too fast!" or "Stop, the light is red!" Fear is morally lethal, dampening initiative, and keeping commitment at bay.

The political soapbox

The goal of a professional politician is often less about improving the lot of his fellowmen than it is about getting his name in the news. Politicians have to generate a lot of popular appeal to motivate their voters to go to the polls. To accomplish their campaign goals, many politicians use fear to win over audiences and captivate their votes: fear of recession, fear of losing jobs, fear of unemployment, fear of strangers. To listen to certain politicians, you'd be so frightened by life that you'd never leave your bed. As you might have guessed, they present themselves as the smart and sensible alternative to a grim and dire reality. Does this mean that economies and nations are not riddled with problems? Hardly. The reality of the matter speaks for itself. Nevertheless, if you pay attention, you'll see how these people work off fear, both individual and collective, to gain votes. Once voting day is over, how faithful are they to their election promises?

In day-to-day living

It's the hypochondriac that goes for second, third and fourth opinions, all covered by his heavy-duty insurance policy. It's the kid who can't go outside unless he has five layers of clothes on because he might catch a cold. People stuck at this behavioral level are the business associates or the couples who eye each other with suspicion and mistrust. They're sure that each word, each act, each event, however simple or innocent, is concealing something dreadful. In a relationship, this behavior is the kiss of death.

At work

The individual operating out of a fear mode is easy enough to recognize. He's the king of the umbrella. He'll take precaution against all risk, he'll avoid decision-making, he'll create problems that don't exist, he'll shy away from new situations, avoid undertaking or initiating projects and will hide behind routine as a personal insurance policy. He's non-committal to a fault, afraid to take a stand. He's an executive who lacks initiative and a manager whose strategies are always defensive, never offensive.

Education

Whenever anyone would raise his voice, little eight-year old Mark would burst into tears. It's the behavior kids often refer to as 'crybaby'. His older sisters would often tease their younger sibling, who would always cry loudly enough to get Mom to come, scold his big, bad sisters, then console him. His father spotted the trouble, and came to me for help. I decided to call a family meeting and speak to Mark and his family about the behavioral spiral. I shared my observations with them that Mark was stuck in the behavioral zone of fear. Moreover, when faced with the slightest difficulty, he would fall down into a behavioral zone of sadness, but not without passing through expiation. Mark's way of expiating was to give his sisters little gifts in the hopes that they'd leave him alone. Mark didn't know how to get angry, a normal and viable behavioral alternative to his problem. He would typically resort to the behaviors with which he felt more familiar: sadness and expiation. To help Mark and his whole family out of a behavioral pattern that was starting to cause havoc, it was important to teach Mark that he had the right to get angry.

To teach him this skill, I suggested that we conduct an experiment the following week. The rules were simple: Mark was going to express all of the anger he had stored up against his sisters. His sisters were going to listen. At first, Mark was hesitant. He didn't want to scream, and contained himself to some whispered reproaches and pleas, never daring to look up at his sisters directly. Finally, I intervened. 'Stop beating around the bush. Let it out! Say what you have to say!' And so he did.

The experiment ended up in gales of laughter and hearty congratulations for Mark as well as for his two sisters who were finally able to hear what their little brother had been holding inside. Mark's ability to finally express his anger helped him to become confident and independent. But what if he had never been able to let out his anger? What would have happened if his mother had continued to intervene, further lessening the chances that he learn to fend for himself? Chances are great that he wouldn't have stayed in the fear mode very long. Instead, he would have slid down into the lower emotions of the spiral. Does it surprise you that we can teach children how to cry, how to fight back and defend themselves? These are life skills that are as important and vital to acquire as math, reading or writing. This is as true for a society or a culture as it is for an individual. Those who can express their anger are already on their way out of the emotional mud, and won't risk becoming

paralyzed by their fear, or sliding into sadness to live a cowering existence.

To resume

I wouldn't do anything if I were you! The future is scary! Doom and gloom! The sky is falling! As long as we're in a fear mode, we're functioning in the introverted part of the behavioral spiral. Our next zone will train us for combat. As Franklin Delanore Roosevelt said, "We have nothing to fear but fear itself."

Exercise

Read some fairy tales. You'll find plenty of examples of a scared protagonist who must master his fear to accomplish a given mission. Greek mythology is also rich in such lessons, like the myth of Psyche and the four tasks she must accomplish to win her heart's desire. Her opponent is a powerful and antagonistic goddess who has no intention of making life easy for Psyche. Through ingenuity, intuition, gumption, and conviction, Psyche succeeds and so can you. Take a deep breath, open your eyes and you'll discover that what you're afraid of is not always as scary as you imagined it to be.

How to help

If you would like to help someone, put yourself on his level and help him to climb to the next area of the spiral. Reveal his fear for what it is and suggest ways that he might confront it so that he can become more confident and self-possessed.

CONCEALMENT/DISSIMULATION

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Opposition

ANGER

Intransigence

Dissimulation---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Expiation

SADNESS

Repentance

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

Earth

DISSIMULATION

This is the behavior demonstrated by someone who hides his feelings and thoughts. We also refer here to defiance, the sentiment of someone who lacks self-confidence and as result, lacks confidence around others. The word 'defiance' contains the word 'defy', which reveals a certain antagonism, or challenge. This being said, the challenge is not overt, inducing wariness, as if fear lurked underneath the bravado of challenge. Dissimulation is a behavior that blends fear and opposition, the former being introverted, the latter, finding itself in the zone of extroversion.

As adaptive behavior

Dissimulation is linked to mistrust. It is a state of wariness in which trust is withheld (a combative attitude) and the real or imagined intentions of another person or a group are held in suspicion.

The positive side of dissimulation as an adaptive behavior is well illustrated by Zorro, the Mexican equivalent of Robin Hood. In the movies, Zorro (meaning 'the fox') is a nobleman who seeks to re-establish justice. Circumstances make an overt war impossible, so Zorro masks himself to wage war on his opponents. Here we can identify two co-existing elements: a conviction in a noble cause and the fear of being found out. We'll often note this kind of behavior in freedom fighters throughout the world who strive to lift the oppressed. These are our contemporary heroes. In cases such as these, progress can be had by camouflaging oneself from the enemy. This is done so that a powerful enemy can be challenged and a goal achieved without being uncovered. Think about secret agent 007, James Bond, who must face untold dangers and outsmart powerful, dastardly fiends to save his country, and at times, the entire world. He penetrates enemy lines by adopting an appropriate cover, but once the war is won or the mission is accomplished, he drops the disguise and gets on with the business of life. Dissimulation switches to the negative, emotional side of the spiral when instead of moving out of the behavior mode, an individual stays stuck, camouflaging himself and his true feelings long after the danger is gone.

Bernard was a calm student and his new high school was like any other. There were groups and cliques, and there were also more menacing gangs that would strongarm their classmates. Bernard knew that as the new kid, he was going to have to confront the murky microcosm. He also knew that the laissez-faire of the teachers and instructors meant that he was on his own. His coping device was dissimulation. He kept a low-profile, didn't make any waves and worked to blend into the crowd. By not calling undue attention to himself, he was able to protect himself and use his defiance in an intelligent way.

From defiance to trickery, from trickery to hypocrisy: Tracing inadaptive behavior.

Gail was a serious student who worked hard at pleasing others. Johnny, her classmate, would make fun of her, and on several occasions, made her the laughing stock of the school. Despite his mockery, he was the first to solicit her help in math. Though she would always give him the help he asked for, this didn't stop Johnny from using her as his private whipping post.

Surely, you witnessed similar happenings on places as seemingly innocent as the school playground. Even kindergartners can be ferocious.

Movies often depict this hypocritical attitude. After watching the Clint Eastwood western, 'The Good, The Bad and the Ugly' with my son, I asked him which emotional levels were being represented by the three main characters.

Without a moment's hesitation, he said, 'They're not very high on the spiral. At best, the good guy is placid, the bad guy is intransigent, and the ugly guy is a hypocrite.' See if you come up with the same conclusion when you watch the film.

In the neighborhood

Carol is a woman who is as sweet as honey. She uses her 'friendliness' to get the scoop on people's private lives and feed her incessant need to gossip. She's the neighborhood busybody, hiding behind the curtains, waiting to catch glimpses of people's private lives. Her conversations are laced with nasty double-entendres about her neighbors.

At work

You'll often times find a hypocrite behind the ambitious, can-do executive on the rise. To get on the boss' good side, some employees will stop at nothing, including discrediting their co-workers, to get ahead. They'll make innuendos and get in their digs through jokes. Behind the smirk, they are insinuating, of course, that they know the real story. These are people who play both sides against the middle without ever getting their hands dirty.

Every week, the boss held a sales meeting to go over the sales figures and to discuss strategies for the future. On this particular day, the topic of the day was to appoint a committee to coordinate the improvements in company security measures.

Roger immediately volunteered, but as the weeks went by, there was no result. When questioned, he was quick to blame his colleagues for the lack of progress. That is how a person operating out of this level works. He loves to flaunt himself, but rarely does he bring his promises and commitments to term. If things don't work out, it's never his fault. He's distrustful

and compulsively seeks to ferret out information so that he can feel in control of the situation. He doesn't respect the privacy of others. If ever you place your business or your household in his hands, everybody will know the most intimate details of your life.

It's with this type of person that sexual harassment is possible, because the hypocrite knows how to threaten others, and then discount his behavior with the all-encompassing rider, 'Can't you take a joke?' His attitude signals the difference between harmless flirtation and harassment, whether it's at the office or during the course of an evening. This type of person can't help lying, deceiving, promising the moon, anything to lower another person's guard. He'll urge you to have another drink and may even try convincing you to partake in drugs as good, recreational fun. As your senses reel in confusion, he'll take the upper hand. He's capable of controlling himself (at least this is what he says). Try to resist and he'll run you around in circles, until you doubt your convictions. The moment you do, he'll scoff at you, reject you, and leave you to lick your wounds.

Toward the family

A person in this behavior mode will belittle his partner, particularly in public. He'll corrupt his children because of his lax permissiveness. When it comes to other people's children, he'll criticize their parenting openly as being 'too this' or 'not enough that'. He'll destroy couples by instigating spats or getting in the middle, encouraging infidelity and revolt. By looking for the lesser evil, he'll play on a vulnerable situation. 'Your husband is a real jerk. Don't let him treat you that way! After all, you're not a doormat!' Here we have the homewrecker in action, but remember, it's your home he'll wreck, not his.

In the news

I had just finished publishing a book about alternative medicine. A journalist came to interview me but after a few minutes it was clear that his interest was to get 'a good scoop.' So, he decided to try positioning my publication as an affront to conventional medicine and practitioners. Despite my efforts to assure him that my book was in no way intended to be a declaration of war against allopathy, he managed to slip some dubious insinuations in his article, casting a negative light on a corporation that I hold in the highest respect.

Journalism is an honorable profession when it is based on the tenet of providing accurate and truthful news coverage. While I believe that the majority of journalists uphold the ethical principles of their trade, there are those who search out sensationalism and shock value to increase their readership or secure their positions, whether this means masking the truth, lying, defaming or insinuating erroneous conclusions. The tools of the trade become hypocrisy, deception, defamation, slander and perfectly innocent quotes taken out of context to create a scandal. I know a number of business people who treat news like snake charmers. Unfortunately, there are those who will believe anything as long as it's in the news, on the television or the radio.

As Gandhi said in his book, "Letters to the Ashram", "It's not because an error is repeated that it becomes truth". It's true that there are journalists at every level of the behavioral spiral. Reader beware!

Soothsayers and fortunetellers

Aside from a few exceptional individuals who seem to be linked by spiritual bonds to a different reality (and we'll find them in any culture throughout history), there are a host of individuals who will try to cash in on a pseudo-power, misleading their clients for commercial gain.

Myrna was worried about her daughter, who was in a bad marriage. On the advice of a friend, she went to consult Madame Emerald, a psychic who was voted in a phony contest as the "best paranormal psychologist of the year". Nowhere was there mention of the contest rules, the jury, or the validity of the title, but it looked impressive just the same. Using her "powers" to foresee the future and help her clients find love, money, romance or a better future, she became very rich. There's nothing so wrong with that, you might say. Business is business. Maybe not. But a few psychic tricks are often enough for a charlatan to convince his client that he has extraordinary and supernatural powers. He positions himself as the ticket to a better future, stripping the client of any possibility to take charge of his own life. By playing off the belief system that all it takes is a magic wand to change your life, they destroy the notion that getting what you want and making your dreams come true involves time, effort

and commitment. They'll rob you of your power, and charge you for it to boot.

How to identify the deceitful hypocrite

He's a magician and a manipulator. By definition, he's a chameleon that can play any role, specially that of the friendly and affable Joe. How looks can be deceiving! But you're not completely defenseless and there are ways to call his hand. First, listen to him. His conversations are laced with innuendos. He'll disguise his digs and barbs in the format of a joke. He'll laugh at your expense, and often at moments that are embarrassing or costly. He'll cut you off in conversation, he'll confuse the issue and try putting the spotlight on you so that you'll become self conscious and retreat into your shell. When he recounts facts, he can't help doctoring them up so that he comes off sounding like some super hero. He cultivates an air of mystery, will do anything to avoid being surprised or being caught off guard. To listen to him, you'd think he's seen and done it all. A real know-it-all. Just remember that when you're around a deceitful person, without knowing exactly why, you won't feel very good about yourself. Even when you're no longer in his presence, there's a knot in your stomach, and the feeling of discomfort you experience usually takes a while to subside.

To resume

Dissimulation, when it results from defiance, can be an adaptive, appropriate behavior in certain circumstances and for a limited time. It becomes deceit and hypocrisy when it is chronically used to hide one's true self, to hide opinions or sentiments. It's at this time that we use the words dissimulation, manipulation, duplicity, dishonesty, calumny, trickery, and deceit. This underhanded behavior is important to know about because it's difficult to detect. It takes training, and we're never certain, after having identified the enemy, that we'll recognize his cousin should we meet him along the way.

Exercise

Everyone knows the 'Peanuts' comic strip by Charles Schultz. Think about the character Lucy when she's cajoling Charlie Brown to kick the football. She'll use her sweetest voice, plead with him to give it one more shot, and silently rejoice when he gives in and decides to try. He prepares himself mentally, runs up to the ball, and invariably, just as he's about to kick the ball, she'll snatch it away. Of course, Charlie Brown falls on his behind, Lucy howls with laughter, and the reader says, 'Poor

Charlie Brown! How could he have fallen for that old trick again!î

How to react

Remember that to help someone up the spiral, you need to go down to his level and take him as quickly as possible to the next one. When faced with this hypocrite, become intransigent.

INTRANSIGENCE

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Opposition

ANGER

Intransigence

Dissimulation---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Expiation

SADNESS

Repentance

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

Earth

INTRANSIGENCE

Intransigence is a behavior that is often mistakenly confused with despotism or absolute authority: no compromises, no concessions. There's another side to intransigence, as you'll soon discover, that is beneficial and admirable.

An attitude that can sometimes prove effective

Frank had been manager of the trucking division for years. Though imaginative, his limited managing skills didn't allow him to assume the task of managing two different staffs, the result of his company's recent merger. Alan was called in as his replacement. Tensions were running high. Each staff was suspicious of the other, and no one was about to make Alan's job easy for him. It was each man for himself and deception, hidden agendas and gossip were the order of the day. Refusing to accept their new leader, employees would create all kinds of pretexts to shirk their responsibilities. The result, predictably enough, was decreased efficiency output and low productivity figures. To regain control, the new manager needed to be firm, intractable, and unyielding. Word soon got out that his new policy was non-negotiable: no free lunches for anyone. As the staff began to snap back into shape begrudgingly, some of them wondered if their boss knew how to smile. Was he capable, they wondered, of the slightest show of sympathy or pity? Interestingly enough, off the job, Alan was a pleasant and engaging man, tender and available for both his family and friends.

How to explain the dichotomy? Alan had taken on an attitude that his new work environment called for because, as previously mentioned, there's little use bartering with hypocrisy or deception. I saw him three years later as he was getting ready to be named to a new post. During his tenure, not only had his division picked up the slack, it had gone on to excel and be cited as the most productive in the company. During that time, Alan demonstrated his excellent managerial skills. He was able to delegate responsibilities, reward on the basis of merit, and bring out the best in his employees. He got the job done. His intransigence was a useful tool and served him well for a limited period of time.

Intransigence is a natural behavior in the face of dissimulation, hypocrisy and connivance. Furthermore, the principles and essential values of life are not things to be negotiated or bartered away, especially when it comes to issues like human rights, terrorist attacks, or ethical questions that must be raised and tackled in any society. In cases such as these, intransigence can become synonymous with heroism and virtue.

It's difficult to recognize

Anyone who seems to demonstrate intransigent behavior may be using this as adaptive behavior to respond to his surroundings. It will take some keen observation to see if this state is a temporary one or if an individual has become stuck at this level of the spiral.

At its best, intransigence signals firmness and discipline, at its worst, it becomes narrow-minded intolerance.

When intransigence is inadapative

On the behavior spiral, intransigence is situated between dissimulation, which lies below, and anger, which lies above. The chronic intransigent is a person who cannot openly display aggression, but will often sink to more covert levels of defiance. Sometimes, he is called a passive aggressive. In everyday life, we can see this person shift to connivance, hypocrisy, and inflexibility. Have you ever met someone who knows how to be all sugar and spice one minute only to turn around the next and use the information you gave him in confidence to make himself look honorable and uncompromising? Are these kind of people numerous? Unfortunately, yes, and they're everywhere.

It's the child who takes pleasure in pulling off the wings of a bug, and it's the bank teller who oversteps his authority and makes decisions that only his supervisor has the power to make. It's the person who refuses to collaborate in order to find solutions, or the administrative officer that brushes over your questions or dismisses you altogether. It's the tax inspector who tries gaining your confidence just so he can slam you with an audit, it's the police officer who pulls you off the road for a minor violation and slaps on maximum fines. It's the pitiless, cold-hearted person. It's the Gestapo, Pol Pot and sadistic criminals. Examples abound during the Holocaust of people who would "sell" information about the Jews, often neighbors and friends, to the Gestapo, often for financial enrichment. It's the person who you'll hear reports about on the news; the one who committed an act of cold-blooded terror without the slightest remorse. In court, he can watch his sentencing without the slightest flicker of emotion. Although it can show up in

ways as loud and riveting as these, intransigence can also come in more subtle forms.

In everyday life

Susan didn't like her stepmother and she let everybody know it. She didn't accept her father's remarriage and showed her disapproval by rejecting her stepmother completely. Despite her stepmother's repeated efforts to establish a relationship and create a family bond, Susan was so adamant in her behavior that she was making life miserable for her whole family.

Intransigence in a couple will usually take the form of an inaccessible, undemonstrative partner who rejects others, keeps to himself, and shows no shred of compassion or feeling even when it comes to his own children. When things go wrong, he's never at fault, it's always the other guy who's to blame. In fact, there is no sentimental life to speak of and one might ask if marriage was not just a contractual engagement that was entered into for social advancement or convenience. His favorite pastimes ? Watching violent and sadistic films.

In business matters, the chronic intransigent is a ruthless climber and doesn't hesitate to step on his colleagues or his competitors, all the same as far as he's concerned, in his climb to the top. He scorns courtesy. For him, it's nothing but a spinelessness and hypocritical show. One day, a friend told me that he had paid a sincere compliment to a co-worker. His colleague's reply was this, "Don't try flattering me. I detest that." At this level, distrust is a way of life. If the conniving, defiant trickster in the dissimulation mode feels out the territory to look for a foothold upon which to take power, our intransigent equivalent has no problem coming in with a bulldozer.

At work, he'll coldly state that he doesn't do favors. Don't count on getting his attention unless your idea or proposal can somehow help him get ahead. He'll try breaking your spirit, with threats if need be, and won't flinch at mowing down your ideas. As appearances go, he may seem sure of himself, and many may take him as the undisputed leader of the pack, especially those lower on the spiral. But it's just a facade. His success is shortlived because of his overdeveloped ego. He's power-hungry to the point of bulimia.

Earlier, I spoke about the attitude of certain journalists to illustrate my point on the dissimulation behavior mode, but there are others who are capable of stooping to much worse to

get the scoop. They'll season their hypocrisy as needed then, *WHAM!*, they'll strike pitilessly. At this behavioral level, the intransigent can shift toward connivance. He'll state his facts with untold certainty, sometimes approaching truth, and his judgments come down down like the blade of a guillotine.

Jerry was a staunch believer in the tenets of his political party. In any conversation where the topic came out, he would espouse his political beliefs loudly and discredit any opinion to the contrary. As a political activist, he had climbed the ranks of his political party and had acquired a certain amount of local authority in his post as a city councilman. At council meetings, his partisanship was so rigid that he went so far as to refuse members of the opposing political party permission to rent a municipal meeting space, which was legally within their right to do. His 'lofty principles', the ones he so diligently defended, didn't prevent him from breaking the law, or from disrespecting the most fundamental principles of democracy. But what did he care about those 'jerks', anyway?

Read the newspapers, you'll see how deeply entrenched this kind of attitude and behavior really is.

To resume

Intransigence is necessary to confront a situation of defiance. It can be adaptive behavior for a limited period of time. On the other hand, the person who is chronically stuck on the emotional level of intransigence will manifest attitudes ranging from blatant partiality and favoritism to out-and-out intolerance.

The difference between the intransigence displayed by someone high on the spiral and his chronic counterpart is that the latter is always looking to find out the 'goods' on someone that he can later use to his advantage. Unlike the dissimulator, there's not even an illusion of exchange. It's his way or no way, like it or lump it. He's better left alone because there's nothing uncalculated about him.

Exercise

Look at the people around you and ask yourself the following questions:

-Is an obstinate, intransigent person really admirable?

-If your neighbor, colleague, congressman is unshakable in his principles, is this necessarily good?

-Does rigid and unyielding, "Because I say so" decision-making reveal a happy, fulfilled, and confident person?

Finally, stand in front of the mirror and look at yourself without indulgence. Is your face pursed in tension, even if you're not conscious that you're tightening up? Go over the events of the day and see if you were pushed to the level of intransigence. If you can recall the incident, smile, and let it go. Don't let yourself get caught up in this behavior pattern. It's not a nice place to be.

To help someone out

So that he doesn't stay stuck on this level, you need to help this person express his anger. Find a neutral, common denominator, encourage him to vent his feelings, and then get out of the way.

ANGER

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Opposition

ANGER

Intransigence

Dissimulation---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Expiation

SADNESS

Repentance

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

ANGER

We all know what anger is. Whether it takes the form of a childish temper tantrum or full-blown adult rage, this behavior mode needs no definition. We generally do our utmost to justify our emotional outbursts because deep down inside, we never feel very good about ourselves afterwards.

Healthy anger

Let's take an edifying example. The bible recounts the story of the young boy Jesus entering a temple. He becomes outraged to learn that merchants have set up shop there, thus defiling his Father's house. In his outrage, he chases them out. Another example can be found with the sober alcoholic, who, on the road to recovery, must grapple with the anger he feels towards himself as his lucidity returns and he becomes more fully aware of his past actions. When we look around us, when we listen to the news, there's certainly reason to get angry.

There are moments in which anger is not only justifiable, it is both appropriate and healthy. Anger can be a shield, that defends us and stops the aggressive behavior of someone else. It can also be a warning flag that signals that fundamental human right has been transgressed.

Charles has always been considered a thoughtful, jovial person. One night, he was having dinner with his wife and some other guests at the home of a former colleague. The tone of the evening was lively and a convivial mood reigned.

Things began to shift when one of the guests began to hassle the person sitting next to him at the table, taking a sort of twisted pleasure in confusing the guest and making remarks that

overstepped all boundaries of courtesy and respect. A chill settled among the guests who oscillated between defiance and intransigence. The frustration level was rising. Suddenly, an unexpected thing happened. Charles exploded. He became red, and began to shake with an anger he had been holding back for a long time. After he spoke his mind about the behavior of the unruly dinner guest, an uneasy silence followed. The perpetrator of the verbal attack retreated into a fear mode, but a few minutes later, no one (no one, that is, but the troublemaker) gave the incident another thought. It was as if Charles' outburst had cleared the air. Something needed to be done, and Charles took it upon himself to right an awkward situation. Once Charles regained control of himself, he apologized to his dinner companions for his reaction. Contrition is often the sentiment that follows a healthy show of anger. The sentiment is like a wave, or a hurricane, that broods and suddenly overtakes us. We momentarily lose control, and then, once the storm has unleashed its elementary force, it subsides. The individual who became angry gets over it quickly enough, and will usually laugh at himself. Unfortunately, there are those who only react to anger.

Anger doesn't fix anything

Of course, there are certain situations that can provoke us to anger. As tax time rolls around every year, you'll hear a lot of people express anger at having to pay so much of their hard-earned money out to the government. Nevertheless, anger is not a very constructive response, because it won't change a thing, even if letting off a little steam clears out your sinuses. Anger has one goal. If you say "Stop", nothing may happen. But if you get angry and shout, you may get your way some, though not all, of the time. You still have to pay taxes like it or not.

When Steve would come home from work at night, he'd sometimes find a car parked in his parking space. The problem could probably have been resolved by having a friendly talk with his neighbor, even if it was uncomfortable to bring the subject up. But Steve was stuck in a chronic anger mode. His outbursts, yelling and complaints had become almost legendary. The whole neighborhood knew about Steve's temper.

Next time you're at a red light, look around and observe the drivers in the cars around you. When you're in the presence of an angry person, you'll usually see him shaking his fist and cursing. He'll lay on the horn, even if he's not in a real hurry. He wants people to step to his tune.

A story came out in the news not long ago about an exasperated driver who got out of his car and stabbed another motorist for some minor offense. You've read incidents about highway scandals in LA where people lose their hands and physically attack other drivers, sometimes fatally.

One day, two parents came to see me about their son who was studying to be a professional baker and pastry chef. One day, the young man decided that he no longer wanted to continue his vocational training. I asked to see him, with the parent's permission.

After some preliminary discussion, this shy and cowering young man, locked into the fear mode, admitted to me that his boss beat him. "Did you tell your parents?" I asked him. "It wouldn't do any good," he answered, "And, besides, my father used to beat me when my grades weren't good enough." I suggested he take up martial arts as quickly as possible.

Anger as a behavior is composed of three degrees. First, there's the bad mood. You've seen it before. It's when a person gets grouchy and irascible. He's irritated and let's people know it. Today, it is jokingly called 'a bad hair day'. Next, there's the boiling phase. Here's where the bad mood picks up steam and begins to boil. Finally, there's the explosion.

In a couple

Plates fly, insults are hurled. All the makings of a happy home life. Sometimes anger is openly expressed, sometimes it will take passive, more latent forms.

Betty was no longer in love with her husband. Instead of honestly confronting him about her feelings, she would use the following ploy to reject him: first, she'd pick on him and harrass him until he would get angry. Then, whenever he would approach her to have sex, she'd reject his overtures under the pretext that she could never have sex with such a mean, angry person. She reverted to this behavior in order not to admit her own feelings. As long as her husband was the bad guy, she didn't have to think about whether to leave him, ask for a divorce or seek marriage counseling.

Anger is violence and the word violence contains the stem 'viol', or violation. It's an accurate root for this behavior. Violence entails using physical force on a victim. It violates his person and his space. Anger reveals a certain incapacity or

unwillingness to find positive and harmonious solutions to a situation. At this level, a love relationship is reduced to animalistic violence. Women who are subjected to the sexual attacks of their husbands are more common than you might suspect.

Paula was a quiet, reserved woman whose face spoke of inner suffering. It was only after our third session that she confessed her plight to me. Her husband was a violent man who beat her. Maybe you're saying to yourself that Paula's reaction is typical of low-income, uneducated people. Not at all. The profile of an abused person can take on many facets. Paula's husband was a lawyer and she was a college graduate. Her strict upbringing and the presence of her two young children prevented her from seeking help or asking for a divorce.

I met with her husband and asked him to take a look at some of the notes I had written about the behavioral spiral. After some private session work and some reflection on the behavior spiral, he began to understand where he was on the spiral and why. His understanding heralded a shift that changed his, and Paula's, life for the better.

Conversation

In the newspaper, the angry person focuses only on what he thinks is making him angry and concentrates on nothing else. He's always right and will state his opinions forcefully. At this level, force is a constant factor. Conversation becomes a battleground, and household scenes will bear out the casualties. If you should ask an angry person to relay some information, you can be sure it will be contorted and worded in such a way so that it creates a conflict.

Chris asked his daughter Viv to tell her brother it was time for dinner. Viv went upstairs, looked at her older brother and said, "You better hurry up. It's time for dinner and Dad's furious. If you don't come now you're really going to get in big trouble."

At work

He grumbles and complains. He's incapable of delegating work, he cuts others off and inhibits them by finding fault. His actions are always accompanied by sweeping gestures, but it's much ado about nothing. Despite the dramatics, we're looking at a person who's not very efficient. His brusqueness has a way of chasing off clients. Understandably so. Who wants to be yelled at, other than those people stuck at the bottom of the spiral?

Around others

It's the bully who gets a rise out of you. He tries dominating and manipulating others by creating fear. This is how gangs operate. Their motto seems to be "two eyes for an eye, and the whole jaw for the tooth".

Robert came home from school with an air of dejection. He had been roughed up by his classmates. "What happened to you?" his father wanted to know. When Robert told him that some of the boys had bullied him in the schoolyard, his father asked him if he had defended himself and fought back. When Robert answered that he hadn't, his father yelled at him.

Upbringing

"Children have to be disciplined. They need a good spank (or a beating) every now and again." Enter Fred, the self-proclaimed "exemplary father". At this level, a parent feels the compulsive need to be obeyed, no questions asked. He'll be on the lookout for the slightest challenge to his authority. It's his alibi for getting angry. He'll go looking for trouble. He's domineering, menacing, and doles out punishment for the least little mistake. These are also the injunctions, repeated ad infinitum, like, "Say hello to the lady." "Say yes sir." "Sit down." "Leave your sister alone." etc.

Julian explained to me how his father would act when he was watching the news on television over dinner. "Shut up!" was his favorite expression. He'd yell and curse when he watched football matches on TV, and it was lucky he was far from the team players and the referee. What kid wouldn't be stressed with parents like these?

Destruction

Paradoxically, many angry people justify their violence by saying it's to build a better world. When I was at the university, I remember watching the student riots. I saw a fellow student with a bat in his hand and a crash helmet on his head that read, "Wipe out violence!" It was the period when protesters, armed to the nines, would ferociously yell out their rally slogans or wave banners that read "Let's fight for peace". Isn't it ironic?

At this behavior level, a person isn't looking to make things better. He won't approach a situation, seek out its redeeming

points and try changing the rest. For him, improvement means crush and destroy. On the social and political level, people on this behavioral mode instigate trouble. The expression, "Let's wipe out the past" vividly illustrates the point. This behavior mode is at the root of any dictatorship. And, it's a behavior mode that can survive and manifest in daily living. Max was having a hard time shucking an oyster. Suddenly, he lost his temper, grabbed a hammer and started pounding on the shell. The result? The oyster shell remained closed, Max hit himself on the thumb and that was that. Anger strips people of their power to calmly resolve a situation.

Look at the movies that are such box office hits. Watch television and count the number of murders, rapes, and other assorted violent acts that are shown in the space of thirty minutes. Violence is such a part of the culture that even children who watch Saturday morning cartoons are taught the law of the jungle. It's about winning and losing. Violence is portrayed as effective conflict resolution.

In sports

A few years ago, a professional basketball team hired me to help the coach motivate his players and to help them deal with their stress. After some observation, I determined that the majority of the players were stuck on the anger mode while a few hovered toward opposition or intransigence. The key word was "pressure", which roughly translated meant, "Make them scared" and "Play dirty". I won't go into the way these guys would pound their opponents with such covert, low-lying punches that they'd escape the notice of the referees. Real professionals. I recall Phil, an American who played center. Despite his laid-back attitude, he was amazing when it came to getting rebounds, but his real specialty was elbowing the opponent. Another member of the team had earned the name of "Pit Bull" by fans. His play was mean and during a match, he exploded with rage. I called him into the locker room at half-time to find out what happened. By way of explanation, he started moaning and instead of answering my questions, showed me a bruise that his opponent had given him.

When pain is involved

Pit Bull's episode leads me to bring up pain. Physical pain, violent, brutal or shooting, has a way of stopping a person in his tracks and bringing him down to the level of anger and antagonism. If you're suffering from a raging toothache, for example, you lose your focus, you become upset, you concentrate on the pain at the exclusion of all which gets on your nerves.

You might even become irritable, so it wouldn't be the time to get too near to you. I have noticed that I can get impatient, even aggressive when I'm driving. I noticed this when I had put the heater up too high and the car temperature was getting to me. Since then, I pay attention not to set the heat too high and remind myself that to stay on top of the spiral, constant vigilance is called for.

Torture

The goal of torture is quite obviously to break a person's resistance down through suffering. Pain, opposition, anger, loss of control. That's the recipe of zealots who employ torture to gain their ends. Contrarily, slapping someone who has lost consciousness can help him move out of prostration into antagonism. It's important to know the motivation behind an act.

I never lose my temper

It's wonderful if you never lose your temper because you're always on the top of the behavior spiral. Just make sure that this tendency to always stay in control doesn't belie an inability or refusal to get angry, because this reveals something totally different. Denying anger doesn't mean you're dealing with your feelings or not having them. It means that anger is higher on the spiral than your chronic behavior, and therefore, out of reach.

To resume

Anger, susceptibility, aggressiveness, violence, dissatisfaction, irritability, exasperation, fury, rage, yells, shouts, curses. Not a very attractive picture. Nevertheless, anger can be a normal and healthy response to certain situations of legitimate revolt. If we hit bottom, we must necessarily pass through a state of anger to move higher up on the spiral. Anger is understandable when an illness causes pain. When anger becomes chronic, it is a miserable state to be in or around. This is when a person becomes dangerous, violent, capable of anything, frustrated and vengeful.

Exercise

Take a look at your own life. What kinds of things make you angry? Make a list. As you look it over, review your attitude. Does getting angry make any of the situations you listed better? Is anger really the best or most efficient way to tackle a problem? Do you really have to get so sensitive or antagonistic?

On the other hand, in the face of hypocrisy, can you really become anything other than angry?

How to act

Maybe you'll be called upon to deal with someone who's angry. It's no use trying to calm him down, it'll just make things worse. Play the game. Get in the ring with him, but fend off the anger by creating a common opponent, a 'pretend' target. You'll end up in a state of placidity.

OPPOSITION

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Opposition

ANGER

Intransigence

Dissimulation---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Expiation

SADNESS

Repentance

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

OPPOSITION/ANTAGONISM

Do you know how we define antagonism? It's a conflictual relationship between two people or things that cannot co-exist without injury. To be in opposition means to place an obstacle between you and another person, place, thing, or idea.

I'll go over this behavior quickly because it resembles anger. Individuals can easily go from antagonism to anger in the same way that they can move from intransigence to dissimulation. These are powerful behavioral pairs.

Childhood

A few years ago, a comedian once illustrated this behavior through the following story:

Father: Junior, eat your soup!

Son: No!

Mother: Leave the kid alone!

Raising children offers a variety of opportunities to see opposition, or antagonism, in full swing. If the terrible two's have earned their reputation, it's because of the antagonism that marks it. The no phase is a natural, normal developmental stage of childhood. The youngster, having tasted a little autonomy, now tries to strike out on his own, impose his own will. Unfortunately, too many parents are unaware of the behavioral spiral and instead of responding to their toddlers and adolescents with appropriate and helpful actions, fall into the infernal trap. What follows is an exhausting, exasperating round of tug-of-war that leaves everybody exhausted.

Productive, positive opposition

Opposition is sometimes necessary. Such is the case in the political process when democratic principles have been flagrantly abused. Healthy opposition is also demonstrated in victims or hostages who, instead of crumbling or caving in to oppression, fight back. Conscientious objectors, or draft dodgers of the 60's, also demonstrated their disagreement with the powers that be by refusing to take part in governmental actions that they didn't morally support. Opposition is also in effect when people practice their beliefs in regimes that have suppressed free speech, or freedom of religion.

Chronic opposition

Chronic opposition is an unpleasant state to be in. The person stuck at the level of the spiral rejects everything systematically. He refuses to entertain any suggestions, argues about everything, doubts everyone and everything. To his eyes, the world is hostile place and opposition is his sole defense. He doesn't communicate, and doesn't admit sincerity could exist. Everything is a challenge. If you want to get him to do anything, you'll have to present him with a challenge. This is the person who is always looking for a war and seeks out conflict and confrontation. He's a warmonger, a loner, and doesn't understand team play or team spirit. If you want to get him to buy something, use a negative sales approach to sell him.

One of my friends was an encyclopedia salesman. One day, he was confronted with a client who was a chronic antagonist. Having sized up his potential client, my friend showed him his encyclopedias and said, "No, these really aren't for you. They won't do at all." To which his client replied, "What do you mean they're not for me? That's for me and only me to say. If I want those encyclopedias, I'll good and well buy them and no one is going to stop me!" My friend made the sale once the client, who had convinced himself into purchasing a full set of encyclopedias that he may not have needed, stopped his ranting and raving.

"You're absolutely right", said Ted to his wife for the third time in a row, in the hopes of ending a tiresome conversation. "What do you mean I'm right?" she challenged him, "are you trying to annoy me?" That's how it is when you're with someone who's in a chronic state of opposition. The person is just itching to pick a fight. This is his motivation. It's what makes him tick.

Ever since Gene joined the group last fall, the monthly meetings had become trying. He used his physical stature and his deep voice in a menacing manner to state his disagreement with anything and everything that would be proposed during the meetings. It only took one year for the group to completely disband. The other members could no longer tolerate Gene's disruptive presence.

To resume

He loves to debate and play the devil's advocate. He'll argue for the sheer sake of arguing and is always on the offensive, sure that he, and only he, is right. At a Republican convention, he'll be a Democrat. In labor union meetings, he'll want to

defend the cause of management. Conflict is the stuff he feeds on, so he searches it out every chance he gets.

Exercise

People at this behavioral level will go to the point of contradicting themselves or refuting the facts and evidence just to be right. Wait until the next elections role around. Listen to the political debates and you'll hear your fill of antagonistic behavior.

How to help

If you'd like to help someone move out of opposition to a higher state of being, agree with him on at least one topic. Keep the conversation in the third person. Once you're no longer in the "I" or "you" mode, express your disinterest and change the topic. It always works!

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Opposition

ANGER

Intransigence

Dissimulation---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Expiation

SADNESS

Repentance

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

PLACIDITY

Gail had just learned about the full effects of the flood. The river, swollen by thick downpour, had taken everything. Her house was destroyed. She listened to the news without flinching and asked if there were any victims. There were none. She didn't seem particularly upset by the news. This is typical behavior for someone at this behavioral level. Life is a succession of adventures that certain people will live with stress. There are those who crumble, others who cry, some who are clenched with fear or seized with an urge to revolt. But the placid person is an observer. He watches life and its events with a marked detachment.

Lack of energy, indifference and placidity

Someone might seem placid and laid-back when in fact he is suffering from low or deficient energy that can temporarily render him indifferent. Careful observation will help you make the distinction. A truly placid person won't be affected, won't complain and will look for the higher good and not the lesser evil. He'll find the glass half full and avoid getting riled by things that, in the end, are neither crucial or essential.

One afternoon, around 6 PM, one of my colleagues suggested we do an exercise. We drove to the airport, found a table at one of the cafe bars inside that was situated next to the arrival and departure information. He asked me to pay attention to the travelers who were checking in at the various airline counters. Most of them seemed nervous and distracted. Many of the departing passengers looked tired and their gazes were empty and blank. I asked him what it was in particular that he wanted me to observe. He turned to me, smiling, and said he had found out, not long before, that a general airline strike was going to be officially announced in the next few minutes and that the majority of flights would either be seriously delayed or canceled altogether.

‘Watch what happens’, he said. As soon as the bulletin boards flashed the news, many of the people in the airport lapsed into their chronic behavioral level. Tics began to emerge: checking watches repeatedly, crumbling under the news, some got angry and began yelling at anyone that looked remotely like an airline employee. A few passengers, however, kept their cool as they examined their options. One, for example, took the time to arrange his papers. He understood the situation. His appointments, like everybody else’s, would be bumped. But he wrote it off as a minor incident. I turned to my colleague and asked ‘Placid?’ ‘Placid!’ he responded emphatically.

At work

The placid person is an accommodating, cooperative person at work around whom people feel comfortable. His calm and affability are due to the fact that he doesn’t let things get to him. He accomplishes his goals without fuss, without imposing on others. He’ll do what’s necessary, no more. Don’t expect him to come up with a brilliant marketing strategy or the next great advertising campaign. He’s a bread-and-butter man who takes care of the daily routine.

Hank had an eyewear business that he had inherited from his father. Nine employees worked for him. They all found him polite, courteous, organized, conservative, clear and concise in his policies and in his decisions. He was friendly and was on good terms with all of his staff and his clients. He was nice and well-considered, even if a little boring. It seemed as if his life flowed along effortlessly. Luckily, he found about the behavior spiral and how to move up. He was able to shift out of his placidity into a more creative, more dynamic space that allowed him to stay competitive and take full advantage of his inheritance.

Each time I met him, Ed always seemed bored, even when he was in training. He was a professional basketball player who would only snap to attention when a championship match was in progress. He would become swift, precise. The rest of the time he was very laid back, dividing his free time between a match of golf or doing the crosswords. At thirty-two, this was what life was about. Placidity was like a protective coat that kept the pain out.

How to properly situate placidity

It's important to understand this behavior mode's position on the behavioral spiral because it's a sort of crossroads.

In the lower zones, up until the fear level, we're on the introverted portion of the spiral. In this spiral zone, the individual pulls inward and withdraws. The outside world doesn't really exist for him. This lack of touch with reality is the root of the problems he faces in life.

In the intermediate zone and up through opposition, the world is perceived like a boxing ring. The whole world is an enemy and it's better to strike first than to be attacked.

In the upper and highest zone of the spiral which gently begins with placidity, two phenomenons take place. An individual has the capacity of introspection, the ability to see himself honestly, and the capacity of extroversion, the capacity to establish contact and relationships easily with the outside world. Levels situated above this one, like passion and joy, begin with placidity. Beginning with the participation behavioral mode, the world and life is seen as a marvelous playground in which an individual is both an actor and a creator. For those who remain at the level of placidity, life is a spectator sport.

Friendship

He's charming and easygoing. People are spontaneously drawn to a placid person. How can you get angry with someone who's so nice and unthreatening? Like them, love them, but don't count too much on a placid person. As one of these individuals once confessed to me, "I don't think I am a true friend." It's evident!

He seems well-adapted. His conversations may be a little banal, but never out-and-out boring and he couldn't care less whether you agree with him or not.

Don't try pushing him to attend a political meeting or for the heavyweight championship boxing match. Though he might accompany you, he'll be bored stiff.

Family

He's neither jealous nor anxious, he likes his creature comforts. If he lacks passion, he won't flinch if you ask him to help around the house, nor will he complain. If you have

children, he'll be an ideal babysitter, if a little too permissive. This is true for both men and women in this behavior mode.

To resume

Gentle, kind, calm, tranquil, polite humor. The placid behavior mode signals unambitious extroverts, spectators, not actors. It's nice to see him from time to time, specially if you've been dealing with people in defiance or opposition modes, but in the long run, you may get bored of the placid behavior mode.

Exercise

Remember the airport exercise my friend invented? Do the same thing at a bus or metro station at rush hour, or during a strike.

How to help

Placidity is already situated in the zone of extroversion. What this person needs is a little push, some motivation. Getting involved will help him to move up into the next behavioral level.

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Opposition

ANGER

Intransigence

Dissimulation---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Expiation

SADNESS

Repentance

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

PARTICIPATION

Participation means involvement. It's evident that from this point on, extroversion begins to manifest, even if it is expressed with a certain reticence. While the placid person seeks maximum personal comfort for the least amount of effort, his participative counterpart will sacrifice a little comfort in order to be as efficient as possible and to adhere to set rules.

Every morning, Robert would walk to work, only 15 minutes away from his home. Whenever he passed in front of the bakery, the counter person would smile. She'd look at her watch, knowing what time it was: exactly 7:47 AM. Robert was like clockwork. Conservatively dressed, punctilious, it never even crossed his mind to stop and smell the coffee, have a treat, or interrupt his routine. He was too conscientious, and an unplanned stop might mean getting to work late. Robert is a typical example of people at this behavioral level. There's absolutely nothing disturbing or shocking about them. On the contrary, they blend into the woodwork, anonymous to the world around them.

You may or may not be familiar with the Biblical story of the father who has three sons and gives each of them a sum of money to look after during his absence. This story illustrates the difference between the upper three divisions of the behavioral spiral: placidity, participation and joy. The placid person, as a spectator, will hide the money. After all, it's not really his, it's not really of any concern, and so as not to be bothered, he merely buries the money. The second son, who aptly represents the participation level of the spiral, conscientiously puts the money in the bank. It will be safe there, earn a little interest, and rule out the chance of mishap. The third son, representing the highest level of the spiral, passion and joy, takes the money, uses it and has fun doing it. Not only does he conserve his father's capital, he increases it manifold.

At work

This behavior type will take part in things, but don't expect any creative sparks to fly. These are not your daredevil pilots. These people are followers and depend on the structure of a well-established routine. They take their time going about their business, and their reliability makes them trustworthy. These people are prudent and think about things before taking action. The participation profile yields a good, albeit plodding, employee who waits for instructions before acting. These behavior types are the nuts and bolts of a business. They're not out to make a fortune, unless this can be done without any risk taking on their part. They're thrifty with their money because as in all things, prudence takes the lead.

Don't assign them the task of researching new markets, but rather, include them in the management end of a project once the network has been established. They're as catastrophic in research and development departments as they are in creative departments. If you need a right-hand person, however, a dependable and loyal person to take your place while you're away on vacation, you can be sure your orders will be followed to the letter. They won't take risks with your money or with your business, and they'll look out for your interest with caution. They'll be a poor choice for president but will make a great vice-president.

Sarah told me that when it came to cleaning ladies, she had seen them all. There was the one that couldn't help rummaging through Sarah's personal things (dissimulation), another one who changed employers every month because she couldn't get along with any of her bosses (anger, opposition), the one who would yawn when she answered the phone (placidity), and the one who did everything that she was asked but would never take it upon herself to initiate anything herself, she was a minimalist participant.

Around others

They respect the law which to them represents the foundation of an orderly, moral society. They would never get involved in any kind of shady deal. Conformity and honesty, these are their trademarks. In all of their relationships throughout life, they are efficiently anonymous. If you try spotting out one of these behavior types in your entourage, you'll have a hard time doing so precisely because they're so discreet.

They are tolerant and respect other points of view, but prefer not to rock the boat or be rocked. They'll avoid conflict like the plague, respond to thorny questions with a polite *ino comment* and are always politically correct. They're able to listen, but don't expect them to take sides.

We were on vacation and every evening, we would go to our friends' hotel and have aperitifs on the terrace. The discussions centered around the latest topics in the news, the rate of inflation, the economy. Nothing too committed. Toward the end of our stay, I noticed that I had never heard Connie state an opinion, throw out a topic or give her point of view. Her typical response was, *idifferent strokes for different folks*, or *iHe's got a point*. Only once in our evening get together did the discussion get a little heated. As soon as it did, Connie edged away from the group both quietly and quickly. She was as reliable as Old Faithful. And as boring.

What do they like to talk about?

Surely not about space exploration, surfing the Internet or the latest sports craze. Being neither imaginative or creative, they shun novelty and their opinions are always reserved.

Their favorite topics are conservative and run-of-the-mill. These are people who can talk about daily life comfortably, but moving out of the humdrum makes them squirm.

Their key words are: security, wisdom, work. They need structure and rules. By nature, these are not curious people. They demand proof and avoid legal disputes. They respect others but won't press an issue or try making converts.

In a relationship

These people make ideal partners because of their steadfastness and loyalty. Though warm, they're always a bit inhibited. Don't talk to them about the Kama Sutra. Instead, quote them statistics from Masters and Johnson or the latest information about sexuality, in scientific, practical terms. While they will not criticize you for your need to experiment or spice up your sex life, these are not your sexual adventurers. Security and comfort are important to them, in a sexual relationship as elsewhere. If you want to get out of the doldrums with them, take it slow. This will allow them to participate in a manner

that feels more comfortable and reassuring to them, one that can help them slowly open up to you.

With their children

They are attentive and respectful to their children. They like board games like Monopoly or Scrabble that have clearly defined rules. A theater class or a round of charades, a game of Dungeons and Dragons would make them a little nervous. As parents, this behavior type will be supportive, encouraging their children to take part in good causes and clubs like the Boy Scouts, the Brownies, or environmental campaigns.

To resume

We appreciate this behavior level because it is reassuring and steady. With these people, we entrust ourselves easily. And they'll respond, as long as we don't take them for a spin of our wildest dreams.

Exercise

Look at your friends' cars. When you find one that is well-maintained, clean, one that has no bumper stickers or paper wrappers hanging around, you may have found a person in the participative mode.

How to react

This behavior type is already on the upper half of the behavioral spiral. A little push is all it will take to activate their dreams, their joy and fantasy. They need stimulation. What are you waiting for?

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Opposition

ANGER

Intransigence

Dissimulation---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Expiation

SADNESS

Repentance

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

PASSION AND JOY

Earth

JOY

Passion

Participation

Placidity-calmness---FIRE

Opposition

ANGER

Intransigence

Dissimulation---WOOD

FEAR

Compassion---WATER

Expiation

SADNESS

Repentance

Resignation

Prostration---METAL

PASSION AND JOY

Here are two behavioral levels that can be treated together because their essential difference is in the degree of extroversion they manifest.

The best way to understand this behavior would be to make a list of wise men, creators, saints, humanity's champions, names that you'll find in any encyclopedia. A study of the points they share in common will prove enlightening. But far from stopping there, our passionate and joyful people exist in everyday life.

There are a lot of who are comfortable with themselves because they are living with passion and joy. You'll find these people in everyday life: your apartment neighbors next door, the couple down the street, the cousin of yours who's a musician, or your colleague who's so good around the house. Today's saints are those people who help those around them both efficiently and discreetly. They're the ones who don't ignore the people society has outcast. The hero today is the guy who didn't hesitate a minute before jumping into sub-zero waters to save a child who was drowning.

In short, these behavioral levels, though we find them as the protagonists of beautiful biographies are also people we find in everyday life, ordinary people.

What characterizes people at this behavioral level? A certain warmth, a communicative spark. The words speak for themselves. Passion is the heat of life, like the sun's own warming rays. It's also activity, force, life, vigor, and vitality. These states are not to be confused with excitement. Joy is a pleasant and profound sentiment, an exaltation felt and acknowledged by the whole of a person's awareness. It's the crown of the spiral that segues into active serenity, the opposite of passive resignation.

At home

Hilbert adores his two kids. He really works hard to stimulate their senses, responding to the natural curiosity they have about life. He is attentive to offering them experiences that will help their natural aptitudes and talents, curiosities and desires develop and blossom. As a responsible, well-adjusted

adult, he strives to teach his children how to become responsible human beings with a mind of their own. Together with his wife, also on the top of the spiral, they move in harmonious understanding and support. What is most exceptional about their relationship is the mutual respect and trust they share.

At this level of the spiral, individuals are always responsible for themselves and respectful of others. They have a good home life but also get involved in their community. There is a more global awareness that doesn't stop in their own backyard. They reach out to others and have a lot to offer.

At work

Guy had opened up a small business producing spare parts. The business had grown to a staff of about 60 people. He set the tone for the healthy work environment that dominated the business, an example that each employee naturally strove to emulate.

As an employee, a person on the upper half of the spiral is reliable. This is an individual who is honest by nature and doesn't expect to be rewarded for it. You can be sure that if this person accidentally comes across confidential information, he will return it as quickly and as discreetly as possible. This individual is prone to initiate actions that are deemed helpful to the company. Orders will be implemented without argument or discussion unless he or she feels that what is being asked is a breach of personal moral code. They follow a higher law, and are willing to take personal risks for the causes and beliefs to which they are committed.

If you look at the story of some of the world's people, you will find men and women motivated by a firm commitment to their dreams and convictions. Many of them came from humble origins, others had to overcome considerable obstacles or face hardships to succeed. Take the case of Bill Gates, head of the Microsoft dynasty. He took what other people might have considered a failure-expulsion from Harvard-and went on to create his company that has become an undisputed industry leader. Albert Einstein was a poor student who went on to become perhaps the most famous scientist of the twentieth century. He became internationally renowned in 1919 and started accruing honors and awards, including the Nobel Prize, in 1921. He was an ardent advocate for pacificism, and promoted political and religious freedom. His decisions were based on a combination of sound intuition and reasoning and careful observation.

Creativity and activity accomplished

Daily life is a mosaic of different activities that have as their common denominator beginnings, middles and ends. This takes the form of a cycle. As an individual rises on the behavioral spiral, he or she becomes more and more capable of bringing an initiative to term, or of successfully meeting the commitments he has chosen to take on. If something seems like it's been left dangling, it is not through negligence or forgetfulness, but rather through a re-assessment of priorities that may have warranted putting a project temporarily aside. Contrarily, as we descend through the behavioral layers of the spiral, individuals will have difficulty meeting their commitments. Their minds become overwhelmed and confused and the cyclical nature of things is suspended. It is interesting to note that there is a relationship between the mental health of a person and his capacity to manage the activities in his life.

Environment and Friendship

Individuals on top of the spiral are concerned by their entourage. They take good care of themselves and others. They take care of their belongings and treat other people's possessions with the same care. Have you ever met a person whose surroundings were completely orderly? Their favorite motto was "a place for everything and everything in its place." What kind of relationship did the individual have with order? Was it a natural impulse to have a harmonious surrounding or was it an obsession with fixity and routine that hid a discomfort or fear with anything new? People at the top of the spiral may or may not be orderly, but their messes are short-lived. You may remember the once popular American television series, "The Odd Couple", which starred Tony Randall (Felix) and Jack Klugman (Oscar.) The former was maniacally neat, obsessively clean and hypochondriacal, always afraid of germs. The latter had a more casual attitude about life, and was decidedly messier.

As friends, individuals at this behavior mode level are sought out. We feel good around them. Their enthusiasm is contagious to most everyone, except for those who are suspicious of happy, involved people.

Conversation

Their communication is clear, their thinking profound, their listening complete. They seek neither to manipulate or to criticize, unless it is to bring a positive criticism that can

help a problem reach resolution. These people can identify and admit their mistakes, and they can learn from them and correct their faults. Such is the behavior of people who are between passion and joy on the behavioral spiral. These are the people who strive for world peace, the leaders who take a stand and commit to using the diplomatic process rather than war to resolve conflicts.

Henry is a man in his fifties, but his life rhythm hasn't changed in the thirty years that I've known him. In that time, he has been a manager in a company, a producer for a multinational organization. He then organized trips to the Argentina desert. Finally, he went on to create a holistic health center. Whenever he moved on, people were sorry to see him go. What I find the most remarkable about him is his ability to listen, to suggest appropriate solutions and to refuse to take part in gossip.

One day he asked me to come to his office. As soon as I entered, I saw one of my competitors sitting across from Henry. He was squirming. Henry then proceeded to ask the man to repeat in my presence the lies he had said about me behind my back. It was an unforgettable experience in standing up for human values and dignity.

To resume

This behavioral level doesn't always produce modesty, but it does produce humbleness. It is signaled by enthusiasm, cooperation, and it's ability to stimulate others. He'll call a spade a spade, but doesn't hold grudges. He'll redo things again and again until he gets it right, not only as a matter of personal pride and ethic but in the interest of all concerned. He's a free thinker and honors his choices. He refuses to box himself in. Lies don't affect him, he's unshakable in his faith and solid as a rock. He won't take pity on his fellowman, but will spend the time to understand a situation or plight and come up with win-win solutions that will lead another to his own independence. If you're looking for a life partner, a wonderful friend, an efficient colleague, an honest politician, or even a president, choose him. You can't miss.

Exercise

Look around you and see if you can identify the people who you consider to be at the top of the behavioral spiral. They don't have to be either rich or famous. You'll probably come up with more than you thought you would. Now take a good look at

yourself. I am certain, after having moved through the behavioral spiral, that you'd rather be at the top than on the bottom. Isn't that an excellent sign?

CHAPTER 3

Following is a brief resume and a few clues on your road to happiness

By reading this book, you have undoubtedly familiarized yourself with the different layers of the behavioral spiral. Above all, now you can tell the difference between the bottom of the spiral and the top. Of course, we're speaking about our habitual, chronic levels. To determine this, we can call upon a number of criteria and a fair dose of self-analysis.

How do you feel around someone?

When it comes to imagining how others feel in your presence, you can only guess. But as far as how you feel in the presence of others, this should be evident to you. In general, when we're in the company of someone who is on the lower part of the behavioral spiral, things get tense, lose their shine and the future seems futile. On the other hand, when we're around someone high on the behavioral spiral, we feel that he is irresistibly drawn to life. We can sense his goodwill, his willingness to share and his capacity to be empathetic. This is a flexible person who can roll with the punches instead of getting ruffled or shaken up. This individual doesn't have to be a healer for his or her presence to be healing. On the bottom of the behavioral spiral, individuals are easily thrown off, easily destabilized. They have a tendency to get stuck in their emotions and springing back is always a laborious process for them.

What is he like on a daily basis?

When a person's stuck at the bottom of the spiral, he feels and acts like a loser. He can barely stand being around himself. He doesn't take care of himself, his appearance, or his dwelling, and is negligent about the way he treats his body, feeds himself, etc.

If he's on the top of the spiral, he works with whatever he's got, however little it may be. He perceives himself as a winner and takes on projects. While it is certain that wealth is not a barometer, a person at the top of the spiral will maximize and regenerate his wealth, the one at the bottom will fritter it away.

One of my friends once said, "I always look for meaningful signs when sizing up a person: the condition of his shoes and his car, for example."

Though this might seem absurd, the way a person treats his surroundings and personal belongings is highly indicative of their internal feelings about himself and about life in general.

On the bottom of the spiral, a person accepts being put down, and worse still, gets used to it. On the top of the spiral, one doesn't wait until things are falling apart to clean, to repair, to beautify the surroundings. This reminds me of a man I knew who waited until he was completely in the dark to change his light bulbs. He hadn't thought to do so when they burned out one after the other.

On the bottom of the behavioral spiral, people attract catastrophes to themselves because they're not present, and therefore, less attentive to their environment and things around them.

In short, at the lower behavioral levels, people are convinced that their problems have no solution and try to sell you that script. On the upper behavioral levels, people seek to identify, understand and solve their problems without burdening others. And, they'll help you work through your own glitches. They own their choices and will honor yours as well.

Past, present or future

People on the bottom of the behavioral spiral live in the past, constantly rehashing times gone by. If we use a road as a metaphor for life, these would be the people that get in the car and instead of keeping their eye on the road before them are glued to the rearview mirror. This doesn't mean you should never look back, but it's important to live in the present and look ahead to the future in the perpetual movement that will make it part of the past, too.

To take another example, psychological methods or techniques that deal only with the past can lock a person into that past

and keep them on the bottom of the behavioral spiral. On the contrary, these individuals need to be stimulated to look ahead. To imagine a better, brighter future. When someone comes to a standstill in his life, he's low on the spiral. This can be the case of the person facing retirement or the employee who loses his job and loses all motivation to find another. It can also be the case of a young person who has lost interest in his own life.

How does he express himself?

Conversations are always positive and constructive with people on the top of the spiral. Their interest in life leads them to seek out answers, to share their findings, which they enjoy sharing with others. At the bottom of the spiral, people are stuck in negative thoughts, tending toward doom and gloom, death and destruction, scandal, ruin and hardship.

For example, when it comes to ecology, people at the top of the spiral look for and propose solutions, whereas at the bottom, they throw up their hands in despair, crying their lot and talking about the hopelessness of it all.

On the top, individuals are able to listen to others and demonstrate, in concrete terms, that they've heard. At the bottom, exchanges are replaced by sterile silence or mute, brooding silences lodged in a refusal to open up.

This is why it's difficult to understand someone at the bottom of the spiral. His thinking is scattered, illogical, hard to follow, broken. They may use convoluted logic and words, throw out obscure or pedantic examples, or just simply bog you down with chatter. On the top of the spiral, communication, like the thinking and reasoning behind it, is simple, clear and direct.

At the bottom of the spiral, people rarely tackle a question directly. They'll dodge it, color it with an emotional content that can range from avoidance, to fear to confusion. They'll skirt the issues, answer a question with a question, or have delayed responses. At the very bottom of the spiral, silence may be almost total. On top, there is no hedging when it comes to responding. Answers are delivered quickly and confidently.

During a conference on behavioral pathology, one of the speakers shared with us one of the methods she used with her patients to identify their behavioral mode. Using the newspaper as her source of inspiration, she would talk with the interviewee about current news headlines, modifying her delivery and her tone to

match the headline content she was discussing. She would go from headline to headline, ranging her tone in accordance to the content, until she could elicit a response from her patient. What she noted is that her patients would respond to news that pointed to their chronic behavioral mode: joy, antagonism, fear, anguish, joy. Professional cartoonists are well aware of this method and use it often to draw their public in.

At the top of the spiral, communication is precise, examples are easily furnished, no matter what the topic might be. Those on the bottom of the spiral tend will bolster their opinions with statements like "everybody knows that...." or statistics, sometimes bent to give their argument credence.

Humor is also an interesting and revealing indication of behavioral level. People at the bottom find it funny to laugh at other people and their misfortunes. They like to poke fun, to laugh at values other than their own, and partake in racial slurs. They tend to inhibit those around them to feel comfortable and safe to the point of withdrawal. On the top, humor is joyful and respectful, and doesn't degrade another person.

How are they at work?

On top the spiral, we'll find individuals who are efficient at what they do, who are capable of finding pleasure in their work and who strive to create and contribute to a good work environment that is in keeping with their moral ethic. They accept responsibility and have a capacity to follow a project through from beginning to end. They seek out experiences that they find personally rewarding and enriching and keep on top of things.

At the bottom of the spiral, individuals approach their work as a lowly routine. The lower they are on the spiral, the more work becomes like a cross to bear, a necessary evil with no place for either efficiency or commitment. At the very bottom, professional activity ceases altogether and the individual uses an arsenal of excuses to justify situations that are always someone else's fault.

This is in sharp contrast with the person on the top of the spiral who not only motivates himself, but others as well. His positive outlooks are backed with effort. His motto, "Don't try, just do it." These individuals are willing to admit when they don't know something. Instead of pretending they have all the

answers, they're willing to learn. It's hard to tell someone at the bottom of the spiral something he doesn't already know.

I remember a seminar I once gave on group dynamics. I opened up with a teaser. "What counts is the ACS," I commented. Only a few members of the audience interrupted me to ask what the acronym stood for. The rest all shook their heads knowingly. How could they possibly know that ACS stood for Applied Common Sense when I had just made it up? By this simple exercise, I was able to determine which members of the audience were on top of the spiral.

Sales is another interesting area for observing the behavioral spiral. A good salesperson works off intuition, and without even knowing it, incorporates the principles of the behavioral spiral. For example, let's suppose you go into an audio video store and ask for information about a television. Immediately, you become a target. A good salesperson will allay the misgivings that his potential customer may have so that he can close his deal. To do so, he'll try finding out what you're looking for. He'll find a factor that will serve as a common denominator and using it as a springboard to win your trust, he'll encourage you to hold, try on, touch the object he wants to sell you. By putting himself on your level, he'll become an ally and make the sale.

In partnerships

You're in one of two categories: either you live alone and you'd like a few pointers on how to have a successful relationship or you're already in a relationship and you're saying to yourself, "How can I preserve my happiness and improve my relationship so it's even better?" or "How can I salvage this relationship?"

Despite the saying that opposites attract, reality tends to indicate that people are attracted to those with the same problems as themselves. If you are involved in a harmonious relationship, congratulations! The behavioral spiral may serve as a barometer for you. If you feel attracted to someone, before making any decision that you could later regret, remember not to judge the book by its cover. Keep the behavioral spiral and its principles handy. If you are involved in an unsatisfying relationship that has whittled away at your dreams, the behavioral spiral can serve as a tool for helping you to improve your relationship.

Understanding between two people is a question of agreement and exchange

First, there is emotional agreement. This ranges on a spectrum that goes from negative to positive, from hate to love. Emotional agreement is the capacity two people have of sharing the same space. In the case of hatred, the emotional agreement is refusal. The only thing each is looking for is to move as far away from the other as possible. In the case of love, partners seek to eliminate the distance and space between them. They seek fusion. The higher on the spiral people are, the better capable they are not only of loving, but of separating, if need be, without hatred. The lower down on the spiral a person is, the less he is able to share someone else's space. At the very bottom, a person is capable of such hatred and separation that he becomes completely isolated. What are you waiting for to lessen the distance between you and someone else?

After emotional agreement, there is a consensus about what reality is. During the initial phases of a budding love, agreement is mostly comprised of sexual attraction. Offspring are the fruit of this shared reality. Once the children come, the weight of daily worries become preponderant. There are bills to pay, taxes to file, health insurance, doctors, schools, colleges to plan for. Then, there are the personal interests to deal with. We're not all interested by everything that interests our partners, our brothers and sisters, best friends and children. Each person develops his own interests: sports, music, going out, computers. Little by little, the reality consensus begins to diminish, unless it is consciously preserved. If you have a problem with your partner, you may need to create some new areas of common interest that will allow each of you to participate fully and enthusiastically.

Lastly, there are the exchanges, primarily, verbal ones. At the top of the spiral, individuals can express themselves easily and are available to listen to their partner. At the bottom of the spiral, individuals become introverted and spontaneity is compromised. To climb back up, it's important to monitor your intention and to listen to your partner. The fact that you're listening may encourage your partner to open up, secure in the knowledge that he'll be heard.

Raising children

If you consider a child as an individual in and of his own right, then you understand the basis of raising a child. A well-balanced child knows who he is, has a respect for life, is able

to relate with his environment. Call upon his reasoning faculties (especially through artistic means), have faith and trust in him, give him a chance to do better if he's made a mistake, give him responsibilities and let him know when he's done a good job. These are the principal factors for raising a child at the top of the spiral. Screaming and threatening, confusing a child, giving up on him, abandoning him or being unavailable are all signs of parenting at the bottom of the spiral.

Groups

Groups are like entities with their own behavioral modes and levels. Groups have a chronic behavioral level that are linked to their objective (raison d'être) and the individuals that comprise the group. If the objective of the group is to destroy termites, this is a clear goal. Clubs, associations, groups with obtuse and confusing objectives that are hard to measure and identify are better left alone.

How do you know whether or not a group is good for you? Look for their mission statement. Don't give stock only to what you read or only to what it says it stands for, look at actions, look at results. How is the group's track record? Read statements made by the group leaders instead of confiding in second-hand reports.

Stay Alert!

The first thing that needs to be done is to determine whether the group that interests you is at the bottom or the top of the behavioral spiral. Then, accept the spiral's movement without locking people into any one level. Instead, say "I think this person is evolving at this or that particular level. Remember to take a good look at yourself. Are you lower on the spiral than the other individual and are the both of you accommodating the relationship by operating on a behavioral middle ground?"

If you don't feel comfortable around someone, pay attention. Dissimulation may be the reason and it's a thankless place to be. Just be sure that you're not coming off some social, cultural or educational prejudice when making your judgment. For example, if everyone around you says that "so and so" is a bad egg, that doesn't make it necessarily so. Cultivate your own judgment. The Chinese philosopher Lao-Tzu once told this story, "There was a man who lost his ax and suspected the neighbor's son of having stolen it. The more he thought about it, the more he became convinced of his suspicion. Because he had brainwashed

himself to believe his imaginings, everything the boy did or said became proof in his mind that this was indeed the culprit. One day, the man emptied his smoke pit, and lo and behold, he found his ax. The following day, when he saw the neighbor's son, the man looked at the lad and thought to himself what an honest and fine young man he was.

As previously stated in the first chapter, aside from those who are stuck on a given level of introversion or antagonism, people fluctuate on the spiral, from their highest behavioral mode to the lowest and back again, like a yo-yo. That is why it is important to remember that while a person may be transiting, or even stuck in a particular behavioral level on the spiral, there is always a possibility for change. By its very nature, the spiral warns us against casting any definitive judgment. It's also why, when someone asks me to situate them on the spiral, I refuse to do so, encouraging the individual to determine his own level.

An owner's guide

It would be a shame not to apply the tools that you've learned about throughout this book, because the knowledge of the behavioral spiral can not only help you to better understand and choose your friends, your colleagues and acquaintances, but to gain a keen understanding of human behavior.

A woman who read my book once told me, "The subject you have written about is vast and intriguing. But don't you think, when it comes to putting your book to practice, that your readers will be left hungry?" I listened carefully to her comment and said to myself that she may have made this remark because she no doubt recognized one or more behaviors in herself and was looking for a way to move beyond a behavioral rut. Then, I told myself, the same might be true for you.

So, the first piece of advice I have to give so as not to leave you hungry is this: In so much as the first reading of this book probably served to satisfy your initial curiosity, it's possible that some of the techniques and principles I outlined therein escaped your notice. Re-read the first chapter. Identify your chronic behavior level, different from the level you settle into, or the middle level, different from the yo-yo principle. Once you've singled out your level, start your way back up.

My second piece of advice resides in the table that you'll find in annex to the book. Its goal is to resume the key signs and actions of each level.

Lastly, you can help someone close to you by helping him to help himself. Give him this book. Ask him to read it. It may open up some constructive dialogue between you. Each time an individual wants to improve a situation, sincere communication, real and respectful, is indispensable. It's even more effective when it takes into account the behavioral spiral. Even if there's anger or opposition, you know that nothing is lost.

This being said, if there's something in this book that is unclear, even after carefully re-reading it, you can always contact me through my publisher. I always write back.

I give private, group and corporate seminars on the behavioral spiral which I think are useful in deepening the knowledge and understanding people have of the spiral. Don't hesitate to contact me. In closing, remember the words of the philosopher, "To understand, you must know. To act, you must understand." The rest is up to you and will depend on your skills and talents and your commitment to the big game of Life.

Edition MOSTEJOVI

44, cours de Chazelles

56100 Lorient

Yang Zone

Wood

Fire

Center Zone

Earth

Yin Zone

Water

Metal

Yang Zone

Joy

(placidity)

Anger

Binding

Dissimulation

Resignation

Sadness

Fear

(Compassion)

Serenity

The emotions of the 5 Chinese elements.

LEVEL -Prostration

SIGN-Beaten, no verbal communication

OBJECTIVE-To get to resignation, with a minimal awareness of the physical body

ACTION-Physical communication. Get his attention

LEVEL -Resignation

SIGN-Has let himself go. Has a neglected look. He says that it's no use. It's not worth the effort.

OBJECTIVE-To get to repentance. It's a way of helping him open up to his immediate surroundings and to reconnect him to the present, in the movement of life.

ACTION: Simple verbal communication about the immediate environment. Bring him back to reality.

LEVEL -Repentance

SIGN-Constantly excusing himself. Submission

OBJECTIVE-To get to sadness so that he can externalize and expiate his guilt.

ACTION- Listen to him. Make him become aware. Accept his repentance and help him to let it out and have a good cry.

LEVEL -Sadness

SIGN-Complaining, depressed, weepy, obsessive collector who is always looking back on the past

OBJECTIVE-To get to expiation so that he can actively evacuate his sadness

ACTION-Be there for him in his time of sadness, and cry with him if need be. Help him to imagine something that will lift his spirits, working gently.

LEVEL -EXPIATION

SIGN-Talks about what he's going to do to get out but doesn't know how to. He's ready to buy anything.

OBJECTIVE-Help him to get to compassion, which will serve as a shock absorber for action.

ACTION-Accept his proposal to make things better, and show him your kindness and sympathy.

LEVEL -Compassion

SIGN-Everything is just fine, always fine. Has an excuse for everything. Seeks to console others compulsively.

OBJECTIVE-Bring him to the 'fear' level so he stops hiding out in his compassion and can begin to perceive the world more realistically.

ACTION-Share his good feelings. Then point out the real dangers of life. Shake him up a little.

LEVEL: Fear

SIGN-Fear of others, of self, fear of past and present. Escape artist.

OBJECTIVE: Get him to dissimulate so that he can learn to mask or hide his fear when confronting the world.

ACTION-Be afraid with him. Show him the benefit of dissimulating his fear.

LEVEL -Dissimulation

SIGN-Defiance, ruse, between the line talks

OBJECTIVE-Get him to intransigence so that he can move out of his hypocrisy

ACTION-Let him know that you've got his number. Expose him. Then, become distant and firm until he becomes himself again. Be careful not to push him back into fear!

LEVEL: Intransigence

SIGN: Cold, distant, acerbic, obstinate

OBJECTIVE: Loosen him up by getting him angry

ACTION: It's hard to put yourself on his level because he's unfriendly. But force yourself, and express yourself in a near-angry tone of voice. Find a common enemy, if not, you'll be in the direct line of fire.

LEVEL: Anger

SIGN: Susceptibility, violence, screaming

OBJECTIVE: Calm his anger by getting him to opposition

ACTION: Share his anger over a given subject. Then, continue through an antagonistic tone.

LEVEL: Opposition

SIGN: Pessimism, offensive, provoking, complains and goes off over anyone or anything

OBJECTIVE: Get him to let go and become placid and calm

ACTION: Share his point of view and his faithlessness..then bring up banal topics of conversation. Make it clear that you're

uninterested in his ranting and raving and have no time to waste on this.

LEVEL: Placidity

SIGN: Calm, observer, non-involved

OBJECTIVE: Get him to participate more in life

ACTION: Lay back with him, share a few minutes of his laxness, and without upsetting him, begin to motivate him.

LEVEL: Participation

SIGN: Conformist, follows the rules, hard worker, no imagination

OBJECTIVE: Give him that little push that will get his imagination going again, and that will move him toward ardor and joy.

ACTION: Stimulate his dreams, communicate your own passion and joy for life.

LEVEL: Passion and joy

SIGN: creative, communicative, enthusiastic, loving, cooperative, capable of sharing with everyone without compromising himself.

OBJECTIVE: Stay with him on his level.

ACTION: This is your ideal partner. Don't lose him.